



## First info rice caravan draws more than 2,000 farmers

More than 2,000 farmers participated at the rice information caravan launched in Lubao, Pampanga.

More than 2,000 farmers and agriculture stakeholders attended the Rice Information Caravan conducted by the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Unit 3 (DA-RFU) in Lubao, Pampanga on 26 August 2008.

The Rice Info Caravan, which is the first of a series slated this year, hopes to increase the farmers' awareness and access to technologies and development programs of the government to increase their

productivity in the midst of the increasing input prices. Through this info caravan, DA specifically sought to heighten farmers' awareness on the FIELDS Program for agriculture. FIELDS, which stands for Fertilizer, Irrigation and other rural infrastructure, Extension, training and farmers' education, Loans, Dryers and other postharvest facilities and Seeds, is implemented by DA through its Rice Self-Sufficiency Program that aims to make the country 98 percent sufficient in the grain in

two years' time by targeting higher harvests of 18.55 million mt next year and 19.77 million mt in 2010.

The FIELDS Program of DA is part of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's commitment to improve the country's food production which she first pointed out during her first State of the Nation Address and was further reiterated during the National Food Summit in April 2008.

Dr. Frisco M. Malabanan, coordinator of the Ginintuang Masaganang Ani (GMA) Rice Program, provided an overview of the GMA Rice Program and background of the

FIELDS Program for the farmer-participants.

Dr. Malabanan stressed the importance of the info caravan as a venue for DA to relay its specific programs particularly on rice against the backdrop of the government's food production drive and Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap's programs to boost agricultural productivity and farmers' profitability.

To further increase farmers' awareness and participation, six booths were installed at the venue highlighting each component of the FIELDS Program and two additional booths specific for the National Food Authority (NFA) and DA-Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service (AMAS).

The Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR), being the national coordinator for agriculture and fisheries R&D and part of the Extension component of the FIELDS Program, participated in the booth exhibit. MISD Asst. Head Julia A. Lapitan, with staff members, Rita T. dela Cruz and Nicanor B. del Rosario III, participated in the booth exhibit featuring some of BAR's supported R&D projects on rice.

The next information caravan is slated on 29 August 2008 in Iloilo City and on 2 September 2008 in Masbate. (Rita T. dela Cruz)



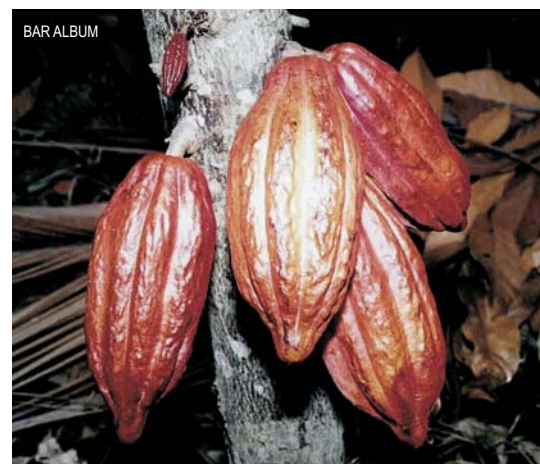
Farmer-participants rush to ATI-BAR booth to get information materials on Extension, training and farmers' education which is one of the component programs of FIELDS, during the rice info caravan.



RDMIC Bldg., Visayas Ave., cor. Elliptical Rd.  
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PHILIPPINES



## Cacao industry gets a lift in R&D



Cacao

Now that the coffee industry in the country has been revived, the local cacao industry is waiting for the much-needed boost for it to become competitive in the local and international markets for cacao's famous by-product—cocoa.

According to the cacao industry situationer posted by the High-Value Commercial Crops (HVCC) Program of the Department of Agriculture (DA), the industry

took off in the 1980s, particularly in Mindanao, as more investments were poured into commercial farms and on grinding facilities before cacao production dwindled in the 1990s.

To renew the interest of farmers and stakeholders in planting cacao, the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) hosted on 8 August 2008 a consultation meeting with the private sector and DA units concerned in crop research and development (R&D) to discuss the status of the cacao industry in the country and explore possible areas of collaboration.

In the meeting, Jenny Remoquillo of DA GMA-HVCC Program said that cacao is now part of the commodities prioritized by HVCC because of its market potential and the thrust of the program to shift to other commodities that will help start new industries.

The meeting was highlighted by the presentation of Josephine Ramos, field operations manager of the Cocoa Foundation Philippines, Inc. (CocoaPhil), on the proposed strategic action plan on the

Philippines Cacao Roadmap.

