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## BAR is set for 18<sup>th</sup> NRS and 2006 agri & fishery techno forum

To provide a venue to present and discuss significant breakthroughs in agriculture and fisheries and technologies available for commercialization, the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) of the Department of Agriculture (DA) holds its 18<sup>th</sup> National Research Symposium (NRS) and 2006 Agriculture and Fisheries Technology Forum and Seminar Series on 3-5 October 2006, RDMIC Bldg., Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City. The three-day event is in celebration of the 7<sup>th</sup> R&D Week, which is commemorated every first week of October as declared through Proclamation No.382 during the time of President Joseph Estrada.

NRS, an annually-conducted event of BAR, aims to ensure that research results reach their intended users and to discuss how these can be refined to fit the needs of small farmers and fishers. This activity also gives due recognition to the notable efforts of researchers in providing the public and the private sectors the latest technologies that they could profitably use.

Meanwhile, the 2006 A/F Techno Forum & Seminar Series, another regularly-conducted activity of BAR, intentionally coincides with the NRS to serve as a venue to promote R&D excellence and technology commercialization.

With this year's theme, "Sustaining Agriculture and Fisheries R&D Excellence for Enhanced Technology Commercialization", the three-day event kicks-off with the technology forum and seminar series on

*see BAR is set...page 8*

## BAR briefs Chinese Embassy reps on R&D priorities of DA



BAR Dir. Nicomedes P. Eleazar (top center) leads in a briefing with FFCCI Auditor Elpidio Duca (top left) and Chinese Embassy First Secretary Qiu Zhijun (top right). Also in the briefing are key staff from BAR.

On 22 September 2006, Mr. Qiu Zhijun, First Secretary, Economic and Commercial Counselor's Office, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in RP, and Mr. Elpidio Duca, auditor, Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FFCCI), visited the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) to learn about the research and development (R&D) priorities of the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the projects and programs coordinated by BAR.

BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar presented to them the DA's R&D programs such as the conduct of basic and strategic research; commercialization of appropriate technologies; intensification of community-based participatory action research (CPAR); and the establishment of agribusiness development projects (ADPs) in Regional Integrated Agricultural Research Centers (RIARCs).

He also discussed with them the current international partnerships and linkages of BAR on agriculture and fisheries R&D and some of its on-going projects in collaboration with international R&D centers.

The Director also expressed the eagerness of BAR to get the support of the Chinese government in funding R&D-related projects of BAR such as improving the facilities at the RIARCs and Regional Fisheries R&D Centers (RFRDCs) to enhance their R&D activities and expand downstream research.

Mr. Qiu Zhijun, on his part, encouraged BAR to support soybean production in the country. "We have a huge demand in China for high protein soybean because we use it for making tofu and producing cooking oil. However, soybean production in our country has decreased. Last

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## BAR Chronicle

The official monthly publication of DA-BAR

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It provides regular updates on the activities on BAR's activities as R&D coordinator and news and features concerning NaRDSAF-member institutions.

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## Eleazar attends APAARI workshop on regional synthesis



Participants of the APAARI Workshop on Regional Synthesis of Research Needs in the Asia-Pacific region in Bangkok, Thailand. Representing the Philippine NARS are BAR Dir. Nicomedes P. Eleazar (second from left, fourth row) and BAR Planning Officer Joell H. Lales (left, second row).

**B**ureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar attended the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) workshop on Regional Synthesis of Research Needs in the Asia-Pacific Region recently at the Rama Gardens Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand. He represented the Philippine National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) and was accompanied by DA-BAR Planning Officer Joell H. Lales.

The APAARI workshop aimed to "revalidate the set of priority research identified for the whole (Asia-Pacific) region and its sub regions." Moreover, the workshop wanted to identify research gaps and to name potential stakeholders which may serve as partners and collaborators in the implementation of the programs.

Attended by representatives from different NARS institutions in the region, from the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), farmer organizations, youth organizations, non-government organizations (NGOs), private sector, and donor institutions, the workshop was highlighted with presentations that focused on global/international research for development agenda, R&D investments and other developments, synthesized regional priorities, workshop

reviews and discussions, and validation of long- and short-term priorities of the region and its sub regions.

