



BAR

Chronicle

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

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DA Creates PhilCorn and PhilFruits

DA-BAR to allocate P45M each as initial budget

To invigorate and give the local fruit and corn industry a much-needed boost, the Department of Agriculture (DA) established the Philippine Tropical Fruits Research Center (PhilFruits) and the Philippine Corn Research Center (PhilCorn) on 11 January 2001 through the issuance of Administrative Orders 4 and 5 (AO 4 and AO 5, Series of 2001), respectively. Former Secretary Domingo F. Panganiban instructed the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) to allocate each center P45M from the DA R&D grants and High Value Commercial Crops (HVCC) Makamasa funds for centers' immediate establishment and operationalization.

Similar to other DA-attached agencies, both research centers shall be managed as semi-autonomous units with budgetary allocation from the national

government. PhilFruits was established out of the devolved Bureau of Plant Industry's (BPI) Davao National Crops Research and Development Center (Davao NCRDC). From being a multi-commodity center, the former NCRDC will focus only on fruits and fruit-based products. All facilities, experimental areas, and personnel of the BPI-Davao NCRDC will be transferred to PhilFruits.

On the other hand, the PhilCorn will be developed on a 60-hectare experimental area within the University of Southern Mindanao (USM) Campus in Kabacan, North Cotabato. At least 40 scientists/researchers from the Cotton Development Authority (CODA) shall act as the core personnel of PhilCorn while its organizational

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New DA Sec Identifies 11 Priorities for Next 100 Days

The new government under the Arroyo Administration has appointed Leonardo Q. Montemayor as the new Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA) barely one month after former Secretary Domingo Panganiban assumed his post. The sectoral representative of the Federation of Free Farmers was sworn into office last 6 February after Press Secretary Noel Cabrera confirmed his appointment during a press briefing.

When asked about his plans as the new head of DA, Montemayor mentioned 11 priorities to be undertaken for the next 100 days:

- Accelerate the implementation of AFMA particularly research and development, extension, and the Strategic Agriculture and Fisheries Development Zones (SAFDZ)
- Address the smuggling activities that adversely affect the agriculture sector
- Pursue the full implementation of the Fisheries Code

See Priorities, Page 2



Montemayor

M.O. No. 1 Establishes RDMIC

As the government recognizes the need for an efficient and improved facilities and infrastructure for the country's research and development system, the Department of Agriculture recently issued a Memorandum Order (MO) to fully establish the DA-BAR R&D Management & Information Center (RDMIC) for Agriculture and Fishery. This P137M state-of-the-art Center is envisioned to become the "power house" of the R&D community equipped with modern facilities to facilitate agricultural information exchange and management among R&D constituents. The Center will have an area of 4,027 square meters and will be located at the corner of Elliptical Road and Visayas Avenue in Quezon City. The RDMIC facilities will include the Agriculture and Fisheries R&D Information System (AFRDIS); a scientific library; an exhibition hall; audiovisual and seminar rooms; a Senior Scientists Advisory Committee Hall; liaison offices for the National/Regional RDE institutions; a CERDAF conference room and dormitories.

The AFRDIS shall serve as a virtual repository of agricultural information that will provide access to references across all R&D networks and institutions. On the other hand, the scientific or electronic library will provide the public an on-line query of information on researches and projects.

At the same time, the Center shall house BAR's increasing number of scientific personnel and research staff, and the DA's liaison offices such as PhilRice, Philippine Carabao

See RDMIC, page 3

How the R&D System Responds to GMA's Core Values

Just recently, the whole Filipino nation watched and joined the dramatic weekend in which President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took oath in an open-air inauguration barely minutes after former President Joseph Estrada stepped down from Malacañang.

The change in the country's leadership has also ushered in a new era and with it abundant hope and fresh optimism from its 84.6 million constituents.

Indeed, GMA and her cabinet face the formidable task of undoing the excesses and mismanagement of the past administration and the new challenge will focus on uplifting the country from poor economic growth and ensuring that there is an equitable distribution of resources and services among the various sectors of society.

During her privilege speech, President Arroyo identified four core values on which her administration will be fully anchored on from this year onwards. Consonantly, how does the R&D System align itself with the four core values? President Arroyo declared that *"We must be bold in our national ambitions, so that our challenge must be that within this decade, we will win the fight against poverty."* The R&D System plays a vital role in the all-out campaign against poverty by bringing science and technology closer to the farmers/fisherfolk. With DA-BAR on top of the whole R&D System in the country, the quest and consequent diffusion of mature, cost-effective and sustainable technologies was given the top billing it deserves. The Department of Agriculture recognizes that increasing farm productivity and improving the lives of farmers can be achieved only through massive application of scientific and technological breakthroughs. For instance, the application of modern methods in production, storage, and marketing could greatly increase productivity and even make local agricultural products globally competitive.

