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BAR touches base with regional partners

BAR Director Nick Eleazar (second from right) encourages farmer cooperators during his visit to the Ilocos region. Also in the picture is Mr. Amador Macabeo (right), BAR's coordinator for Regions I and II.

Establish linkages, this was the advice of BAR Dir. Nicomedes P. Eleazar to farmer cooperators during his visit to the Ilocos Region on March 3 to 5. The director told his audience to "organize farmer groups and link with NGOs" for financing farm activities and technology commercialization so that their generated efforts could be sustained. The director, along with Mr. Joell Lales, BAR senior executive assistant and Mr. Amador Macabeo, coordinator for Regions I and II, visited the Community-Based Participatory Action Research (CPAR) Projects in Urdaneta City, Pangasinan that showcase diversified farming systems for vegetables and livestock and in Caba, La Union which feature the expanded corn technology showcase.

Likewise, BAR technical staff met with DA-RFU Regional Executive Dir. Reinerio Belarmino, BFAR Regional Dir. Nestor Domenden, BFAR Regional Technical Dir. Benjamin Ronduen, BFAR RFRDC Manager Segundina Rosario Gaerlan, and RIARC Manager Edmundo Quinit. The meeting stressed the major focus of the R&D Bureau on technology commercialization and resource mobilization that are in support of Goals 1&2 of the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) which call attention to the expansion of productive agribusiness lands and reduction in the prices of wage goods.

Expressing support to DA BAR's 8-point strategy, the regional officials explained that the Region has already identified priority commodity technologies such as vegetables (ingredient of the local dish, *pinakbet*), bangus, and seaweeds as among others which are ready for commercialization.

Eleazar expressed optimism for eventual success on his recent visit, lauding the efforts of the Region in modernizing the agriculture and fisheries sectors, at the same time thanking them for their support to the Bureau's R&D programs.

The Palayamanan Farmers' Congress

On March 4, the Palayamanan's Farmers' Congress welcomed Director Eleazar as its guest speaker in the closing ceremonies held at the PhilRice Auditorium, Batac, Ilocos Norte. During the ceremony, Eleazar persuaded farmer-participants to become fellow disseminators of specific technologies through the Palayamanan and Palayaralan programs of PhilRice and BAR. He challenged the participants to "sow the seeds of knowledge they gained from the Program." In this way, the program gains sustainability and, at the same time, empowers the farmers as agents of change themselves. *(Angela E. Obnial)*

IN THIS ISSUE

EDITORIAL

The color of March

by Victoriano B. Guiam

March 2005 is associated with the celebration of Easter. For Christians, the Resurrection is the high noon of the faith for it is synonymous to rebirth, a triumph over death. This event also symbolizes a new beginning or an entry into a better order of things.

In many ways, BAR finds itself in new beginnings. We are now months away from changes in leadership at BAR and the DA. But, having made the initial adjustments, many of BAR's present activities, and most of the articles for this issue of the BC, focus on new initiatives.

From the Director down to its administrative staff, BAR has been busy laying down the groundwork for various endeavors. These count consultations with the clientele in the regions on the appropriateness of R&D priorities, a new proposal for external funding, a novel program for farm waste management, and the return of a technology commercialization program in a more aggressive mode.

We also have the outlines of a national plan to address nutritional concerns and the promise of emerging technologies on hybrid rice and pigeonpea. Finally, we have fresh faces at BAR to complete our renewal.

March also marks the beginning of summer. The green of the grass is giving way to the brown of dry fiber. It is the time to recharge weakening spirits; it's the time to celebrate life; it's time to be young again.

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In what must be a first, BAR is the featured agency every morning at 4-5 a.m. for five days from 28 March to 1 April in the DA's radio program, "Maunlad na Agrikultura" over DZRH AM radio. The DA leadership decided that to improve the image of the department, it must also introduce its various units to the public. And along with this chance of getting better known by the clientele, has come the offer to use the radio program as a medium for the dissemination of new technology and information. This opens up even new possibilities for BAR.

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In agriculture, it is possible to rejuvenate old plants. Grafting of mature trees with younger parts and cutting off of the aging branches enables one to form a more juvenile and robust specimen.