During the workshop proper, Dir. Eleazar served as the presiding officer of the Southeast Asian cluster to come up with short- and medium term research priorities for Southeast Asia (SEA) and for Asia-Pacific Region which included, among others, linking farmers to market, entrepreneurial development of farmers and fisherfolk, market and market systems for SEA, and germplasm collection, conservation, and use of crop biodiversity for Asia-Pacific Region. Through this workshop, DA-BAR, which has the institutional link and network with its stakeholders, had the opportunity to explore possible collaboration with other institutions as well as incorporate other perspectives and best practices in implementing research and development in other countries.

In this biennial meeting, Dir. Eleazar was voted member of the Executive Committee (ExeCom) of APAARI. This is the second time that the director is voted member of the prestigious committee. The workshop is a follow-through of a workshop on research needs assessment held in the Philippines in October 2005 which was organized by DA-BAR in coordination with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources R&D (PCARRD).  
(Angela E. Obnial)



# Booming goat production seen in Tarlac

Goats – *kambing* or *kalding* in the local dialect are seen to be increasing and becoming a booming enterprise in the municipality of Camiling, Tarlac. This was revealed by Dr. Philip Ibarra, president of the Tarlac College of Agriculture during the graduation ceremony on 19 September at Cariño Resort, Camiling, Tarlac of the Farmer Livestock School on Integrated Goat Management (FLS-IGM). The activity is part of the DA-BAR funded TCA project on “Enhancing Goat Productivity through Adaptation of Technologies.” The said project is one of the pilot livestock projects under the National Technology Commercialization Program (NTCP) which encourages the establishment of viable commodity enterprises that utilize mature technologies.

Through the leadership of Dr. Philip B. Ibarra, TCA president and Dr. Ma. Asuncion G. Beltran, project leader

and incumbent dean of the Institute of Veterinary of Medicine at TCA, the production management of goat including the propagation and production of forage and pasture grasses made the farmer graduates achieve excellence in goat production. In addition, the project in partnership with the provincial and municipal governments and the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist and veterinarian made the project a vehicle for livestock development in the area.

The FLS-IGM is a six-month training course that incorporates technical aspect as well as translating it into business opportunities for increased productivity and profitability. It uses a community-based participatory approach wherein farmers are provided with first hand skills and knowledge about goat production and management. With this approach, that the “learning-by-doing” becomes a living



testimony of relevance and efficiency. Specifically, the farmer discussions are done on a rotational basis and conducted in different farmer sites to encourage self-awareness, realization and empowerment. Boer and Anglo Nubian upgrades are reproduced at the TCA goat production farm and these are given to farmers through the training course. These

see *Booming...* page 5

## Agri technologies showcase this year's farmers' field day

Showcasing the results of research promotes the adoption of the technologies that are appropriate under location-specific conditions, particularly those for the upland areas. Through demonstration projects, technology transfer and commercialization are hastened.

This is what the Northern Mindanao Integrated Agricultural Center (NOMIARC) is trying to achieve in their yearly conduct of the 13th Annual Farmers' Field Day and Technology Forum on 19 September 2006 at Dalwangan, Malaybalay, Bukidnon. Attending the field day are Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) Director Nicomedez P. Eleazar and Ms. Digna Sandoval, crops coordinator of the Bureau's Technology Commercialization Unit (TCU).

The Farmers' Field Day and Technology Forum is an annual joint activity of the different attached agencies of the Department of Agriculture (DA), private seed and

fertilizer companies, industry associations, and various stakeholders in agricultural development. This activity provides Filipino farmers the opportunity to see for themselves the benefits and advantages of growing different crops. This also enhances their awareness of the existence of new technologies to increase their production and income generation.

This year's theme, “*Pushing agricultural development in the countryside through integrated sustainable farming systems*” highlights the importance of adopting an integrated farming method to increase the income of poor farmers especially those in the countryside.

About 1000 participants attended and participated in the activity with farmers from the different provinces and municipalities of Region X including the Regional Integrated Agricultural Research Center (RIARC) and the Regional Integrated Fisheries Research and Development Center (RIFRDC) managers of Mindanao

Cluster (RFU-XI, XII, CARAGA, and ARMM), and LGU representatives.

Highlights of the affair include a showcase of different agricultural technologies on promising hybrids/varieties of corn, rice, vegetables (tropical, semi-temperate and indigenous), rootcrops, high value crops, soil improvement through liming, use of organic fertilizer, biological control, hillside farming/agro-forestry, livestock and fishery technologies, packaging/postharvest technologies and value-added technologies.