We must improve moral standards in government and society, in order to provide a strong foundation for

good governance. One concrete way of showing 'good governance' is by developing the Human Resource complement of the whole R&D System. Human resource is a critical component in any organization. To build a strong foundation for future leaders, they should be equipped with technical know-how and at the same time inculcate in them the ethics of their profession. For the HRD of the R&D system, BAR offers scholarship grants for postgraduate applicants to all the members of the NaRDSAF and supports training/visits of scientists abroad. The Bureau believes that scientists can only be vigorous if they are attuned to the new information/researches available in national as well as international scientific circles.

Third, the new president declared that *"We must change the character of our politics, in order to create fertile ground for true reforms. Our politics of personality and patronage must give way to a new politics of party programs and process of dialogues with the people."*

The Bureau also recognizes that interest on R&D should be based on program rather than on politics. Unless there is active and honest involvement and participation of a greater majority, a program will never be sustainable. This is the reason why the Bureau has worked hard to integrate the R&D Programs for major commodities/disciplines to maximize the use of scarce resources, following a systematic procedure for research evaluation and resource prioritization.

Finally, President Macapagal-Arroyo believes in leadership by example. *"We should promote solid traits such as work ethics and dignified lifestyle, matching action to rhetoric, performing rather than grandstanding."*

BAR believes in working without invoking self-interest and performing according to one's specific functions and duties. Thus, BAR promotes the culture of transparency and accountability in the R&D system. This is the essence of true leadership. (Junelyn S. de la Rosa)

Priorities...

- Rural infrastructure
- Design innovative credit and financing schemes
- Effective management and maintenance of water resources in agriculture
- MakaMASA program
- Enhance the trade and fiscal incentives for agriculture
- Develop programs for Mindanao
- Recover the coconut levy funds
- People empowerment

In his speech, Secretary Montemayor shared his confidence in helping the current administration succeed in addressing poverty and rural development. According to him, this is viable through long and extensive years to direct exposure and close collaboration with farmers, as well as cooperation with different agricultural market and agribusiness players.

Secretary Montemayor is a true blue eagle, having graduated *summa cum laude* (A.B. Philosophy) from Ateneo de Manila. He was also a graduate of the Strategic Business Education Program from the Center for Research and Communication. As an active partylist representative of the house, he has authored major laws like the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act or R.A. No. 8435; the act of strengthening the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform program or R.A. No. 8532; the Fisheries Code or R.A. No. 8550; and the Safeguard measures Act or R.A. No. 8800.

Concurrent to his position, he is the chairperson of the House Committee on Agrarian Reform, director of the Rural Workers Department of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines; board member of the Philippine Agricultural Economics and Development Association; head of the Education Department of the Federation of Free Farmers Cooperatives; and chairperson of the Task Force on Reorganization of the Ministry of Agriculture. (Rita T. dela Cruz)

OBITUARY

The BAR and its staff express its sympathy to the bereaved family and relatives of DR. LYDIA OLIVA, Vice-President for Research and Development, and Director of the University of Southern Mindanao Agricultural Research Center (USMARC) who passed away on 31 January 2001.

Chinese Scientists Visit BAR



Chinese visitors

Four scientists from Hebein Provincial Science and Technology Commission attended a briefing at the Bureau of Agricultural Research as part of the exchange visit between China and the Philippines. Their visit is part of the Cooperative Research and Development in Technology of Pests Prevention and Elimination in Grain Protection, which is one of the projects under the signed 12th Protocol of the RP-China Science and Technology Agreement.

The technical visit is done to improve the R&D activities of both countries for the preservation and protection of grain commodities. Through this exchange visit, the delegation hopes to gain information and familiarize themselves with various activities and programs of primary research institutions in the Philippines.

The Chinese scientists stayed in the country for 12 days, conducting technology investigation to different research institutes and industrial units of grain protection products with regard to their grain production, storage method, and related R&D activities. After visiting the Bureau, the delegation visited other research institutes in the country like the Munoz Science City; the Banaue Rice Terraces and Santiago City; the National Food Authority and Cagayan Valley Integrated Agricultural Research Center; the East-West Seed Co.; research centers in Los Banos (International Rice Research Institute, the National Crop Protection Center, the Institute of Plant Breeding); and industrial units of grain protection products like Vitarich, Purina, N-Pal, and Seed Testing Center.

