

**BAR**

Chronicle

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH<http://www.bar.da.gov.ph>E-mail: rd@bar.da.gov.ph

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1 -15 July 2000

CIMMYT to Assist RP Corn Production

The government has found a new ally in its bid to modernize the agriculture sector.

The International Center for Maize and Wheat Improvement (CIMMYT) has expressed interest in helping the government draft strategies to improve corn production. Two CIMMYT directors recently visited the Bureau of Agricultural Research to confer with the proponents of the country's corn program.

Dr. Prabhu L. Pingali and Dr. Shivaji Pandey, the directors of the Economics Program and the Maize Program, respectively, met Dr. Eliseo R. Ponce of BAR and Dr. Art Salazar of the University of the Philippines at Los Baños (UPLB) to assess the corn industry and formulate the appropriate strategies to improve production.

RP corn industry

The local corn industry has been crippled by high production cost, lack of support infrastructure, low available credit and a very unstable market. In fact, it is cheaper to import corn from other countries such as the United States. The US sells corn at US\$77/ton, less than half the price of locally produced corn at US\$158/ton.

The CIMMYT directors stressed the need to veer attention to white corn where there is less competition. They pointed out that competition is stiff in the market for modern commercial varieties. The Philippines would gain more from engaging in the production of non-conventional varieties. Thus, the country must develop superior technology for

See CIMMYT, Page 2

Kenyan Delegates Visit BAR

... as part of SEARCA study tour

Kenyan nationals recently visited the Bureau of Agricultural Research to gain exposure to the Philippines' production systems, specifically rice and fish culture production.

Furthermore, they were introduced to the Department of Agriculture's (DA) initiatives in agriculture and fisheries highlighted by BAR as the force driving the country towards food self-sufficiency.

The three Kenyans are participants in the Study Tour on Rice-Fish Culture Production System organized by the SEAMEO Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA). They are: Dr. Oburu Oginga, a member of the Bondo Parliament and Public Accounts Committee; Mr. Romulo Opondo, Head of the Kenya Agricultural Research

Institute (KARI), Rice Research Programme, and; Mr. Jackson N. Olum Oludhe, a Bondo local leader and prominent farmer.

The study tour has the following objectives:

- ☐ familiarize the participants with the technologies and practices utilized in rice-fish culture production systems in the Philippines;
- ☐ identify strategies in successful rice-fish culture production system ventures;
- ☐ assist the participants in developing linkages with government agencies, institutions and firms involved in Philippine rice-fish culture, and;
- ☐ assist the participants in assessing how the study tour findings can be utilized in formulating plans for the

See Kenyan, Page 3

BAR Looks into Possible GIS-REMAP Collaboration with BSWM

The Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) recently discussed possible collaborative and convergence work with the Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM) on the proposed Geographical Information System-Research Monitoring, Evaluation and Analyzing Policies (GIS-REMAP).

In a consultation meeting, the existing database structures of BSWM, which are in analogue format, were found to be largely incompatible with modern computer structures. In this

regard, BAR has agreed to extend financial assistance and manpower aggregate to BSWM for computer systems modernization. Other collaborating agencies will include the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) and the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice), both of which already have developed modern computer systems.

The P3-million GIS-REMAP is an advanced management technology that has the capability of "synthesizing,

See GIS-REMAP, Page 2

9th PHILARM National Convention

BAR Continues Funding Proceedings Manual

The Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) pledged continued funding support for the publication of the Philippine Association of Research Managers (PHILARM) convention proceedings manual. This forms part of BAR's efforts to promote the advancement of research management in generating and disseminating R&D information and resources.

The newly released proceedings manual on the 9th PHILARM National Convention, which was held in La Trinidad, Benguet last year, embodies the plans and aspirations of various R&D institutions' leaders which conform to the theme "*Sama-samang Pananaliksik sa Pagpapaunlad ng Pagsasaka, Pangisdaan, Likas Yaman at Industriya*." The manual, which is a special issue of the Research and Management Components, contains the salient results of the annual convention to strengthen the research capacity of the key actors in

agriculture, fisheries, environment and natural resources and industry sectors. The topics included are: Techno *Gabay-Unlad Buhay Para sa Masa* Program; Modalities and Approaches in Building Strategic Alliances in Regional R&D in the Environment and Natural Resources Sector; Approaches in Building Strategic Alliances Between R&D and the Industry Sector, and; RDE Linkage Modalities Under the AFMA.