Part of the activities were visiting demonstration areas by different sectors inside the NOMIARC station and conducting hands-on training on food processing and flower arrangement by invited resource persons. Experts who were present during the fields visits answered the inquiries of farmers on the technologies being showcased.

Meanwhile, Dir Eleazar and Ms. Sandoval visited different facilities in the center to which BAR provided financial support. (Rita T. dela Cruz)



## TWG meets for possible projects on rubber R&D

Bearing in mind the vision of setting the Philippines as the 4<sup>th</sup> biggest player in the world natural rubber industry, some of the members of the Technical Working Group (TWG) for the National Rubber Development Program (NRDP) held a meeting last 14 September 2006 at the NABCOR office, Philippine Stock Exchange Center, Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Members present were representatives from the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR), DA-Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance System (DA-AMAS), National Agricultural and Fishery Council (NAFC), National Agribusiness Corporation (NABCOR) and High Value Commercial Crops Program (HVCC).

The TWG identified and organized the component activities of the project proposal on rubber for possible funding under the PL480 grant from U.S.

This is to generate the needed resources for the implementation of the NRDP which is aimed at (1) increasing the rubber plantation from 81,925 in 2005 to 1 million hectares in 2016, (2) increasing the national average yield from 1 ton per hectare in 2005 to 2 tons per hectare by year 2020 and (3) improving the quality of rubber to meet world standards for competitiveness, (4) increasing investment in rubber industry, (5) increasing the contribution to the foreign earnings of the government, and (6) creating a minimum of one million new job opportunities for plantation workers, tappers and processors in 2020.

The NRDP has six major components namely: (1) investment promotion and facilitation; (2) production support and expansion; (3) research and development; (4) market promotion and development; (5) infrastructure development; and (6) program management.

The DA-BAR, as mandated,

handles the research and development component. This component is geared towards accelerating the development of the Philippines' rubber industry through R & D towards expansion of the rubber cultivated area to one million hectares in FY 2010.

Some of the activities lined up under this program include (1) crop improvement and adaptation for 5 years; (2) nursery development and maintenance; (3) biotechnology and tissue culture propagation; (4) demonstration farms establishment and maintenance; and (5) infrastructure and facilities development for rubber R & D.

Future plans include DA-BAR working closely with the Philippine Rubber Board Incorporated, the University of Southern Mindanao and other state colleges and universities, the Regional Field Units of the Department of Agriculture, and the Local Government Units. (Ma. Eloisa E. Hernandez)

## Symposium tackles biofuel framework

BAR A. Dir. Teodoro S. Solsoloy, together with staff from the Management Information System Division-Applied Communication Section (MISD-ACS), attended the symposium entitled *Symposium on Biofuels: Way to Go Forward* on 15 September 2006 at the Davao Room, Hotel Philippine Plaza, CCP Complex, Pasay City. Representatives from the academe, stakeholders, private sector, government agencies, journalists and foreign diplomats were present during the event.

The goal of the symposium is to review the real issues and plan the framework on the use of biofuels in the Philippines. The symposium also aimed at drafting recommendations for policy and regulatory framework and a roadmap indicating doable action plans pointing to specific directions. Undersecretary Mariano S. Salazar of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), served as the keynote speaker. He stressed the vision of his Department for large scale production of biofuel.

The symposium featured papers on bio-diesel and bio-ethanol. The paper

on bio-diesel presented by Engr. Felipe R. Maldonado M. Argamosa, director, University Research and Development, Technological University of the Philippines, highlighted the potential of *Jathropa curcas* as biodiesel feedstock in the production of Jathropa Methyl Ester (JME). There are still pressing issues on the successful utilization of *Jathropa*. These include public acceptance, varietal problem, clear public market, strong distribution channels, sound technical marketing, strong government support and competitive pricing. The second paper on bio-ethanol presented by Dr. Raymond R. Tan, associate professor, College of Engineering, De La Salle University Manila, laid down the queries from interest groups on compatibility of bio-ethanol with gasoline engines, assurance of enough supply of ethanol and the economic benefits. He said that considerable caution must be taken in the identification of agricultural feedstocks for ethanol production in order to meet the energy and food demands of the growing population and not to sacrifice food in agricultural production.