Heading the Chinese delegation was Mr. Liang Gou Fa, Assistant Director of the Shijazhuang Science and Technology Commission. Other members included Mr. Jia Zeng Ke, Deputy Director of Garin Science Research Institute of Hebein Province; and Ms Wang Gui Qin, Director of Shijazhuang Grain Protection Institute. Ms Liu Xiao Ran, an interpreter from Shijazhuang Goldenfish Paint Corporation, accompanied them. (Rita T. dela Cruz)

RDMIC...

Center (PCC) and Bureau of Postharvest Research and Extension (BPRE) which are located outside Metro Manila.

Moreover, the RDMIC shall be the nucleus of the proposed DA Research, Development and Extension Complex which covers the improvement of the existing DA facilities and areas occupied by Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), Agricultural Training Institute (ATI), Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI), Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), National Food Authority (NFA) and Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM).

PhilRice will take the lead in the proper design and implementation of the project. The Center is expected to be functional on 2003. (Mary Charlotte O. Fresco)

PhilCorn...

structure and staffing pattern has yet to be approved.

Each center shall have an Advisory Committee that will define and formulate program plans, policies, and other relevant activities necessary for its timely and smooth inception. PhilCorn's Advisory Committee is composed of the BAR Director as Chairman, University of Southern Mindanao (USM) President as Co-Chairman, UP Mindanao Representative, DA-BAR-ERT Chairman, DA-Region XII RTD for Research, Farmer organization representative, Traders/Millers sector representative, Livestock sector representative, and the National Team Leader of the Corn RDE Network as members. PhilFruits' Advisory Committee is composed of the BAR Director as Chairman; BPI Director as

BAR Holds First of Seminar Series for 2001

The Bureau, through the Knowledge Products and Services Division and the Natural Sciences Research Institute, recently held the first sequel of the BAR Seminar Series on Analytical Techniques on Phylogeography and Population Genetics. It was held on 30 January 2001 at NSRI in UP Diliman, Quezon City. Dr. Michael Purugganan, assistant professor from North Carolina State University, served as resource speaker.

The seminar tackled an overview of phylogeography, a field of study on the different principles and factors affecting the processes of evolution and history of species. Processes of evolution (gene flow, dispersal, selection, drift) and the methods for predicting the distribution of diversity (conservation and germplasm exploitation) were likewise discussed.

Participants included staff and researchers from the Bureau of Plant Industry; Institute of Plant Breeding and National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology in UP Los Baños; National Sciences and Research Institute and Institute of Biology in UP Diliman, and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

This activity was held as part of BAR's program of upgrading the research capabilities of organizations in the Plant Genetic Resources Network, a group of research institutions concerned with the collection, characterization, storage, and research in plant biodiversity. (Laarni C. Anenias)

Co-Chairman; and the following as members---Director of PhilFruits, DA-BAR-ERT Chairman, DA-Region XI RTD for Research, farmer organization representative, corporate fruits growers representative, fruit processors/exporters representative, and National Team Leader of the Fruit RDE Network.

Through the establishment of PhilCorn and PhilFruits centers, viable and dynamic national corn and fruits research and development programs will strengthen and modernize the national corn and fruit industries into highly productive and profitable businesses. (Junelyn S. de la Rosa)

Web NEWS

UK Chromosomes High on Disease Genes-Scientists

<http://dailynews.yahoo.com/headline>

CGIAR Applauds Completion of Rice Genome Map

<http://www.cgiar.org>

Researchers Take a step Forward Towards Delaying Drought-Tolerant Rice

<http://www.icrisat.org/text/news/genes.html>

Celera Genomics Says Finishes Mouse Genome

<http://dailynews.yahoo.com/headline>

Diversity Prospecting: The Gene Revolution

<http://www.icrisat.org/text/research>

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS) invites scientists and researchers to apply and be one of the 10 successful candidates for the Visiting Research Fellowship Program at Okinawa. This fellowship pioneered researches on the conservation of global environment and optimum utilization of bio-resources in the tropics and subtropics. The researches should be based on four research themes, namely: development of techniques for environmental control by using plants and microorganisms specific to the tropics and subtropics; elucidation of the mechanism of heat tolerance of tropical and subtropical plants; identification and evaluation of salt-tolerant crops; and evaluation and utilization of useful traits of plant genetic resources in the tropics and subtropics. Successful candidates will undertake the research at the Okinawa Subtropical Station of JIRCAS in Ishigaki City, Okinawa Prefecture.