One thousand copies of the manual will be distributed to PHILARM members, public and private research agencies, management students and faculty members of colleges and universities.

For years, the PHILARM has been an active partner of the Department of Agriculture, committed to the advancement and promotion of research management as a profession, career, and tool for national development. (*Mary Charlotte O. Fresco*)

CIMMYT...

white corn production.

DA-private sector relationship

Dr. Salazar explained the delineation of duties between DA and the private sector. DA will spearhead the development of parent lines and in-bred lines while the private sector will develop specific hybrids.

Dr. Ponce added that BAR has a national program for corn, with UPLB as lead institution. Furthermore, linkage between the proponents is hindered by a poor communication system. He suggested that this is where BAR and CIMMYT can work together. "We are hopeful that CIMMYT could help us in technology generation, policy research and resource development".

Dr. Pingali said CIMMYT will help in these areas as it recognizes the potentials of our corn industry. Dr. Pingali praised the DA and BAR for its emphasis on technology transfer. However, there is still the need to focus on identified priority areas. (*Junelyn S. de la Rosa*)

New FARMNET Asia Chair Appointed



Dr. Eliseo R. Ponce, director of the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR), was recently appointed Chairperson of the Farmer-centered

Agricultural Resource Management Network (FARMNET) Asia for the year 1999-2000. This was one of the highlights of the *Farmnet Asia Forum* held in Bangkok, Thailand.

FARMNET Asia is a voluntary inter-governmental non-profit collaboration of eight Asian countries and concerned organizations to promote a farmer-centered sustainable agriculture and natural resource management for rural development through gender-sensitive participatory approaches. The eight-member countries are China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam who promote the initiatives of the FARM programs.

As chairperson, Dr. Ponce shall guide the Network throughout its start-up phase. Furthermore, Dr. Ponce and his team shall be responsible for overseeing all policy and official matters that are related to the Network.

To complete the Management Committee of the Network, a Network Secretariat (NS), who will come from BAR, will assist the Chairperson as the Secretary of the Network. On the other hand, the Coordinating Secretariat (CS) will remain at the Food Agricultural Organization-Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAO-RAP) in Bangkok, with Dr. Narciso Deomampo as the Regional Director of the Network. The Support Secretariat (SS) will be responsible for the day-to-day running and management of the network. Re-appointed to this post is the Management Institute for Social Change (MINSOC), with Mr. Bishan Singh as the Executive Director and Regional Coordinator. (*Rita T. dela Cruz*)

GIS-REMAP...

analyzing, retrieving, and outputting spatial information" This facility will enable resource agencies to easily map and create a visual representation of research outputs and production data.

The GIS will involve comprehensive database integration and management that will link research results and outputs from various Department of Agriculture (DA) attached agencies, providing the DA with a common technology database in electronic format. Moreover, this will be part of the National Information Network (NIN).

This initiative is also implemented in other developed countries to increase industry productivity and reduce costs. In the Philippines, the GIS will virtually improve the capabilities of policy makers, organizations, agronomists, and crop consultants in managing the vast information database. (*Thea Kristina M. Pabuayon*)

Biotechnology: An Important Tool for Sustainable Agriculture

Biotechnology is important in developing technologies to sustain increased agricultural productivity.

This was the consensus of the participants of the Regional Conference on Agricultural Biotechnology held on 29-30 June 2000 in Bangkok, Thailand.

The participants were representatives of agricultural research agencies of five Southeast Asian countries, namely China, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines, and Monsanto, Third World Network and Asian Food Information Council, the IRRI, the CGIAR Technical Advisory Committee, the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA), the ASEAN Secretariat, and the International Cooperation Center for Agricultural Education (ICCAE), Japan.

The conference served as the venue for the sharing of information and knowledge on agricultural biotechnology developments in policy and technical matters, especially the status of research and development and training in their respective countries. Although biotechnology is comprised of varied tools such as cells, enzymes, DNA sequences, and gene constructs, most of the reports presented dealt with genetically modified crops or GMOs. With 100 biotechnology research laboratories, China is understandably the most advanced in utilizing GMOs, with farmlands covering about 500,000 hectares. The other countries are in various stages of research and development and have reported limited capabilities, especially in terms of manpower. These countries have adopted biosafety guidelines and are active participants of various international biotechnology R&D networks.