Discussants came from the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Energy (DOE), oil companies, car

manufacturers, transport groups, technology providers, financial institutions and other major players. The open forum discussed four major aspects, namely: (1) technical; (2) economic; (3) policy; and (4) infrastructure. The technical aspect includes issues on extensive product performance testing and test protocols. It was suggested that there should be a national center for testing. Policy matters focused on whether biofuels be treated as a mandatory or a voluntary program. Under the infrastructure component, marginal land availability, replanting of coconut and expansion of bio-refineries were enumerated.

The symposium was sponsored by DOST in collaboration with the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST), DOE, National Research Council of the Philippines (NRCP), Philippine Council for Industry and Energy Research and Development (PCIERD), Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD), and the Association of Academies in Asia (AASA). (Ma. Eloisa E. Hernandez)



# PAC launches sweet tamarind, bamboo commercialization



Former PAC President Fortunato A. Battad (with the shovel) led the ceremonial tree planting for the launching of the bamboo commercialization project at the Pampanga Agricultural College (PAC). With him are: (L-R) CHED Commissioner Saturnino Ocampo, Jr. (extreme left), PAC President Zosimo Battad, Chinese Embassy First Secretary Qiu Zhijun, FFCCI Auditor Elpidio Duca, other distinguished guests (slightly hidden), and PAC VP for Research and Extension Leopoldo Reyes (extreme right).

The Pampanga Agricultural College (PAC) formally launched the project "Mass Propagation and Commercialization of Bamboo and Sweet Tamarind" during its 32<sup>nd</sup> Foundation Anniversary at the PAC Compound, Magalang, Pampanga on 8 September 2006.

The Bureau of Agricultural Research funds this three-year project (2005-2007) with PAC and the local government units in Pampanga. The target beneficiaries of the project include farmers, entrepreneurs, consumers, and LGUs in Pampanga. The cooperating agencies are the Department of Agriculture – Regional Field Unit 3, and the Central Luzon Integrated Agricultural Research Center (CLIARC).

According to PAC researchers, the sweet tamarind that they developed is comparable to that of Bangkok's variety which is known for its sweetness. They said that tamarind has a huge market potential in the Philippines because the country continuously imports it to meet the domestic demand. Moreover, the sweet types of tamarind, they said, are always in demand and can command a higher price than that of the sour variety. During the PAC's founding anniversary, Dr. Leopoldo F. Reyes, PAC vice-president for Research and Extension, led the launching of the "Aglibut" sweet tamarind. *Aglibut* is a variety of sweet tamarind they developed and are promoting for commercialization. It is the first sweet tamarind variety approved by the National Seed Industry Council (NSIC) in the Philippines.

PAC also prioritizes a strong research program for bamboo since it was chosen as a pilot area for the 10-year project supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The project also showcased the planting of bamboo on idle grasslands as a component of a livelihood development program. According to PAC, both the sweet tamarind and bamboo have been found to thrive well in any type of soil and climate, and could be intercropped with other crops such as vegetables to maximize land productivity or planted for reforestation programs of the government.

The bamboo project was formally inaugurated during the PAC's 32<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary Celebration at the Pampanga Bamboo and Rattan Center at PAC. The project was funded by BAR with the Chinese government.

At present, PAC maintains sweet tamarind and bamboo nurseries within its compound. Its goal is to expand them and produce 150,000 grafted sweet tamarind seedlings and 150,000 bamboo seedlings in 3 years. It is closely collaborating with the LGUs and agricultural offices of Pampanga in the towns of Magalang, Arayat, Mexico, Mabalacat, and Angeles City. PAC also leads in the training of the project's target beneficiaries on the crops' cultural management, postharvest handling, and marketing. (Miko Jazmine J. Mojica)

*Booming...from page 3*

helped in the increase of the number of goats produced under the TCA-LGU led activities.

Furthermore, the strategy made sure that goats are improved through the multiplier farm approach by sharing goats that are upgraded to other interested goat raisers. This leads to a "snow-ball effect" of making the production of goat an enterprise to address the demand of local markets within the province of Tarlac, nearby provinces, and Metro Manila.

Based on this experience, the booming goat industry in Tarlac through the FLS-IGM strategy and the continuous support of key players and stakeholders will be expanded and applied in other municipalities to prove that the technologies really work for the clientele - goat raisers, communities, and consumers. (Marlowe U. Aquino, Ph.D.)

*Expanding...from page 7*

are mango and calamansi. The study showed a great prospect for Philippine produce at high price.