Deadline of application is on 15 March 2001. For more details, please address your inquiries to the International Relation Section, JIRCAS, 1-2 Ohwashi, Tsukuba, Ibaraki 305-8686 Japan. Applicants may also inquire through their website at <http://www.ss.jircas.affrc.go.jp/index.htm> or contact them at telephone numbers +81-298-386335 or fax +81-298-386337 or e-mail at irs@jircas.affrc.go.jp.

1st R&D ManCom Meeting Held

To discuss various issues on R&D that cut across different agencies of the Department of Agriculture, the 1st R&D Management Committee (RDMC) meeting was held on 30 January 2001 at the BAR-CERDAF Boardroom. Present were members of the RDMC namely, Director Eliseo R. Ponce (Bureau of Agricultural Research), Director Blo Umpar Adiong (Bureau of Plant Industry), Director Teodoro Abilay (Bureau of Animal Industry), Administrator Cecilia Gloria Soriano (Fiber Industry Development Authority), Administrator Eugenio Orpia (Cotton development Administration), Executive Director Leocadio Sebastian (Philippine Rice Research Institute), and Deputy Administrator Carlos B. Carpio (Philippine Coconut Authority). Attending for the Sugar Regulatory Administration, the National Tobacco Administration, and Bureau of Soils and Water Management were Angelina M. Lojo, Roberto R. Bonotan, Perlita L. Baula, and Jose Rondal, respectively. Dr. Ponce presided the meeting.

Organizational matters/concerns and future agenda of the committee were discussed during the meeting covering the briefing on S.O. 721, which provides for the creation of the RDMC. The DA R&D Management Committee (RDMC) was created for the following functions: 1) to assess the progress/status and identify problems and issues in the implementation of the research and development program among the R&D units of the department; 2) to determine appropriate actions/solutions that DA R&D agencies should undertake to address identified problems; and 3) to determine important concerns that need to be brought to the attention of the DA management.

Updates on the Agriculture Restructuring and Bureaucracy Plan (ABRP) were also taken up during the meeting. The ABRP aims to streamline and reorient the structure of the DA along functional lines to achieve efficiency, enhance coordination, improve access of farmer and fisherfolk to support services, strengthen its partnerships with local government units (LGUs), and reduce the cost of doing business in the agriculture and fisheries sector.

Dr. Ponce briefed the group on the different funding facility of BAR particularly the Institutional Development Program (IDP). He encouraged the members to avail of the BAR assistance program for corporate planning and the Institutional Development Grant (IDG) for strengthening the capabilities of R&D

centers. For the scholarship program, the group agreed on qualifying applicants exceeding the age limit for pursuing graduate studies provided that a proper justification is made on their educational capability to undertake such degree.

Also, Dr. Ponce presented to the group the draft of the memorandum order on the establishment of the DA RDE Complex. The proposed establishment shall serve as the nerve center for the Agriculture and Fisheries R&D Information System (AFRDIS). It shall house the office of the secretariat of the CERDAF, the liaison office of the National R&D networks, and the BAR. Likewise, it shall provide office space for all liaison offices of DA R&D institutions such as PhilRice, Philippine Carabao Center (PCC), and Bureau of Postharvest Research and Extension (BPRE), which are located outside of the Greater Manila Area. Lastly, it shall form the nucleus of the proposed DA Research, Development & Extension (RD/E) Complex, which covers the improvement of the existing DA facilities and lots occupied by the PCA, ATI, BPI, BAI, NFA, and BSWM. The center will be located at the DA property at the corner of Elliptical Road and Visayas Avenue, adjacent to ATI Building facing BSWM and BPI-NPAL, Diliman Quezon City. Members were requested to study the memo and make comments for discussion for the next RDMC meeting. (Joell H. Lales)

Chronicle

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BAR Sets Priorities for First 100 Days of New Administration

Following the appointment of new DA Secretary Leonardo Montemayor last 6 February, the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) has programmed its activities in line with the 11 priorities of the new administration deliverable within the next 100 days. Montemayor's agenda will be anchored on these points: accelerating the implementation of the major provisions of the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA) particularly research and development, extension and the Strategic Agriculture and Fisheries Development Zones (SAFDZ); addressing the smuggling activities in the agriculture sector; implementing the Fisheries Code; rural infrastructure; designing innovative credit and financing schemes; effectively managing water

resources; implementing the MAKAMASA Program; enhancing trade and fiscal incentives; developing Mindanao; recovering the coco levy funds; and people empowerment.