The participants suggested regional collaborative programs in intellectual property rights and public awareness in agricultural biotechnology which SEARCA will manage. They identified the following opportunities and immediate objectives that will result to sustainable agriculture through biotechnology:

- ❑ Reduction of soil erosion using a biotechnology that reduces or totally eliminates tillage. The use of herbicide-resistant soybeans appears

to have achieved this, as reported by farmers using the technology.

- ❑ Reduction or elimination of chemical pesticides or other inputs that upset the environment. Chinese farmers reported an 80% decrease in insecticide use with Bt cotton growing.
- ❑ Increase in farm yields, productivity and incomes through various means such as:
 - ❑ reduction in farm input, as cited above
 - ❑ consistent yields despite presence of pest (e.g. virus-protected crops) or insufficient water (e.g. drought tolerant crops)
 - ❑ farm-level processing to add value (e.g. fermentation)
 - ❑ adding new value to crop (e.g. fresh food vaccines)
 - ❑ shorten cropping seasons (e.g. rapidly maturing crops)

Participants also recommended that each country address biosafety, public perception and awareness, ethical and socioeconomic issues. On the other hand, agreement must be reached by trading partners on common approaches to regulation.

The Conference was organized by SEAMEO-SEARCA and co-sponsored by Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and Asia-Pacific Seed Association (APSA). (*Saturnina S. Halos, Ph.D.*)

RIARCs...

services and other expertise) for the development of the RIARC operations manual;

- ❑ Provide technical support in the implementation of the operations manual, and;
- ❑ Assist project proponents in providing direct technical interventions for the development of RIARCs.

In a consultation meeting with the consultants held recently, BAR Director Eliseo Ponce addressed some issues on the Operation Manual's outline. He suggested that chapters would be comprehensively presented if

Kenyan...

development of rice-fish culture in their country.

Dr. Eliseo R. Ponce, BAR director, briefed the participants on the role played by BAR in the conduct of DA-BAR initiatives and thrusts as outlined in the AFMA under the one-system, one program approach. He pointed out that the new R&D framework is more client- and market-driven, thereby helping the country achieve food security.

This strategy on achieving food security brought to fore the role of market liberalization. Dr. Oburu Oginga asked whether the Philippines should instead promote the self-sufficiency of farmers by creating a market for locally produced products. "Won't the influx of imports kill your own farming industry in the long run?" he asked.

"The Department gives more weight to food security which is defined as the affordability, availability of quality and safe food all the time because unlike industrialized countries, the Philippines cannot afford to subsidize the whole farming industry," Dr. Ponce said. The bottomline is increasing farmers' income which can only be achieved by producing what is profitable for Filipino farmers.

The participants expressed interest in the integration of research and extension in the new R&D framework. According to Mr. Opondo, linkage between the two is nonexistent in Kenya. Thus, relevant technologies do not reach the farmers.

Dr. Ponce encouraged Kenyan scholars to study here in the Philippines. "Certainly... there is a lot we can learn from each other," Dr. Oginga said. (*Junelyn S. de la Rosa*)

grouped into volumes. It was agreed that three volumes will be made: Volume One will contain the concept, policies, objectives and organizational structure of the RIARCs; Volume Two will be devoted to experiment station development and maintenance, and; Volume Three will tackle Integrated Regional R&D Laboratory support services.

BAR will be allocating funds for personal services, maintenance and operating expenditures.

The draft of the manual is due to be evaluated and reviewed by RIARC managers. (*Mary Charlotte O. Fresco*)

BAR-Sponsored Seminar Series

INIBAP and the Banana R&D Programs of the Philippines

The Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR), through its Knowledge Products and Services Division, held recently the ninth in its series of seminars. The seminar was entitled *INIBAP and the Banana R&D Programs of the Philippines*, with Dr. Augustin Molina as the resource speaker.

Dr. Molina is the Regional Coordinator of the International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain for Asia and the Pacific Network (INIBAP-ASPNET).