Grasses are known survivors of fire, floods, drought, and trampling and foraging by livestock. Also among their traits is what's known as "ratooning". If you cut off the exposed top of a grass, their lower parts are able to generate new plants. With sugarcane and rice, which are grasses, a second crop can be produced using the cut lower parts of the previous crop. A farmer simply lets the shoots of the cut plants grow and in a few weeks a new sugarcane or rice field appears.

The sea cucumber is one odd ball. It has a notable power of self-mutilation as a defense mechanism. To escape pursuing predators, this slow moving marine animal can expel the exterior part of its viscera through a violent muscular contraction that can break the wall of the body. The edible ejecta draw the attention of the pursuer and this allows the escape of the sea cucumber. The lost parts regenerate rapidly and the animal is whole once more.

The bee colony's life revolves around its queen. If the queen is artificially separated from the colony, or if the queen dies, the workers react to the loss by making special queen cells around some of the younger larvae. These larvae are fed entirely on royal jelly until they pupate. Once the replacement queen is produced and mated by male drones, life returns to normal in the colony. ■

BAR gains headway in agri & fisheries waste mgt and utilization drive

The Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) has established the groundwork for the implementation of its own initiative on agriculture and fisheries waste management and utilization as a banner program to heighten organic fertilizer production and farmers' income.

In the effort to facilitate the utilization of indigenous resources and agricultural wastes to produce high value crops, the BAR, in collaboration with the National Agriculture and Fisheries Council (NAFC) organized national and regional project management teams.

The teams are set to collaborate with the regional field units (RFUs) of the Department of

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Erratum

We apologize for the misspelled name in the article, *BAR reorganizes for efficiency,* which came out in the January issue. "Aguillon" should have been **Agillon**.

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BAR, UNDP link up to preserve Philippine endemic crops

Recent advances in agricultural technology and practices have afforded farmers with adequate protection for their crops from vicious attacks by pests and diseases. However, farmers are helpless even with the help of modern science in the fight against the destruction poised by rapid urbanization, intensive farming and other developments brought by the need to maximize the utilization of land by an ever-growing population.

The Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR), with the assistance and support of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Medium-Sized Grant Programme of which the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the executing agency, has initiated the development of an agrobiodiversity project to address the threats to the sustainable utilization and conservation of certain plant species valuable to Philippine agriculture.

In a meeting held on 21 February 2005 at the Research and Development Management Information Center, BAR officials discussed with a UNDP representative the significance of the project and the details of the proposal to be submitted to GEF for funding.

The project, "Sustainable Conservation and Utilization of Philippine Indigenous Crops and Wild Relatives", shall focus on the conservation of significant crops endemic to the Philippines. The crops included wild banana species (e.g,. *Musa acuminata*, *M. balbisiana* and *M. paradisiaca*), wild relatives of abaca, rootcrops such as yam and taro, and indigenous vegetables. These crops were selected not just for their commercial value but also for their importance in broadening the genetic base of globally important agricultural crops.

Banana, for example, is an important dollar-earning export crop. The Philippines has the biggest hectarage of banana plantations (about 339,196 hectares) in the Asian region, 80% of which are owned by small farmers. In terms of trade, the country is the fifth largest exporter of banana with 1.1 million metric tons total export yearly. It is the only Asian country among the world's top 10 banana suppliers and dominates the Japanese market.

Recognized as one of the world's centers of animal and plant biodiversity, the Philippines ranked fourth in terms of species diversity and endemism. Of the total 39,100 identified species of flora and fauna in the country, 67% are endemic or are found only in the country. It is believed that many of the wild ancestors of today's cultivated banana along with abaca, more popularly known in the international market as Manila hemp, are indigenous to the country.

Through a grant in the form of a Project Development Facility (PDF), BAR started a project preparation study of the conservation program to identify project sites and partner agencies in November 2003. After the February meeting, the stage is now set for the review by the DENR-based National GEF Focal Person.