R&D Investments

BAR's first priority area is the acceleration of the implementation of major provisions in the AFMA, particularly in research, development and extension (RDE). As the department's RD/E coordinator, the Bureau will be in charge of three major investment projects: the launching of the Philippine Tropical Fruits Research Center (PhilFruits) and the Philippine Corn Research Center (PhilCorn); and groundbreaking of the R&D Information and Management Center (RDMIC). With an initial budget of P45 million each, PhilFruits and

PhilCorn will serve to develop viable and dynamic researches to modernize and strengthen the fruit and corn industries. The Centers shall be established in Bureau of Plant Industry Complex Bago Oshiro, Davao and USM, Kabacan, North Cotabato, respectively.

The RDIMC which has an initial budget of P35-M (first phase) will serve as the "power house" of the R&D community in Quezon City. It will be equipped with modern equipment to facilitate information exchange among R&D constituents.

New Partnerships

On April 2001, the annual meeting of Farmer/Fisherfolk Industry Advisory Committee (FIAC) will be held to improve farmer-industry participation

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New DA Sec: Peasant Champion



"Empowerment of the poor." This is the strategy that newly appointed Department of Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor hopes to adopt in order to eliminate poverty and attain food security.

Montemayor, a peasant leader, a member of various farmer organizations, and a former party-list congressman representative of ABA (also known as

Coalition of Farmers, Farm Workers and Fisherfolk Organizations), believes that it is only by restoring to the poor the capacity to take charge of their lives that they will have the chance to improve their place in society. This capacity may mean increased skills or the ability to have control over their resources. According to Montemayor, empowerment of the poor entails four points: resource reform; control over farming decisions; resource conservation; and provision of income-generating activities.

The most evident clamour for resource reform is agrarian reform, which for years now have been lobbied by farmers to be fully implemented. Most of the country's farmers and fisherfolk find livelihood in land and water resources, and having full access to these resources through grants and full ownership would provide them security. Resource conservation likewise plays a major role in the strategy. An awareness of both the

See Montemayor, Page 3

BAR Meets Assistance Program Grantees Target for 1st Quarter

Only two months into the year, BAR already have five and six grantees under its degree and non-degree scholarship programs, respectively. Based on a degree scholarship target of 20- grantee per annum, this translates a 100% accomplishment for the first quarter of 2001. On the other hand, the non-degree assistance program grantee target of one institution per year also exceeded its target, with two different institutions getting two grants each.

Under the Degree Scholarship Program, five recipients from the University of Eastern Philippines, Benguet State University, University of Southern Philippines, University of Southern Mindanao and the Fiber Industry Development Authority received a total of P430,743 in

See Assistance, page 3

Scientists and Policy Makers Convene for a 2-day Training on Biotech



Participants and resource speakers during the training

Scientists and researchers from the academe and policy makers gathered for a two-day training workshop on Managing and Communicating Issues in Biotechnology held at the Bulwagang Panday Karunungan, PCARRD, Los Baños, Laguna on 19-20 February 2001. The training workshop served as a venue for the review and discussion of current issues related to biotechnology, specifically on the scientific and technical aspects of environmental safety, food safety, socio-economic and public acceptance, and regulatory processes. Likewise, a formalized training on the techniques for communicating biotechnology issues among different stakeholders was also provided.

The Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD), the Biotechnology Information Center (BIC) of SEAMEO SEARCA, and the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA) jointly sponsored the activity.

The first day was devoted to the discussion of the various issues on biotechnology while the second day was focused on discussing elements of communicating issues of high concerns and exercises applying the techniques for communicating biotech issues. Experts from the Monsanto Company (Dr. P.S. Teng, Dr. G. Fuller, N.D. Hoang); the International Rice Research Institute (Dr. W. G. Padolina); the ISAAA Southeast Asia (Dr. M. Escaler); the University of the Philippines at Los Baños- Institute of Plant Breeding (Dr. E.C. Fernandez, Dr. D.A. Ramirez); and the National Committee for Biosafety of the Philippines (Atty. J.M. Ochave) served as speakers for the event.

Participating in the activity were scientists and researchers from the UPLB Science Community, government agencies (DA, DA-BAR, DOST-BFAD), regional members of the Institute of Biosafety Committee (IBC), members of NCBP, and scientists/researchers from other universities conducting researches or studies in biotechnology. (Rita T. dela Cruz)

Operational Plans of PhilFruits Established

A month after Administrative Order No.4 was formally issued to establish the Philippine Tropical Fruits Research Center (PhilFruits), several moves have been undertaken to ensure the smooth operationalization of the project.