In Switzerland, most of the tropical produce is sold as dry goods i.e. dried mango making it a potential market for Philippine fresh goods. During the study, potential retailers gave positive indication in accepting exports from the Philippines. Compared to other countries in EU, Switzerland has stringent requirements for their produce preferably organically-grown or chemical free.

In France, most of the Asian retail market is dominated by produce from Thailand and Vietnam and a few others from Senegal, Brazil, and Costa Rica. Tropical goods are being sold at a high price making them a good potential export market of Philippine fruits and vegetables. Meanwhile, in United Kingdom, most of the fruits come from Thailand although importers gave their interest in possibly getting produce from the Philippines given that marketing trial be conducted first. Marketing trials allow computations of profitability and determine the technical effectiveness of applied postharvest technologies to exported produce.

Source:

Travel report highlights: Market reconnaissance on tropical fruits and vegetables, Dubai and EU, 05-26 August 2006



## Private sector rep talks on commercialization

The recent Visayas Regional Cluster Agriculture and Fisheries Technology Forum held on 6-7 September 2006 at Punta Villa Resort, Iloilo City could be described as informative but lacked investment mood. This was the observation of Mr. Ramon Peñalosa, private practitioner of agriculture and fishery. Although his observation was only highlighted during the activity, his main contribution was the perspective of the private sector in the integrated utilization of technologies through commercialization. He lauded the activity as a good avenue for the promotion of developed technologies by research institutions as well as source of relevant information for farmers and fisherfolk.

Mr. Peñalosa's presentation focused on four aspects to ensure the success in the commercialization of agriculture and fishery (A/F) technologies. First, technology generation criteria in the development of technologies must address trends in marketing, promotion and commercialization including market-driven approach for an integrated system; emphasize regional uniqueness of commodities; doable, replicable and sustainable activities. Second, commercialization must use the business tree, not just a technology park wherein production, finance, marketing and organization are intertwined by appropriate management skills of

planning, direction, supervision, control and evaluation. Third, individuals, groups or communities working on the commercialization of technologies must consider cooperation and collaboration activities, "walk your talk" for technologies utilized, applied and promoted, and clarify one's vision and mission in the whole gamut of commercialization. Lastly, technology users must know the language of the commercial technologies in order that they will be provided with appropriate support services, technical assistance including socio-political support system, if needed. Given these aspects, he assured technology users, adopters and individuals about to engage into small or wide-scale commercialization that everything must be translated into profit or gains. This ensures that people invest on quality and appropriate technologies.

In a related concern, Visayas executive officials emphasized that commercialization must have a political influence to propel activities at the local level particularly on production and processing activities. The initial technologies presented during the forum, assure Visayas agriculture and fishery growth and development. Also, more private sector participation is encouraged in order that investments on interesting and innovative technologies are provided with ample financial and technical support. (*Marlowe U. Aquino, Ph.D.*)

### BAR briefs...from page 1

year, we produced about 16 million tons of soybean and we imported about 30 million tons from the United States. You should mass-produce soybean in the Philippines because you can have China as your biggest market," he said.

Mr. Qiu Zhijun also said that 20 years ago, China is behind the Philippines in terms of development. "We suffered from poverty and food shortage. But we were able to pull ourselves through and spur agricultural growth. You can do the same in your country by using your resources appropriately and taking advantage of your

good climate," he said.

On the other hand, Mr. Duca said that the reason why foreign investors are discouraged to do business in the Philippines is because of the red tape and frequent policy reform changes by the government. "I encouraged Chinese investors to put up businesses in the Philippines but they are appalled by the too many documents required by the Customs. Policies should be assessed, evaluated, and changed at least every five years, if necessary. It should not be done every time a new set of politicians take over the land," he said. (*Miko Jazmine J. Mojica*)

## DA Rationalization Plan presented in 22nd session

Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR) held the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of the DA-Rationalization Plan Seminar Series, 12 September 2006 at the RDMIC Lobby, Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City.

Assistant Director Alberto B. Maninding of the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI), and CMT-Head of Technical Support Staff served as resource person. He presented the proposed DA-Rationalization plan to BAR employees. "The purpose of the seminar series is to convey properly the information on the on-going rationalization process," said Maninding.

Series of seminars were already conducted with various groups including stakeholders of the Department.