In-situ and on-farm conservation programs shall be used in preserving the biodiversity of the selected crops in the project regions of Regions 1, 3, 5, 7, 12 and the Cordillera Administrative Region. The identified municipalities are Batac, Ilocos Norte and San Gabriel, La Union for indigenous vegetable conservation; Adams, Ilocos Norte and Buenavista, Quezon for bananas; Tigaon, Camarines Sur and Lake Sebu, South Cotabato for abaca; Kapangan, Benguet and Corella, Bohol for yam; and Sablan, Benguet and Tabaco, Albay for taro. *(Rudyard R. Roxas)*

NEWS

UNDP mulls new BAR agro bio-diversity project

Officials of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) met on the prospects of an agriculture biodiversity conservation project on 21 February 2005 at the RDMIC Conference Room. Central to this, an assessment of BAR's capability was needed for the funding agency, Global Environment Facility (GEF), to approve the medium-sized project proposal on agro biodiversity.

In 1993, BAR availed of a Project Development Facility – Block A (PDF-A) assistance from UNDP-GEF on "Sustainable Conservation and Utilization of Philippine Indigenous Crops and Wild Relatives" (PHI/03/G41). This earlier project enabled BAR to develop a medium-sized proposal that aims to integrate biodiversity conservation in agricultural production systems across the Philippines. Targeting factors affecting "on-farm" conservation of traditional varieties and the conservation of wild relatives in natural ecosystems, the results of the PDF-A serve as the "base for the formulation of national policy and systems development for *in-situ* conservation of agro biodiversity and land use planning."

The resulting project highlights the importance of biodiversity and its role in generating food security and developing efforts on food production in agriculture in the country.

The UNDP Philippines' programme officer, Ms. Clarisa Arida, and PDF-A national consultant, Dr. Liwayway Engle (also of the Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center), attended the meeting along with officers of BAR's Project Development Division, Dr. Amy Kagaoan, Ms. Digna Sandoval, and Ms. Salve Ritual and IRU head, Mr. Vic Guiam. BAR Dir. Nick Eleazar presided over the meeting. The UNDP serves as the overall executing agency of GEF in the Philippines. An indication of its satisfaction on BAR's readiness to take on the medium-sized project is a meeting with the GEF Regional Coordination Unit representative in April that it has scheuled.*(Angela E. Obnial)*

NEWS

Central Luzon consulted on R&D priorities

In support to Department of Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap's twin goals for the agriculture sector, which are a)developing idle lands for agribusiness; and b) reducing prices in the market, the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) through its Program Development Division, conducted a consultation on commodity priorities for R&D with the Regional Field Unit III in Pampanga on 17-18 March 2005. This is the first of a series of consultations that will be held throughout the country.

This served as the occasion to discuss the DA goals, the Regional Integrated Research, Development and Extension Agenda Program (RIRDEAP), the region's priority commodities in agriculture and fisheries, and problems in the region that can be solved through R&D. Other problems relevant to R&D that exist in the region were also identified.

BAR employed the help of technical experts in different fields in the consultation. These were: Dr. Teodoro Abilay for livestock, Dr. Roberto Rañola for economics, Dr. Louie Divinagracia for agribusiness, and Dr. Rey Velasco for crops. Dr. Catalino dela Cruz, a member of BAR's Technical Advisory Group, and PDD Head Dr. Carmencita Kagaoan were the event's experts on fisheries. On the part of the region, Regional Integrated Agricultural Research Center Manager Dr. Orlino Mercado, Regional Technical Director for Research Eduardo Gonzales, Regional Fisheries Research Development Center Manager Felix Terrado, and BFAR Regional Office III Assistant Director Lilian Garcia, attended the event.

During the visit, the experts visited Mr. Rustico Limpin, agribusiness winner and 2003 Gawad Saka Special Citation awardee for establishing the Pampanga Tilapia Seed Producers Association.

Mang Boy, as Mr. Limpin is fondly called, helped the aquaculture industry in Pampanga recover from the slump brought about by the Mt. Pinatubo eruption through innovations he applied to his own farm. These innovations eventually proved financially rewarding as well. The DA website describes his major technology achievement as "a multi-purpose single engine, diesel-powered contraption that can aerate 220-tonner concrete conditioning tanks, generate 150w electric power, and even, drive a 4" diameter deep well centrifugal water pump." He has also adopted, among other tools and small machines, technologies that are cost-efficient or promoted economy in the day-to-day good hatchery management.