Proponents of the project convened to determine the implementation and operational plans of the P45-M funded (initial budget) research Center to be located at the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) Complex in Bago Oshiro-Davao City. The Center is expected to boost the Philippine tropical fruits' and fruit-based products' international marketability.

Among the issues discussed during the meeting include the initial site development plan of PhilFruits; renovation of the existing (BPI) administrative building; construction of a new road network; development of an experimental area; and procurement of new research facilities for PhilFruits.

The corresponding budget

allocation for these activities was also aired during the meeting.

Dr. Santiago Obien, Institutional Development Specialist of the BAR-Institutional Development Division, pointed out that, the Information Technology Communication library and the administrative building should be the first priority for construction. According to Obien, an initial budget of P10 million from the Institutional Development Grant (IDG) should be allocated for the proposed establishment of these buildings.

Members of the Regional External Review Team (RERT) suggested that the proposed IT Communication library building be constructed beside the existing DA-Southern Mindanao Integrated Agricultural Research Center (SMIARC) to insure efficient collaboration as well as exchange of R&D information.

It was also agreed during the meeting that proponents of the project should conduct consultation meetings

Priorities...

in the formulation and implementation of RDE programs in agriculture and fisheries.

Coinciding with this activity, BAR and Winrock International will formally launch the Pinoy Farmer Business Development Project. The project will promote sustained and market-driven support services to rural-based organizations to empower farmers to develop competitive and profitable businesses using communication technology. This P18.75-M project will be implemented until 2003 and will have three major elements: Market Aggression/Marketing Linkage; Information Technology Support Systems Development and Application; and Participatory R&D Approach.

Improving the quality of RDE governance

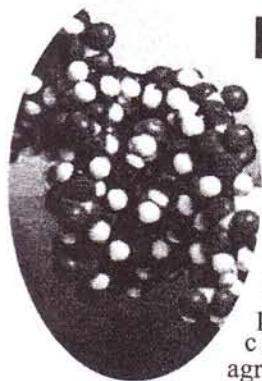
Under this major role of BAR as mandated in the AFMA, four major activities are set for implementation within 100 days: Approval of National Integrated RDE Agenda and Programs (NIRDEAPs), Senior Science Advisory Committee (SSAC) meeting, 2nd Council for Extension, Research and Development in Agriculture and Fisheries (CERDAF) meeting, and the deployment of the Project Formulation Team for the R&D Program in Muslim Mindanao. Four networks will present their NIRDEAPs for review and approval during the 2nd CERDAF meeting this April. BAR, in cooperation with the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) will facilitate the event. As of the 1st meeting held November last year, 16 NIRDEAPs have already been approved by CERDAF for implementation. The NIRDEAPs embody the integrated thrusts and directions for A/F RDE and contains priority programs for a five-year implementation period. As provided in AFMA, members of the NaRDSAF and the National Extension System for Agriculture and Fisheries (NESAF) drafted the NIRDEAPs with inputs from the private/industry sector.

Prior to the CERDAF meeting,
See Priorities, Page 3

every second Tuesday of the month starting 6 March 2001 for the finalization of the project components' work program.

On the other hand, BPI, being the lead agency in the establishment of PhilFruits, shall take the responsibility in creating a team for infrastructure development.

The proponents of the study were reminded that provincial fruit research centers based in Maridagao, Tawi-tawi, Sulu and Guimaras may be tapped and be involved in the establishment of PhilFruits. (Mary Charlotte O. Fresco)



BAR Sponsors Cluster II Symposium on Biotech

To further promote the potential of microorganisms in solving the problems and challenges in agriculture, industry and the environment, the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) co-sponsored the Cluster II Symposium on the Use of Novel Microbial Biotechnology Approaches for Agriculture, Industry and Environment. The Philippine Society for Microbiology (PSM) organized the symposium, held at the Bureau of Soils and Water Management Convention Hall, Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

The symposium featured six paper presentations from scientists from the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), DA-BAR, UP Diliman and Manila Water Company, Inc. Papers presented during this one-day activity include:

- *Microbial Tools in Gene Discovery for Crop Biotechnology* (Dr. John P. Bennett, senior molecular biologist, IRRI);