The attempts to reorganize and reform the system were based on Executive Order 366, s. 2004. Section 2 states the strategic review of agency operations and organizations focusing on vital and core functions of government on improving the quality and efficiency of government services. Section 3 lays down the rationalization and service delivery improvement framework. This transforms the bureaucracy into an effective and efficient institution; and ensure long term sustainability of core government services. With this, a Change Management Team (CMT), Technical Support Group (TSG) and supporting sub-committees were created under Special Order No. 404 s. 2005.

The main goal is to transform DA into a modern organization fully capable of delivering rural and economic development. This boiled down to four (4) objectives, namely: (1) improve the stability and professionalization of the Department; (2) ensure the economic rights of agriculture clients; (3) improve quality of governance; and (4) strengthen key organizational values.

An open-forum was held to thresh out some issues on the proposed rationalization plan. The proposed Rationalization Plan of the Department was passed to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) on August 2006. To date, it is still undergoing review and is hoped to be approved within the year for implementation early next year. (*Ma. Eloisa E. Hernandez*)



# Expanding market potential of Philippine fruits and vegetables: A market study

RITA T. DELA CRUZ

**T**he Philippine agricultural industry is focused on fruit and vegetable production due to their export potential in the world market. Quality-wise, our fruits and vegetables are among the best in the world but their quality deteriorates when they get transported. And with the strict quarantine requirements set by the US, Japan, and Australia, which comprise some of the biggest market potentials for our fruits and vegetables, it becomes more difficult to export these perishable goods.

Local fruit exporters have shied away from the US market due to its stringent export requirements and currently, only fresh mangoes from Guimaras are allowed to enter the US market. This was after the island was quarantined to make sure that it is free from the seed weevil disease. Since Guimaras produces only a small volume of mangoes each year, local fruit exporters cannot assure their US distributors of a year-round steady supply. Small volume of production could also mean higher shipment costs for the local producers. With the recent oil spill in Guimaras, the industry is even more threatened.

The culprit remains: poor agricultural practices and in effective postharvest handling. This problem is slowly taking its toll on the agriculture sector while our Asian neighboring countries like Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam are making names as credible exporters of tropical fruits and vegetables.

## Conducting a market reconnaissance

In dire need to boost the market potential of Philippine fruits and vegetables and to generate big revenues for the agriculture sector, a market reconnaissance study was conducted. This is through the initiatives of the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) and the Agribusiness Marketing Assistance Service (AMAS), of the Department of Agriculture (DA), the Postharvest Horticulture Training and Research Center (PHTRC) of the University of the Philippines Los Banos (UPLB), and in

collaboration with the private sector, LA Trading, Philippines. The study was made possible through the Agricultural Attache for the Philippine Embassy in Belgium and the Philippine Mission to the European Communities (EU).

The research team is headed by Dr. Edralina Serrano of the Postharvest and Seed Sciences Division, PHTRC; Ms. Digna Sandoval of the Technology Commercialization Unit, BAR; Mr. Renato Remanes of DA-AMAS; and Mr. Lito Arenas and Ms. Charito Arenas of LA Trading, Philippines.

The reconnaissance study was conducted in the European Union (EU) and United Arab Emirates (UAE), which were identified as potentially profitable markets of Philippine fruits and vegetables.

Specifically, the objectives of the market study are: 1) identify the profile (kind, quality, selling price, labeling and packaging) of tropical fruits that are currently being marketed in EU (Rome, Switzerland, France, and UK) and UAE (Dubai, Sharja); 2) determine the main routes and transit time along with the handling route of tropical fruits from the country of origin to major market outlets in UAE and EU; 3) cite possible importers of Philippine-grown tropical fruits and vegetables; and 4) determine sanitary and phytosanitary requirements, problems and constraints in exporting.

Activities for the reconnaissance study involved actual visits to wholesale and retail markets to conduct quality

profiling and obtain retail prices of commodities, packaging and labeling requirements. These actual visits were coupled with interview and discussion with the importers and retailers to determine the import demand volume and quality requirements as well as the distribution channels of imported produce. Aside from visits and interview, the group also gathered secondary data on sanitary and phytosanitary requirements and trade regulations from concerned agencies and collected actual fresh samples and obtained one-page brochures for promotional purposes.

## Market potentials of Philippine fruits and veggies

Results of the study showed UAE, Dubai in particular, as a potentially profitable market of Philippines tropical fruits and vegetables. Among the reasons identified include: abundance of Filipino expatriates in UAE and its neighboring countries, less stringent phytosanitary requirements, and short transit time (21 days by sea). Among the commodities in great demand are mango, banana, papaya, calamansi, and pineapple.