"The plan is to intercrop at least 50 million cacao trees with coconut producing at least 100,000 metric tons of export-quality cacao beans. If this happens, P60,000 to P80,000 additional annual income per hectare can be gained from cacao harvest. This is a big opportunity for families in rural areas," said Ramos.

To realize this goal, CocoaPhil is seeking to collaborate with DA to encourage farmers to go into cacao farming by making

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## Eleazar receives Quezon Medalya ng Karangalan

For his outstanding achievements in research management and administration, BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar was awarded the prestigious *Quezon Medalya ng Karangalan* on 19 August 2008 at the Quezon Convention Center, Lucena City, Quezon Province.

The *Quezon Medalya ng Karangalan* is the highest award conferred by the people of Quezon Province to its outstanding citizens for their meritorious contributions to society.

For 2008, Director Eleazar was recognized as the top candidate among the 13 awardees for garnering the highest point average as scored by the Quezon Day Awards Committee composed of officials from the provincial government of Quezon and respected individuals in the province. The award is given annually in time for the province's commemoration of President Manuel L. Quezon's birth anniversary.

In his acceptance speech, Director Eleazar, who was born and grew up in Tagkawayan, Quezon, recognized his fellow awardees who are highly respected in their respective fields of expertise.

Among his fellow awardees are: Justice Stephen Cruz, *judiciary*; Edicio De la Torre, *theology, education and social work*; Ramon Grimaldo, *fisherfolk leader*; Justice Angelina Gutierrez, *law*; Nelia Hizon, *public health*; Rolando Ong Bon Jieng, *herbal medicine*; Atty. Asis Perez, *environmental law*; Rebecca Ruga, *farmer leader*; Cesar Sia, *medicine*; Hobart Dator Sr., *public service* (posthumous); Conrado Dayrit Sr., *medicine* (posthumous); and Fabian Millar, *philanthropist* (posthumous).

The awarding ceremony was led by Quezon Governor Rafael P. Nantes and Senator Franklin Drilon who was invited as the guest of honor.

Prior to this award, Director Eleazar also received the Distinguished Alumnus Award for the same category from



Quezon Governor Rafael P. Nantes (right) puts the medal to BAR Dir. Nicomedes P. Eleazar (left) while Senator Franklin Drilon (center) awards the plaque.

the University of the Philippines Los Baños College of Agriculture Alumni Association (UPLBCAAA) in 2007. (Miko Jazmine J. Mojica)



# Angara urges DA-DOST initiatives to survive current food crises



Senator Angara delivers his speech during the opening program while (L-R) DA Asec. Dennis B. Araullo, BAR Dir. Nicomedes P. Eleazar, and IRRI Deputy Dir. Gen. William G. Padolina listen from the presidential table.

RBERNARDO

Senator Edgardo J. Angara underscored the need for the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) to pool their research funds and personnel together to address the current pressing issue on food production.

Specifically, he suggested that a network among selected state universities and colleges (SUCs) that can do research be established, to which Angara promised to support being the current chair of the Committee on Agriculture and Food.

Angara made the commitment at the 2008 Agriculture and Fisheries Technology Commercialization Forum and Exhibit and 21<sup>st</sup> BAR Anniversary Celebration on 21 August 2008 where he was the keynote speaker and one of the honored guests.

"The central role of R&D is focused on the two major issues faced by

agriculture today: food and fuel. Unfortunately, the budget for R&D is declining despite its importance to food production," the senior lawmaker stated.

He underlined the importance of R&D in the overall productivity of the agriculture sector and the economy as a whole.

"We have very good researchers in the country. Funds

must be channeled out to SUCs with the technical expertise to conduct research," he added.

Angara also stressed that there must be an immediate transfer of technologies and allow the SUCs to immediately patent their products and bring them down to the grassroots level. "Once the policy is set on technology transfer, there will be more incentives to conduct more market-oriented research," he said.

"With IRRI, PhilRice, FAO, and other CGIAR members helping us, I am sure we can cope and survive the food crisis. We don't have to feel so hopeless. We have the people, the infrastructure, and the training to do it. We just need concentration and focus and implement it as a deliberate national policy," Angara stressed.

Senator Angara, who was Agriculture Secretary from 1999-2000, has made some remarkable contributions to the agricultural development wherein he had the opportunity to implement his own creation, the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA) and closely watched the improvement of food production programs and support services.

Overall, the agricultural sector has realized a growth rate of three percent since 2000, compared with a 1.2 percent growth over the past two decades.