- *Rice-rhizobial Interactions: Extent of Genetic Makeup of Rice for Forming Symbiosis* (Dr. Pallavolu M. Reddy, affiliate scientist, IRRI);
- *Biotechnology Initiatives at the Department of Agriculture* (Dr. Saturnina C. Halos) senior project development Adviser, DA-BAR);
- *Novel Biotechnology Approaches for Treatment of Industrial Wastes* (Dr. Analiza P. Rolon, assistant professor, UP Diliman);
- *Combining Molecular and Engineering Tools in Studying Wastewater Treatment Systems* (Dr. Ma. Fiorella DLR. Fabella, Wastewater Project Development manager, Manila Water Co. Inc.); and
- *Novel Developments in Fluorescence Microscopy: Its Applications in Plants, Animal and Microbe Research* (Dr. Cynthia P. Saloma, assistant professor, UP Diliman).

Participants included scientists and researchers from different Philippine-based research institutes (local and international), members and staff of PSM, and students and instructors from universities. (Rita T. dela Cruz)

Montemayor...

consequences of negligent resource management and the benefits of environment-friendly farming practices should be promoted to make our farmers, fisherfolk and industry members more responsible.

With regard to the last two aspects of empowerment, farmers should be given the chance to fully participate and control the institutions in-charge of agriculture. This would entail engaging in micro-finance and a shift from chemical to sustainable agriculture.

Author of Reforms

Montemayor had his share of the limelight by championing various causes of farmers and pushing for various reforms in agriculture.

In March of last year, Montemayor asked the senate to immediately act on the Safeguards Measure Act (House Bill No. 7613), which he authored together with Negros Oriental Rep. Hermينو Teves and Quezon Rep. Marcial Punzalan, to protect local industries such as chicken and steel from import surges.

The Act provides increased tariffs and temporary ban on foreign agricultural products that enter the country in volumes or amounts that cause or may cause harm to the plight of local industries.

At present, the new DA Secretary has vowed to go after smugglers of agricultural products. This will be done through the creation of the Inter-Agency Anti-Smuggling Task Force that will directly prosecute suspected smugglers of products such as rice, sugar and chicken parts. This anti-smuggling program is part of his 11-point agenda for the first 100 days of his term. His other priorities are: accelerated implementation of AFMA, particularly research and development, extension and the Strategic Agriculture and Fisheries Development Zones; implementation of the Fisheries Code; Rural Infrastructure; Designing of Innovative Credit and Financing Schemes; Agrikulturang MakaMASA Programs; Enhanced Trade and Fiscal Incentives; Mindanao Development Programs; Coco Levy Funds; and People Empowerment. (Thea Kristina M. Pabuayon)

(Sources: Philippine Daily Inquirer and The Philippine Star)

Priorities...

BAR will facilitate the first SSAC Meeting for 2001. As an advisory body, the SSAC will review all RDE programs prior to endorsement to the CERDAF. To further develop the agriculture and fisheries industry in Muslim Mindanao, a project formulation team composed of experts from UPLB, Mindanao State University, and BPI will be deployed in Muslim Mindanao areas covering Region 9, Region 12, and ARMM, to conduct an assessment of possible project collaborations. BAR shall lead in the preparation of briefing materials and handouts, and shall consolidate the inter-agency report to be submitted in May.

Other activities include the launching of the Manual on Administrative and Fiscal Management, and the Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation of On-going Projects in May and April 2001, respectively. (Thea Kristina M. Pabuayon)

Assistance...

thesis/dissertation allowance. All grantees are enrolled at either UP Diliman or UP Los Baños pursuing Masteral (two) and Doctorate (three) degrees in agriculture and fisheries related courses. Three non-degree grantees from DA-RFU XI, Bureau of Plant Industry, and Central Luzon State University will be supported to attend international conferences in Vietnam and Israel. The remaining three grantees from DA-BAR, UP Diliman Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, and De La Salle University will be supported to act as resource persons to a conference in Iloilo.

The Scholarship program was developed by the DA-BAR to create a pool of highly competent researchers and technical staff significant to make the R&D system effective and efficient. The program gives financial support as tuition fees, maintenance allowance, book and supplies allowance, thesis dissertation allowance, and retention salary to R&D employees pursuing studies in crop science, animal science, veterinary medicine, fisheries, social science, farm resources, and computer science.