BAR consultations with Regions 1 to XIII, including ARMM and CAR are also being scheduled. *(Ma. Lizbeth J. Baroña)*

Source:
On Gawad Saka Awardee: Some information retrieved from http://www.da.gov.ph/gawad_saka/Gawad2003/awardee_03c.htm, March 15, 2005

BAR launches Nat'l Technology Commercialization Program

Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) Dir. Nicomedes P. Eleazar recently started the implementation of the National Technology Commercialization Program (NTCP) that is envisioned to boost the productivity and profitability of agriculture and fisheries.

The thrust of the two-year program is to expedite the utilization of mature technologies in the farmers' fields to augment their income and transform agriculture into a market-driven sector. Mature technologies refer to those innovations which were assessed as being suitable to the needs of the farmers and ready for their adoption.

In a meeting with technology commercialization expert Dr. Bessie Burgos of the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD), Director Eleazar discussed the two-year workplan (CY 2005-2007) of the NTCP. The workplan includes program strategies and guidelines, coordination with implementing and collaborating agencies, organizational management, and the program's methodical implementation. He tapped the expertise of Dr. Bessie Burgos for technical assistance and training for the BAR staff and initially compose the NTCP team.

The said team, headed by Dr. Marlowe Aquino, subsequently met to discuss the significant details in the program's implementation such as the identification of initial activities and pool of experts who shall be tapped for technical assistance. The team also came up with an organized method to execute the said program. They are set to conduct field visits to several regions in the country in the first week of April followed by consolidation and analysis of

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JICA opens grant assistance for grassroot projects

Pursuant to its goal of meeting the diverse needs of developing countries, the Government of Japan has recently announced the availability of the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Project (GAGP) which aims to support small-scale projects directly benefiting the grassroots level while at the same time contributing to the socio-economic development of the Philippines.

GAGP started in 1989 and since then was able to fund 294 small-scale grassroots projects amounting to approximately Php 1 to 4 million. These projects were implemented by non-government organizations (NGOs), local government units (LGUs), and other non-profit organizations.

Every year, GAGP receives an average of 350 proposals but only 20-30 projects qualify. In 2002, GAGP funded 76 projects, which is three times over its previous yearly quota.

The project areas supported by GAGP include: poverty alleviation and mitigation disparities (agriculture and rural development and livelihood assistance for the poor), meeting basic human needs (health and medicinal care and potable water), social welfare (welfare and empowerment of marginal sectors i.e., children, elderly, indigenous people, women, persons with disabilities, etc.), basic education and human resource development (school building in poor areas and schools with poor educational environment and training center building for human resources development community), environmental protection/disaster relief (community-based resource management and disaster relief), and peace building and rehabilitation of conflict-affected areas (basic infrastructure, social integration support, protection of victims and marginal sector, and support for internally displaced persons).

Project proposals are selected using the five major criteria: 1) capability of the proponent in terms of track record, financial management capacity, implementation capability, and monitoring system; 2) necessity, urgency, appropriateness, feasibility, impact and sustainability of the proposed project; 3) within priority/ target areas of the Embassy; 4) with high opportunity for public relations; and 5) appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of requested amount.

Proponents must take into consideration that in selecting projects for funding, the Government of Japan places high priority on the impact and sustainability of each project thus, organizations must convince the Embassy that they are capable of soundly managing the proposed projects. Providing a detailed description of the past achievements of the proponent organization, complete detail on how the proposed project will be implemented, and a comprehensive implementation scheme or plan should be submitted along with the market study or profit-cost analysis. *(Rita T. dela Cruz)*

For more information visit http://www.ph.emb-japan.go.jp/index_J.html. The application forms and GAGP guidelines can also be downloaded from this site.

NEWS

New RP plan of action for nutrition unveiled

Improvement of the quality of life Filipinos through better nutrition is the ultimate goal of the draft Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition, 2005-2010, unveiled at the just concluded Golden Anniversary and Annual Convention of the Nutritionist-Dietitians' Association of the Philippines (NDAP).

In presenting the draft PPAN, Executive Director Elsa M. Bayani of the National Nutrition Council (NNC) welcomed comments and suggestions that will help refine the program designed to address the nagging nutritional problems.

Ms. Bayani stressed that the consequences of malnutrition affects not only the survival and growth of young children, but also their capacity to be economically productive, competitive and socially active in adulthood.

Malnutrition, she added also causes deepening strain in the already scarce financial sources of poor families and magnifies the scope of limited government expenditures for delivery of basic services, including nutrition and health education.