His term as agriculture secretary was marked by the implementation of breakthrough agricultural programs on food security, seed and crop production, and strong support for R&D.

Recently, he has been advocating for an adequate funding for AFMA. According to him, AFMA is the modernization blueprint of the agricultural sector and sound programs must be developed and combined with adequate funding.

"The lack of funding support could disrupt what could have been the successful modernization of Philippine agriculture," he concluded. (Rita T. dela Cruz)



Senator Angara (center) leads the ribbon cutting ceremony during the opening of the 2008 A/F TechCom Forum and Exhibit; joining him are BAR Dir Eleazar (left) and Asst. Dir. Solsoloy (right).

RBERNARDO



The official monthly publication of DA-BAR

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# Learning tropical fruit wine processing

CHRISTMAS B. DE GUZMAN

Louis Pasteur said that wine is the most healthful and the most hygienic of all beverages. It can give the human body 500 calories that are normally taken from fats and carbohydrates. All this energy is completely consumed by the body and will not add an ounce to the body weight. (Lichine, et al. 1968)

One of the seminars conducted during the 2008 Agriculture and Fisheries Technology Commercialization Forum organized by the Bureau of Agricultural Research was on processing of tropical fruit wines. Prof. Erlinda I. Dizon of the Food Science Cluster, College of Agriculture, University of the Philippines Los Baños, served as the resource speaker. It was held on 22 August 2008 at the SM Megatrade Hall 2, 5<sup>th</sup> Level, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

Prof. Dizon said that wine is a product made by normal alcoholic fermentation of juice from sound, ripe fruits which contains 8-18 percent alcohol by volume.

There are several health benefits that can be derived from wine. Aside from being a healthy beverage, it was said that



Fruit wines developed by the Food Science Cluster, College of Agriculture, UPLB.

wine can deter food poisoning. It can help wipe out the bacteria that are responsible for food-related stomach problems. In addition, red wine reduces the build up of fat cells in the arteries, thus it protects wine-drinkers against heart disease.

Recent studies in medicine have shown positive effects of moderate wine consumption to the heart.

One of the popular findings is the "French Paradox." France is considered both as land of wine-producers and wine-drinkers. It is one of the countries with the highest amount of saturated fat intake which is positively correlated with *arterosclerosis*, yet there is low incidence of coronary heart disease. (Landrault, et al. 2001)

Wine can also prevent cancer. The *catechins* in red wine have been proven effective in reducing cancer risks. It can also help treat *anorexia* (characterized by the loss of appetite), since the alcohol in concentrated form in grape wine improves appetite by prompting the flow of saliva and gastric secretions. Nonetheless, wine is a mild natural tranquilizer as it reduces anxiety and tension.

Some of the locally produced wines are *basi* (sugarcane wine), *laksoy* (nipa wine), *tapuy* (rice wine), and *tuba* (coco wine).

Meanwhile, sources of tropical fruit wines include *atis* (sugar apple/sweetsop, *Ananas quamosa* L.), *bignay* (*Antidesma bunius* L.), *dalandan* (orange, *Citrus lanatus*), *duhat* (Philippine plum, *Syzygium cumini* L. skeels), *guyabano* (soursoy, *Anona muricata*), *kalumpit* (*Terminalia edulis* Linn.), *lipote* (*Syzygium polycephaloides*), *mangga* (mango, *Mangifera* sp.), *mangosteen* (*Garcinia mangostana* Linn.), *passion fruit* (*Passiflora*

*foetida*), *pinya* (pineapple, *Ananas comosus* Linn.), *saging* (banana, *Musa* sp.), and *sampalok* (tamarind, *Tamarindus indica* Linn.).

"In fruit wine processing, sorting and washing of the raw ingredients are always the first steps. Crushing and slicing are next in the process, followed by dilution, blending, scooping, sugar adjustment, inoculation, and establishment of mother starter or culture," as she discussed the process of fruit wine making.

She added that the next process involves fermentation. Once fermentation begins, regardless of the chosen path, it will normally continue on until all of the sugar has been converted to alcohol and a dry wine is produced.

From there, harvesting, labeling, bottling and aging follow in that order.

Problems that can be encountered in processing fruit wines, as mentioned by Prof. Dizon, include: seasonality of raw materials; inconsistent quality of products; limited supply of wine bottles, seals, or closures; lack of proper quality control; and lack of technical know-how.