Meanwhile, the Non-degree Assistance Program provides funding support for participation of interested R&D personnel to both local and international short-term trainings, conferences, symposia and seminars. The support covers the registration fee and accommodation expenses for local trainings, and registration fee or round trip economy class airfare for international seminars. BAR, however, encourages counterpart funding support from the mother agency and sponsoring agencies. (Thea Kristina M. Pabuayon)

ISNAR Hosts 2nd CGIAR-CDMT Joint Retreat

BAR Director Eliseo R. Ponce represented the Southern Countries to the second joint meeting of the Change Design and Management Team (CDMT) and the Steering Group (SG) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) at the ISNAR headquarters in The Hague, Netherlands on 6-7 February 2001.

The 2nd joint meeting of the CDMT and the SG is part of the series of meetings held to discuss and formulate proposed changes to revitalize the whole CGIAR system. Discussion during the plenary sessions was based on the "Issues Paper" that was produced by the CDMT and presented by CDMT Chair Margaret Catley-Carlson. Both groups agreed that adopting a programmatic approach, seeking long-term financing, changing the structure of the system, improving governance procedures and developing a common communication strategy are the major elements that could pave the way to a new revitalized CGIAR.

CGIAR Chair Dr. Ian Johnson identified five major points during the synthesis of the two-day retreat. First was the large consensus on the concept of "Global Challenge Programs" (GCPs). GCPs will organize and coordinate research efforts that will focus on identified developmental issues. It was also agreed that each GCP effort could undertake discrete fund raising that will be autonomous but linked to the CGIAR resource mobilization processes.

Another important point of consensus was the CDMT recommendation that Centers could benefit from having common services, including the management of the proposed GCPs. The SG shared CDMT's view that a programmatic approach for the CG system will naturally create alliances among Centers. The CDMT was tasked to develop principles, criteria, and benchmark for clusters.

Another major issue was that the introduction of a programmatic approach would need better decision-making at all levels. It was recommended that the CGIAR create an executive body that will have the authority to follow-up on decisions, recommendations and act on behalf of the CGIAR between annual meetings. The CGIAR chair will head the executive body. The SG also supported CDMT's suggestion to transform the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

RDMC Special Meeting Held

The R&D Management Committee (RDMC) held a special meeting on 15 February 2001 at the BAR CERDAF Boardroom.

Prospective programs/projects of the different R&D agencies were identified and prioritized during the meeting for inclusion in the Secretary's first 100 days agenda. The following projects/initiatives were prioritized for implementation:

- launching of the National Tropical R&D Fruits Center in Davao (BPI);
- launching of the National Plant Genetic Resource Center for Food and Agriculture (BPI);
- approval of the National Extension Program by the CERDAF (ATI);
- launching of the National Control of Sura (BAI);

into a higher-level of scientific advisory body that will function as a true research council. The TAC will provide the best available scientific advice, ensuring that science remains in sync with developmental objectives and current concerns such as ethics and biosafety.

The next point discussed was on changing the public persona of the system. Most of the participants recognized that any entity accepting financial contributions would need a legal persona. Since the system has few legally constituted non-profit organizations, it was agreed that this matter be taken up further in the next meetings.

As to branding, the SG recognized that the name Future Harvest did not resonate well with all members of the CGIAR. Both groups agreed on the need to combine the CGIAR and the Future Harvest communication functions. However, it was noted that Centers must continue developing their own communication strategies for national and regional focus and harmonizing their communication outputs.

Finally, the participants discussed the issue of building commitment for an agreed change scenario among CGIAR stakeholders. To afford a smooth change process, the SG reminded the CDMT that the proposed building blocks of the change process be communicated to all the stakeholders so that closure on the change process can be reached at the Medium Term Meeting in Durban, South Africa. (*Junelyn S. de la Rosa*)

- expansion and strengthening of diagnostic laboratories all over the country (BAI);
- implementation of the National Water Challenge in Agriculture (BSWM);
- rehabilitation and modernization of post-harvest facilities in Mindanao (BPPE);
- implementation of technology capable of extracting water from the air (BPPE);
- establishment of tram lines to ease transport of agricultural produce from farm to market (BPPE); and
- establishment of a mozzarella pilot plant in Nueva Ecija (PCC).

BAR Director Eliseo R. Ponce, designated coordinator for R&D presented the framework for organizing R&D activities for the year. The framework focuses on the following themes: 1) quality of governance; 2) accountability; 3) partnership arrangements; 4) knowledge management; 5) quality of science; and 6) focus programs.

Ponce also cited the need to review and refocus on priority projects/programs in order to clearly define its directions in enhancing R&D.

The 2nd RDMC meeting is scheduled on 5-6 March 2001 in Batac, Ilocos Norte. (*Joell H. Lales*)

Chronicle

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