The PPAN sets out a number of guiding principles to achieve specific objectives, like reduction in the prevalence of low birthweight, iron deficiency anemia among infants and pregnant women, Vitamin A deficiency disorders among lactating women and children, and iodine deficiency disorders among school children and women or reproductive age.

"Food is key to survival and critical for physical and mental development" is the first principle in the draft Plan of Action for Nutrition. Efforts to improve quality of life should start at improving access to food, it says.

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FEATURE

'Super Rice': hybrid rice technology flexes its muscles

by Ma. Lizbeth J. Baroña

It's not just about *sounding* optimistic that the greatest struggle of man – fighting poverty - is about to get a break. It is about being hopeful that finally, a scientific breakthrough that could get us to near attenuating, if not altogether eliminating, hunger is already being field-tested in the part of the world where it all begun: China. A new research in hybrid rice technology –the super rice varieties- is showing promising results, making its proponents hopeful on the prospect of achieving greater potentials of the hybrid rice.

The hybrid promise

The hybrid rice technology was developed in China in 1974. It will be almost three decades later that the Filipino farmer, albeit tentatively, started to make use of the technology.

Today, about 50% of China's total rice area produces hybrid rice. China's hybrid program was able to increase average rice production from 3.5 to 6.2 tons/ha. More importantly, it was able to feed more than 1 billion of its people.

Our Government, as attested by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's staunch support for the commercialization of the hybrid rice technology, is excited with the implications of the high-yielding hybrid rice. It did not take long for the hybrid rice technology to make good on its promise: farmers who took part in the Hybrid Rice Commercialization Program(HRCP) reported having high-yields that they could only imagine before they were introduced to the hybrid variety.

The country's Cagayan Valley has already 3,500 of its farmers planting hybrid rice, boasting an average yield of 6.15 ton/ha using hybrid rice varieties. From the south, the Philippine Rice Reseach Institute reported that a farmer, Pedro Gonzales, who was a cooperator in the HRCP-Zamboanga City, harvested 11.75 tons/ha using a locally-bred hybrid rice, the *Mestizo* rice, during the wet season of 2002. It was the biggest harvest Mr. Gonzales had since becoming a farmer in 1968. It was also a record harvest.

Although the average yield of the hybrid rice variety is 6-7 tons/ha, way lower than the record yield from Zamboanga City, the hybrid rice's average harvest is still 15-20% greater than that from using best bred varieties.

And it can get better. At least that's how the person who started it all, Chinese professor Yuan Longpin, dubbed "Father of Hybrid Rice", feels about his new hybrid rice research.

Professor Yuan is leading a study that seeks to develop "super hybrid rice" varieties. The "super rice" research, which is on its second phase, hopes to develop varieties that would increase yield by a further 10%. This is achieved by integrating varieties that have erect-leaf canopy for sufficient sunlight, lower panicle position that is about 40-60 cm above the ground for increased lodging resistance, and bigger panicles that can accommodate more grains, with *javanica* –the variety resulting from matching of different species involving *indica* and *japonica*. A trial field in Hunan province generated a yield of 12 tons/ha.

The commercialization of super hybrid rice is expected to feed 75 million more mouths if planted to 13 million hectares.

Another hybrid rice coup?

Whether the development of the "super rice" would finally help us turn the corner in our race to feed the world against depleting resources remains to be seen. But what is keeping Professor Yuan and the researchers hopeful are the test results. The initial results point to the possibility of considerably decreasing hunger incidence, especially in the country that has to feed billions, like China, and eventually throughout Asia where the majority of the world' rice-eating population are located.

Sources:

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2. *"Hybrid Rice for Food Security" retrieved from http://www.fao.org/rice2004/en/f-sheet/factsheet6.pdf on March 11, 2005*
3. *"Yuan LongPing: Father of Hybrid Rice", retrieved from http://dna.kps.ku.ac.th/golden/YuanLongping.html on March 10, 2005*
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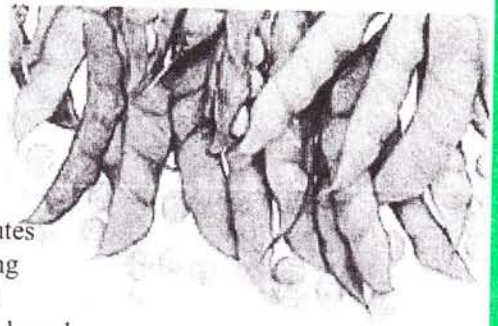
What's in a pigeonpea?