Dr. Molina expounded on the relationship that exists between the country and INIBAP. The Philippines maintains the Southeast Asian regional banana germplasm collection. As such, collaboration between INIBAP and the Philippines is mainly on the areas of germplasm conservation and characterization, training and information exchange, according to him. INIBAP has provided support for the rescue and relocation of this collection.

Furthermore, INIBAP enhanced the BAR-University of the Philippines at Los Baños (UPLB) Banana Biotechnology Program by facilitating collaborative work between UPLB and Australia. This project allows the testing and subsequent utilization of transgenic bananas with genes resistant to virus diseases endemic to the

Philippines.

In the Philippines, INIBAP puts priority in supporting and participating in activities that will improve the banana production and profitability of smallhold farmers. Various research activities are being enhanced to provide equitable income and food security to this marginalized sector. As a matter of fact, Dr. Molina emphasized that through INIBAP's International Musa Testing Program (IMTP), they were able to identify superior banana hybrids and superior landraces that are now ready to be tested in farmers' fields and eventually disseminated. INIBAP will be responsible for seeking and facilitating the support of national partners to achieve the objectives of different R&D programs in the country.

Dr. Molina said INIBAP will support the R&D programs to increase the availability of improved banana germplasm; develop improved production system in typhoon-prone areas; develop the expanded uses of banana for value adding; and improve the postharvest technology and quality of banana.

INIBAP was created to increase the productivity of banana and plantain grown on smallholdings for domestic consumption and export. (Rita T. dela Cruz)

RIARCs Operations Manual Approved

In line with the Bureau of Agricultural Research's (BAR) mandate of providing institutional development support to NaRDSAF member institutions, the DA-BAR recently approved the project entitled "*Support Services and Resources for the RIARCs Capability Building*."

The project targets to develop an Operations Manual for the management of Regional Integrated Agricultural Research Centers (RIARCs). The components of the Operations Manual are the development and maintenance of an experimental station and the Regional Integrated Laboratory Support Services (RILSS).

To support the implementation of the said project, BAR acquired the services of three highly qualified consultants from UP Los Baños responsible for developing the components of the Operations Manual. They will likewise provide technical assistance in the development of RIARCs.

The project has the following objectives:

- ❑ Assist in the assessment of current RIARC operations and management;
- ❑ Provide resources (materials,

See RIARCs, Page 3

WHO'S NEW AT BAR

The BAR family just keeps on growing... and growing...

Wonder no more who are the two unfamiliar people walking around the cafeteria or corridors.

He could easily blend in with the crowd as he walks unobtrusively among us. A man of few words (as most men are), **Richal Ariel Ilagan** (BS Agricultural Economics) is into mind games like chess. Though Ariel doesn't seem to have difficulty talking to girls, he remains single (and available?!) at the ripe young age of 22. A Los Baños, Laguna native, he exudes "Shy Guy"

charm and persuasiveness specially when performing his tasks as a Research Economist in the SEARCA project "Strengthening of the Knowledge Management Capability."

Andressa Gutierrez, at age 20, is brimming with enthusiasm and zest for life... "*Mahilig akong kumain ng apoy* in my free time. *Minsan blade din!*" Makes one wonder if she plans to engage in this hobby while carrying out her duties in the Capture Fisheries Network under UPV, her alma matter. With a degree in Fisheries, major in Marine Fisheries, Andee is like fish in water here in BAR.

Chronicle

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2nd National and 4th Mindanao Mango Congress

RP Mango: Gearing Up for the Global Market

Mango industry players gathered recently to devise strategies to secure a foothold in the global market. Members of the Philippine Mango industry convened last 18-20 July 2000 at the 2nd National and 4th Mindanao Mango Congress to discuss strategies that will fast-track the establishment of the Philippine Mango in the global market. The Mindanao Fruit Development Council (MinFruit Council) spearheaded the event together with the Mindanao Mango Industry Development Foundation (MMIDF) and the Philippine Mango Council (PhilMango Council).

With this year's theme "Modernizing the Philippine Mango Industry for Global Competitiveness", the event served as a venue for discussion on the current status, problems, issues, concerns, and opportunities faced by the Philippine Mango industry and its goal to establish itself in the international markets, particularly China, Australia, and the United States.

Plenary sessions and discussions focusing on technical and practical approaches to agribusiness development, and a corporate exhibit showcasing various products and services of different fruit-grower associations, cooperatives and government agencies highlighted the three-day affair.