On the other hand, she enumerated the challenges in today's wine manufacturers such as production of consistent quality products, competitive advantage in terms of product presentation (packaging, label, closure, or seal), innovative products, willingness to work hard to establish a thriving business, protecting the natural flavor of the product, identifying functional properties of the product, expanding cultivation area for minor but potential fruits for making wine, and utilization of by-products from wine processing. ■



Prof. Erlinda I. Dizon of Food Science Cluster, College of Agriculture, UPLB

CDGZMAN



# Health and wellness benefits from seaweeds explored

CHRISTMAS B. DE GUZMAN

According to statistics, people who live in Japan are healthier and actually live longer than the people in the United States. Seaweed is a staple food of the island country of Japan. This is the key factor to their health and life longevity. Seaweed contains higher fiber than vegetables, more protein than meat, and more calcium than milk. Seaweed is actually a good ingredient to include in everyone's diet.

Dr. Marco Nemesio E. Montaña of the Marine Science Institute, College of Science, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, discussed the health and wellness benefits of seaweeds in a seminar at the 2008 Agriculture and Fisheries Technology Commercialization Forum organized by the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR). He underscored the multitude effects of dietary algae, which include having anti-oxidant, anti-viral, anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, anti-tumor and anti-wrinkle properties, aside from the fact that it lowers blood pressure, glucose, cholesterol, and inhibit cell-cell adhesion.

Dr. Montaña said that there are some *pytochemicals* unique to seaweeds. These include the seaweed pigments or *carotenoids* such as *fucoxanthin*, seaweed sterols, *phlorotannins*, fibers, seaweed anti-herbivore chemical defenses, and acidic polysaccharides (*fucoidan*, *carrageenan*).

*Fucoxanthin* is a pharmacologically active carotenoid commonly distributed in brown algae. It acts as an antioxidant and inhibits GOTO cells of *neuroblastoma* and colon cancer cells. It has also been found that *fucoxanthin* reduces the viability of prostate

cancer cells by inducing *apoptosis* (natural cell death) to a greater extent than the other *carotenoids*. Moreover, it can induce *apoptosis* in human leukemia cells.

In terms of wellness, a new product line developed from seaweed extracts is the *Seamoy* (with approved patent and trademark). This is a seaweed-based, low-cost air freshener gel that uses sweet floral scents to give every room, car, lockers, and cabinets a clean, fresh smell. The gel can be easily handled and packed in a variety of ways.

The use of seaweeds as a base ingredient for air fresheners has improved the quality of those existing in the market today. Air freshener gels usually last only for two to three weeks whereas some soft gels, which may contain soft paraffin, can cause clogging in air-conditioning units. Likewise, air freshener gels are expensive owing to the high production cost of its base ingredient, *carrageenan*. *Carrageenan* is an algal polysaccharide used to give the air freshener gel a clear appearance. It is extracted from certain types of seaweeds using chemicals and equipment which result in increased production cost.

Dr. Montaña addressed concerns on the shelf life, environmental effect, and market cost of air-freshener gels.

The seaweed-based air freshener gel uses dried *Eucheuma* sp. seaweeds as base. *Eucheuma* is a red seaweed cultivated in the southern part of the Philippines and is one of the top five exports of the country. This type of seaweed contains carrageenan and cellulosic materials. However,

instead of extracting the carrageenan, the whole seaweed is used, thus, reducing the cost of production. The gel produced using the whole dried seaweed is not translucent in form. The gel strength remains the same as that of the carrageenan-based gel. Dr. Montaña used hard paraffin and diatomaceous earth (decalite) to control the release of the essence in the gel, resulting in a prolonged shelf life.

Hard paraffin does not evaporate in



Dr. Marco Nemesio E. Montaña holds a *Seamoy* sample during his seminar on seaweeds.

room temperature, therefore, preventing the clogging of air-conditioning units. The residue of the seaweed-based air freshener gel is biodegradable making the product environment-friendly.

Another product from seaweeds, as mentioned by Dr. Montaña, is the red sushi sheet. The product is derived from *Halymenia durvillaei*. Unlike other sushi sheets, this exhibits a bright red color which enhances the appearance of the sushi sheet. Product development is still going on to improve its appearance, texture, flavor, and overall quality.

Development of farming technologies for *H. durvillaei* is still in progress, thus, exact costing cannot be made yet. Approximately, in making the sushi sheet, a pack (6 x 6 inches, 10 pieces) would cost Php 11.00.

Other seaweed products include euginthol, fruit cubes, low calorie jelly, egg coatings, decorating gel, instant gum paste, low calorie mapple syrup, low cholesterol flan, *Algro* fertilizers, *Halimuyak* gel soap, dishwashing soap, *Halimuyak* liquid soap, ginhaua ointment, suppository base, and *R-PE*.