Most of the people in Rome, Italy are not familiar with tropical fruits, thus importation is rare. Exotic fruits are mostly demanded during holidays and Christmas season. Aside from bananas and melons there's not much competition for tropical fruits in the market making it a good potential for introducing more of these commodities. Among the fruits that showed great potential

see *Expanding...* page 5





## RIARCs renew action plan for GIS enabling

In order to come up with a unified strategy to fast-track the topographic mapping and digitization of all DA research stations, and finalize the database template for the research station characteristics and profile that can be linked to the digitized map, a workshop-meeting was organized by the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) on 20-21 September 2006 at the Lobby of RDMIC Bldg., Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City.

The focal persons of each region on the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) were invited to present updates of the survey and topographic mapping of their stations. They presented a modified plan of action to complete

their task by the end of the year.

Only Regions 3, 4A, and 8 have finished their survey and topo mapping while Regions 2, 4B, 5, and 10 are still working on theirs.

Meanwhile, Regions 7, 9, and 12 have organized teams for the survey and topo mapping and are still waiting for the Special Order from BAR to be signed by the DA Secretary Domingo F. Panganiban. Regions 6, 11, and ARMM reported that they have yet to create their topo maps because of inadequate funds, manpower resources, and technical skills. The remaining regions (Regions 1, CAR, and CARAGA) were not able to send any representative for the workshop-meeting.

Engr. Mario B. Collado, Region

III coordinator for the Soil and Water Access Team (SWAT) of the Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM), was invited during the second day of the workshop to discuss with the participants the assistance they could offer for the conduct of survey and preparation of topo map, action plans, and activities of RIARCs.

The group agreed that BAR will take care of digitization if they are not able to do this using AutoCAD. The target date for the submission of the topo maps is December 2006.

BAR's Information and Communication Technology Section of the Management Information Systems Division (ICTS-MISD) and the Spatial Analysis and Information Laboratory organized the meeting-workshop. BAR initiated the development and adoption of GIS for the National R&D System for Agriculture and Fisheries in recognition as a planning tool of planners, scientists, and policy makers. (Miko Jazmine J. Mojica)

### BAR is set...from page 1

October 3. Highlighting the activity are presentations on: 1) Lessons Learned in Agribusiness Development: An International Perspectives (Dr. Narciso Deomampo, UNDP-FAO, Bangkok, Thailand); 2) Prospects of Exporting Fruits and Vegetables to Europe and Middle East (Dr. Edralina P. Serrano, PHTRC-UPLB, College, Laguna); 3) Agriculture and Fisheries Product Packaging and Development for International Competitiveness: The Private Sector Perspective (Mr. Abner Villahermosa, San Miguel Packaging Products); 4) Pro-poor Growth Strategies in Support to Agricultural Development (Dr. Ernesto Pernia, School of Economics, UP Diliman); and 5) Utilization of BioCon to Improve Crop Production (Dr. Virginia Cuevas, Institute of Biological Sciences, UPLB).

The NRS is scheduled on October 4 with DA Undersecretary for Policy, Planning & Research Segfredo R. Serrano and Assistant Secretary for Administration and Finance Catherine Mae C. Santos as honored guests. They lead in the presentation of AFMA R&D Papers awards and special citations with the assistance of BAR Dir. Nicomedes P. Eleazar and Asst. Dir. Teodoro S. Solsoloy. Attending the

opening of poster exhibits are Executive Director Virginia L. Agcopra of Congressional Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization (COCAFAM) and Ms. Redia N. Atienza, of the Legislative Committee Support Service.

Immediately after the opening program is the presentations of 29 researches that qualified for the AFMA R&D Papers awards. Presentations are simultaneously held in Maria Orosa Hall, ATI Bldg (basic research category); RDMIC Lobby, BAR Bldg (applied research-technology); 2/F RDMIC Conference Room (technology adaptation/verification); and 3/F RDMIC Conference Room (socio-economics research). From these papers, top three papers for each category are chosen from which the best paper will be selected and granted the Best R&D Paper with a trophy and a cash prize.



Late in the afternoon of the same day is the Best Poster Competition.

Winners are awarded on October 5 during the Awarding Ceremony. Awarding the AFMA Best R&D Paper and Best Poster are DA Secretary Domingo F. Panganiban and National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) President Emil Q. Javier. (Rita T. dela Cruz)

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