Department of Agriculture Sec. Edgardo J. Angara served as guest speaker, addressing hundreds of mango sector representatives from

See 2nd National, Page 3



Agriculture Secretary Edgardo J. Angara (inset) addresses members of the Mango industry sector during the 2nd National and 4th Mindanao Mango Congress.

DA-BAR-Winrock Program To Introduce IT in Rural Areas

The Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) and Winrock International will formally launch the *PinoyFarmer Business Development: An Information Technology Support Service for Agricultural Modernization and Global Competitiveness* this August 2000. This is in line with its thrust of increasing the productivity and income of the local people.

The project aims to benefit the eight provinces of Region 1, Region 2, Region 6 and Region 10 by promoting a sustained and market-driven support services to rural-based organizations to empower the Filipino people to develop competitive and profitable business using information communication technology.

The project also envisions to increase the productivity of rice-based and corn-based cropping systems by 35% and farmers' income by 25%.

The project has three major elements: Market Aggregation/Marketing Linkage; Information Technology Support Systems Development and Application, and; Participatory R&D Approach.

One of the vital components of the project is the establishment of a National Information Network (NIN) which will help the people readily access market information such as production trends of major agricultural commodities, price trends, names and contact details of

See Winrock, Page 2

BAR Sponsors ADB/IFAD Projects Joint Annual Meeting

In support of the coconut research activities, particularly the strengthening of international linkages and collaboration with countries involved in R&D activities as implemented in the AFMA, the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) sponsored a dinner for the ADB/IFAD-funded Projects Joint Annual Meeting recently held at the Century Imperial Palace Suites at Timog Avenue, Quezon City.

The Joint Annual Meeting was a two-part event which included a four-day conference and a two-day field trip to Laguna and Quezon. Participants from the countries

involved in the project, PCA representatives, and BAR staff attended the meeting. BAR Asst. Dir. Jovita M. Corpuz of BAR gave the welcome remarks in behalf of BAR



PCA-ARDB Deputy Administrator Carlos Carpio delivers his speech to the Coconut RDE Network National Team Leaders.

Director Eliseo R. Ponce.

The meeting was held in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed between the Philippine Coconut Authority

(PCA) and the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI) to jointly conduct coconut research that will augment the income and nutrition of the coconut smallholders in the Asia-Pacific region. This project is partly funded by IFAD and ADB. Participating countries are Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines.

The Philippines was chosen this year as the host country for the *Third Coconut Research Project Annual Meeting*. The six-day activity will serve as the venue for the review of achievements and work plans of the ADB/IFAD-funded coconut research projects in Asia. It will also strengthen research linkages among network member countries and enhance effectiveness and development impact of coconut research projects. (Rita T. dela Cruz)

BPI Corporate Planning Workshop Held

In response to the Bureau of Agricultural Research's (BAR) call to enhance the institutional capability of DA attached agencies and staff bureaus in the implementation of AFMA, the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) conducted a *Corporate Planning Workshop* on 20-24 July 2000 at Lagos del Sol, Caliraya, Quezon.

The workshop, an initiative of BAR through the Institutional Development Division (IDD), aims to restructure the institution's mandates, goal and functions that will focus on research and development.

The Corporate Plan will embody the institution's more defined vision, mission, organizational structure, goals and strategic priorities. This will serve as the basis of the kind and amount of financial assistance to be given by BAR to BPI as part of the Institutional Development Grant (IDG).

The workshop was organized based on the methodology set by the

institution. It had two phases: pre-corporate planning, and corporate planning. The pre-corporate planning involved the identification of the institution's target clients, their needs, potentials and implications. This helped the institution determine what areas in their structural management needs to be restructured or redirected.

On the other hand, the corporate planning phase tackled the current status of the institution's service/products, legislation, policies, organizational capabilities and structure and competencies and its corresponding proposed plans. The BPI's Medium-Term Corporate Plan for the year 2001-2005, including its goal and priority activities, was also formulated and validated. A consultant evaluated the plan.