FEATURE

by Rita T. dela Cruz

Pigeonpea (*Cajanus cajan*) is a nutritionally important crop. Not only does it contain high levels of Vitamin B and protein but, more importantly, amino acids such as methionine, lysine, and tryptophan. If combined with cereals, pigeonpeas make a well-balanced human food.

Pigeonpea originated in India accounting for about 82% of its world production. Other producers are Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. People often use the seeds whole, de-hulled, or as flour. In the Caribbean region, people eat the seed as the popular green (immature) pea, but most is processed into *dahl* (a thick Indian stew made from pulses, onions, and spices). Meanwhile, the plant's woody stems are use as firewood, thatch, and fencing. The leaves are an important source of organic matter and nitrogen, adding as much as 40 kg per hectare to the soil.

In the Philippines, pigeonpeas are used both as food crop and as forage/cover crop. Often, these are grown as intercrops with other row crops such as corn and sorghum and grows well as hedge crop which may be found as such along the bunds of rice fields. Most of its varieties are perennial and can last 3-5 years with seed yield decreasing considerably after the first two years. But like other perennial crops, it continues to grow and protect the soil even after the intercrops have been harvested. Pigeonpeas are resistant to drought and is very suitable for small farms.

What's new with the pea?

Working towards better production and sustainability as a source of food, scientists from the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) are continuously finding ways to improve on the pigeonpea's attributes particularly suiting it for developing countries. ICRISAT is a non-profit international research organization based in India that is devoted to science-based agricultural development. It is one of the 15 international agricultural research centers under the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

One among its recent achievements on pigeonpea is the development of the first hybrid pigeonpea variety. This was recently launched for commercialization along with its seed production technology. The scientists develop short duration (100-150 days to maturity) and short-statured pigeonpea varieties that in effect greatly broadened the adaptation of pigeonpea to new production environments. With this development, productivity per unit area and time growth of pigeonpea improved significantly. With the launching of the hybrid seed production technology, both private and public sectors in India have been able to release hybrid cultivars.

Through ICRISAT's partnership with universities, women's groups and national programs, the Institute has shared pigeonpea germplasm and technology with farmers in Southern and Eastern Africa and other parts of Asia like the Philippines. Varieties of pigeonpea suited to specific production systems have also been identified.

The pigeonpea hybrid seed production technology

ICRISAT developed a technology to produce cytoplasmic male-sterility (CMS) based hybrid pigeonpea by crossing a wild relative of pigeonpea (*Cajanus cajanifolius*) with that of the cultivated variety. Through this technology, plant breeders can now produce stable hybrids for commercialization, which can almost double productivity to about 3 tons per hectare.

According to Dr William Dar, director general of ICRISAT, with this new CMS-based pigeonpea hybrid technology the Institute was able to overcome some of the limitations that had been limiting pigeonpea hybrid research for many years. This technology has enabled ICRISAT to develop and test more than 200 hybrids. Three recent experimental hybrids showed near-double productivity, high stability, and no plant deformity during this year's evaluation. The promising benefits of this technology—high productivity, low labor requirement for seed production, and great drought tolerance— have generated high interest among partner-institutions.

The development of the CMS hybrid was made possible through ICRISAT's partnership with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), institutions, and private-sector companies. Moreover, ICRISAT collaborated with seven private seed companies through the Hybrid Parents Research Consortium. So important is its partnership with the Maharashtra Hybrid Seed Company (MAHYCO) that ICRISAT named the CMS system as the Barwale CMS System in Pigeonpea in honor of Dr. BR Barwale, chairman of MAHYCO.

For more information about the pigeonpea hybrid seed production technology, please e-mail Dr. KB Saxena, principal pigeonpea breeder at ICRISAT at: k.saxena@cgiar.org.

Sources:

1. ICRISAT Press Release at *http://www.icrisat.org/web/asp/Whatsnew.asp#6*
2. Aggie-horticulture at *http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/plantanswers/vegetables/pigeonpea.html*
3. CGIAR Research and Impact at *http://www.cgiar.org/impact/research/pigeonpea.html*

New RP plan...