BPI is the first among the DA staff bureaus and attached agencies to conduct the Corporate Planning workshop. (Mary Charlotte O. Fresco)

Winrock...

prospective buyers and suppliers of agricultural inputs and machinery. This will also help facilitate the networking linkage of farmers with their support agents (extension workers, intermediaries and suppliers). These support agents will serve as the work partner of the farmers and fishermen who want to venture into agribusiness enterprises.

According to Mr. Bolo, the agents will guide the farmers in making sound market decisions on what products to produce and the ways to increase profit from the existing products.

The project will equip the communities with up-to-date information communication technology such as Internet, cyber-cafes and palm-sized computing platforms to instill a sense of professionalism among the extension agents.

To ensure the sustainability of the project, Mr. Bolo suggested that financial support from the local government units (LGUs) be sought in acquiring, repairing and maintaining computers.

The project which has a total budget of P18.75 million will be implemented starting August 2000 up to May 2003. (Mary Charlotte O. Fresco)

BAR-Sponsored Seminar Series

Natural Resource Management in the Philippines: An Analysis

The ever-increasing world population poses a threat to food production. Rice, the staple food in the Philippines and Asia, has been given special attention in terms of research, development and extension funds. However, despite a number of technological advances in rice production, farmers' yields continue to decline.

Researchers and scientists are one in the belief that the depletion of natural resources - particularly soil and water - plays a major role in this decline. With this in mind, it is now prudent to assess the natural resource of the country and identify several technologies to promote sustainable agricultural resource management.

The Philippines has a total land area of 30 million hectares, of which 8.2 million are arable and permanent uplands. Of the arable areas, only 25% are constraint free, while 71.2% of the country's total land area are marginalized by various degrees of acidity. Total area devoted to rice is 4.2

million hectares but almost 40% are unsuitable for rice farming.

A study conducted by PCARRD in 1999 has found that over half of the land area of 13 out of the 73 provinces of the country are affected by erosion. Other studies also show that high soil loss in certain provinces and reduction of irrigated lands are due to resource depletion.

Several technologies have been promoted for efficient soil management such as the development of various organic fertilizers like Bio-green, Mycovan, Bio-N, Nitroplus, and Mycrogro. However, these have encountered problems on commercialization, marketing and large-scale production.

Watershed degradation is the other cause for farmers' low yields. Like soil resources, watersheds are inappropriately used and poorly maintained. This causes ineffective water delivery and inefficient water use. Although there are available water technologies, delivery is still hampered

by lack of funds and investment.

NRM Program for the Philippines

Dr. Agnes Rola, associate professor and director of the Institute for Strategic Planning and Policy Studies has proposed a research program for natural resource management (NRM). The proposed program will be anchored on promoting soil and water productivity. It entails the integration of soil databases with the existing ones for use in policy and planning, understanding farmers' indicators in managing agricultural resources and the role of diagnostics, utilizing local government units in agricultural resource management, seeking the support of the private sector, and developing impact assessment indicators. Moreover, proper policies for commercializing sustainable soil and water technologies will be drafted to support entrepreneurs. *(Thea Kristina M. Pabuayon)*

(Based on a paper by Dr. Agnes Rola entitled "Research Program Planning for NRM in the Philippines: A Background Analysis" presented during the 2nd BAR-PIDS Seminar on 18 July 2000)

2nd National...

various provinces of the country, including Pangasinan, Davao, Visayas, Guimaras, Iloilo, Metro Manila, Cotabato, Bulacan, Zambales and Batangas.

A Modernized Mango Industry

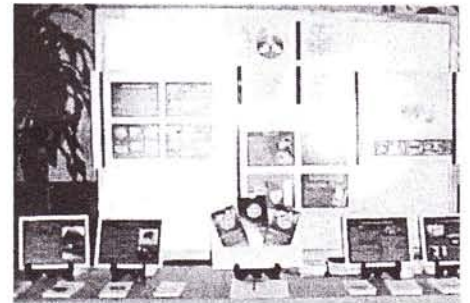
Secretary Angara emphasized the need for a modernized mango industry in order to successfully break into the highly competitive global markets. Mango ranks third to banana and pineapple as the most important fruit product of the Philippines. Besides ranking 8th in 97 mango-producing countries in world, the Philippines is also widely recognized for its fiberless Golden Mango.

Apart from developing the Golden Mango, Sec. Angara urged producers to further exploit the value-adding potential of our mangoes to further sustain the industry's growth.

These include additional improvements of other products such as dried mangoes and mango juice, which are already gaining wide acceptance in international markets.

In the advent of international trade cooperation, the Philippines has also recently established relations with China, Australia, and the United States, further rendering the industry highly competitive with other agricultural exports.

Other efforts to modernize the industry include a number of infrastructure and technological developments and projects by the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) and the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR). These include the future establishment of the Research and Development Centers for Mango Development in Luzon, Visayas and



The BAR booth during the corporate exhibit.

Mindanao, the National Research and Development Center for Tropical Fruits in Davao City, and the Mango Research and Development Satellite Station in Mindanao. BAR has already allocated P10 million for the Center's activities. Moreover, two separate bills seeking to establish mango research centers in Guimaras and Pangasinan have also been filed. *(Thea Kristina M. Pabuayon)*

Around Asia

web NEWS

Visit the following sites for more information:

Vision of the 21st Century

<http://www.time.com/time/reports/v21/tech/mag food.html>

Omega-3 good for aquatic health - study

<http://www.enn.com/enn-news-archive/2000/01/01172000/pytoefa8931.asp>

Two mindsets, two visions of sustainable agriculture

<http://www.enn.com/enn-features-archive/1999/08/080699/donatella4795.asp>

It's the size of the ecosystem that counts

<http://www.enn.com/enn-features-archive/1999/08/080699/donatella4795.asp>

BAR-Thai DOA Collaboration to Start September

Delegates from the Department of Agriculture (DOA) of Thailand will come to the Philippines in September to conduct with the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) the first planning exercise. The output of this planning workshop shall be a general plan of activities under the Cooperation Agreement that will involve jointly planned projects and organizational mechanisms. The *Joint Planning Exercise*, scheduled on 11-15 September 2000, hopes to strengthen the two countries' agricultural R&D knowledge in order to improve the capabilities of their respective R&D systems. Furthermore, through this exercise, the technology requirements of their agricultural sectors may be readily addressed.

Four major activities shall be undertaken during the workshop, namely: identification of general activities; approval and phasing of activities; identification of

DA Prepares for RP-Vietnam TWG Meeting

The Department of Agriculture (DA) Technical Working Group (TWG) with representatives from the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) recently held its first meeting at the AGILE Office of the DA. The interagency meeting was held in preparation for the *First Meeting of the TWG* to be held in Hanoi, Vietnam.

In attendance were the following: Dir. Ma. Concepcion Lizada of the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Products Standard (BAFPS), Ms. Janet Garcia and Ms. Leah Samson of the DA-International Relations Division (IRD), Mr. Vic Guiam of BAR, representatives from the National Food Authority (NFA), Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI), DA-

organizational mechanisms; and establishment of interaction between the counterpart groups.

Under the MOU entered by both agencies, there shall be a total of 20 areas of cooperation. However, with the limited available resources, BAR proposes that initial projects involve only the following: rice, horticulture (fruits and ornamentals), plantation crops (rubber), crop protection, farm mechanization, export promotion, quarantine, field crops (sugarcane), and biotechnology. Prioritization was based on its importance to both countries.

In preparation to the coming activity, BAR is currently reviewing proposals for prioritization and collaboration. On August, BAR and DOA will conduct cross-consultation/consensus building on the Philippine-proposed projects. DOA will also consult with RDE Networks on the DOA proposals. The pre-finalization of proposals on referrals and packaging of proposals will be done in the first and second week of September prior to the actual planning exercise. (Rita T. dela Cruz)

Field Operations Service (FOS). Asst. Sec. Segfredo Serrano presided over the meeting.

The RP-Vietnam Meeting is tentatively scheduled to be held in late August or September 2000. The composition of the Philippine delegation and the proposed workplan of the projects shall be discussed in the next meeting of the group.

According to Mr. Guiam, the group was saddled with the lack of knowledge about Vietnam, agricultural directions, and agricultural intentions with countries like the Philippines. Hence, they decided that the TWG meet with people from the private sector to source pertinent information on Vietnam. Furthermore, they will seek the help of Filipinos who served as consultants to Vietnam and coordinate with international agencies like the SEAMEO Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture. They would also use other available sources, such as the Internet. (Rita T. dela Cruz)

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