"Good nutrition is the right of every Filipino," asserts another principle, adding that it should be provided to everyone regardless of his/her socio-economic and political status or religious belief.

Another important principle is : "good nutrition is a sound investment" to emphasize that helping poor families gain access to food supply and means to buy their own food in the short tern will enable them to "break from the chain of extreme poverty and hunger."

The draft PPAN outlines various programs, projects and activities envisioned to contribute to improvement in food and nutrient intakes and health status. The local government units are key partners in implementing programs like community, school and home food production, nutrition information and education, food assistance in calamity-stricken areas, and livelihood assistance to families with malnourished children.

The multisectoral NNC, chaired by Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap, spearheads the formulation, planning, monitoring and evaluation of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition. Meanwhile, the local nutrition committee, under the leadership of LGU chief executives, provides the appropriate mechanism for integration and coordination of all local nutrition efforts guided by nationally-set directions and guidelines.

As an integral component of the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan, the NNC executive director pointed out that the PPAN helps form a well-nourished, healthy, and mentally able human resource essential to the nation's socio-economic development. *(NNC Press Release)*

BAR gains...

Agriculture (DA) as well as the local government units to promote bio-organic farming, proper disposal and management of agricultural and fisheries wastes, and the adoption of suitable farming technologies.

The programs' components include technology commercialization, market access linkage and capacity building, provision of support services, policy advocacy, impact evaluation, and monitoring and assessment, which is targeted to run for three years.

On its first year, the program implementation will target Regions 1, 2, 3, 6, 11 and 12; Regions 5, 8, 9 and 10 on its second year; and finally, Regions 4a, 4b, 7, CAR, and CARAGA on its third year. At the end of 3 years, the project would have produced over P150 million worth of bio-fertilizer, carbonized rice hull, and mushroom produce. By then, this would have made possible the creation of jobs and a significant rise in the income of its beneficiaries composed of farmers and fisherfolk local cooperatives, NGOs, LGUs, and rural household families.

Key BAR persons in the program include Dr. Carmencita V. Kagaoan, Mr. Rolando V. Labios, Dr. Ireneo B. Ramat, and Dr. Marlowe U. Aquino. The program was proposed to DA in Nov. 2004 during the incumbency of Dr. William Medrano as BAR director and approved by Sec. Arthur C. Yap in the term of BAR Dir. Nicomedes P. Eleazar. *(Miko Jazmine J. Mojica)*

BAR launches...

mature technologies in mid April to May. The program implementation is expected to be in full blast by June.

Technology commercialization is not really a new concept but an existing approach that seeks the maximum utilization of technologies for agriculture and fisheries generated and developed by the various research institutions, which, in this case, are the R&D implementing units of the Department of Agriculture (DA) such as regional field units (RFUs), attached agencies, and bureaus; state universities and colleges (SUCs); and the private sector. *(Miko Jazmine J. Mojica)*

Who's new at BAR

Two more staff are added to the growing family of BAR. Two ladies both with long, shiny tresses, both sweet looking, both indomitable to be successful in what they do: Angela E. Obnial and Miko Jazmine J. Mojica.

Angela or 'Anj' is assigned at the Office of the Director as a development communication specialist. She graduated from UPLB with a degree in B.A. Sociology. Currently, she is pursuing a degree in M.S. Development Communication, also at UPLB, which she hopes to finish in 2006. Striking a balance between work and school, Anj is one busy person. Somehow, she still finds time to read, and get together with friends. Working at BAR, she hopes and expects to make new friends.

Also from UPLB, Miko Jazmine or simply "Miko" is a recent graduate with a degree in B.S. Development Communication. Before working at BAR, she was a writer at the Civil Military Operations School, Civil Affairs Group, Philippine Army for three months and another two months at the Office of the President, Anti-Smuggling Task Force, AFP Camp Aguinaldo. Aside from writing, which is what she loves to do, Miko enjoys reading and cooking. When asked about her expectations on working here at BAR, she quipped: "One thing I've learned in college is not to expect anything from anyone." She is assigned at the Management Information System Division *(Rita T. dela Cruz)*

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