*R-PE* is a fluorescent red pigment extracted from red seaweeds used in *flow cytometry* (a technique for counting cells suspended in fluid) and as coloring for food and cosmetics. It has antioxidant property. What is being studied is whether or not *R-PE* has antibacterial and anticancer properties.

In conclusion, Dr. Montaña said that seaweeds are important and significant renewable resource of the country. He encouraged the participants at the seminar, especially those interested in venturing into seaweed business to initiate research and development activities that would facilitate funding and improve the seaweed industry.

The participation of the government, private sector and the academe in the development of this so-called "ocean herb" is essential. ■

# TECHCOM adds value to AGRICULTURE

## SACY underlines 4 factors for successful TechCom implementation



Secretary Arthur C. Yap

Technology commercialization (TechCom) is critical in adding value to agriculture, particularly in developing commodities and products, Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap asserted at the opening program of the "2008 Agriculture and Fisheries Technology Commercialization Forum and Exhibit" and "21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR)".

The event was held at the SM Megatrade Hall 2, SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City on 21 August 2008.

In his impromptu address Yap said: "Critical to the development of the rural sector is TechCom wherein value-adding plays an important role, particularly in providing income to farmers. By increasing the uses and values of our agricultural products, we are also targeting to improve incomes of our farmers. And this is the way to boost the rural sector in terms of development and income."

He cited some of the pressing issues besetting the agriculture sector today. Yap stressed that being the Secretary of Agriculture today, the two most important and valid questions to ask are: What did you do to contribute to the growth of agriculture in the country? What did you do to improve the income of the farmers?

"Today, the demand for the agriculture sector to deliver is high. It has the added pressure to the government that the Department of Agriculture has to walk on a very tight rope promoting agriculture while

monitoring the supply and profit. That is why TechCom is very critical. We have to have something different to offer."

In line with his earlier point, Yap enumerated four important factors that come to mind when one talks of technology commercialization. These are: *market research*, *research and development* (R&D), *extension*, and *capital*.

"*Market research* is important because it determines what the market wants and monitors what the competitors are doing." In view of this, DA has established various trade desk offices to specifically conduct market research and monitor what the neighboring countries are doing in the name of global competitiveness and efficiency. This endeavor is in cooperation with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

"After knowing what the market wants, we need *R&D* to enable the industry to generate new products necessary for agricultural productivity." Specifically, Yap instructed BAR to forge ties with the Centers of Excellence in the region that have the technical expertise and competence to conduct research in the field.

"We need to push BAR into developing partnership with regional and localized centers and even with state universities and colleges that have technical capabilities that we can utilize," Yap reiterated.

Another important aspect in technology commercialization that Yap cited is *Extension*. With the devolvement of extension to the local government units, Sec. Yap revealed his frustration of how difficult it is now for DA to control as to which direction the agricultural extension is and should be heading.

The last and most important factor according to Yap is *Capital*. "At the end of the day, the question boils down to one thing: Will it be funded?" he said. As a success story, he sampled the case of Mr. Lito Arenas of LA Trading who started as a mango picker but is now one of the biggest exporters of mangoes in the country.

"All this would have not been possible if he was not able to get sufficient funding support from the Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (ACEF)," he further noted.

ACEF is a funding facility aimed at supporting those whose livelihood depends on the country's primary sector such as agriculture which enables farmers and fisherfolk, cooperatives, and agribusiness entrepreneurs to compete in an extremely competitive and increasingly globalized agriculture market.

In conclusion, Yap encouraged those in attendees to support the TechCom programs of DA through BAR. (Rita T. dela Cruz)



Sec. Arthur C. Yap inspects bottles of fruit wine developed by UPLB during his rounds to the various product displays at the techno forum and exhibit. Looking on are UPLB Vice Chancellor for Administration Roberto F. Rañola (left), BAR Asst. Dir. Teodoro S. Solsoloy (second from left), and BAR Dir. Nicomedes P. Eleazar (right).



## Market value of abalone in Central Visayas intensified

Unfamiliar to many of us is the abalone (*Haliotis asinina*), an endemic fishery species living in marine waters. This simple yet important shellfish commonly found in the coastal waters of Central Visayas is recognized for its market value.

Owing to its abundance, economic, and social importance to local fishers, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in Region 7 through the mechanism of community participation started to study its growth behavior and extract most of its value. As such, research has provided an expanded opportunity to define its production management system within a confined condition.

Initially, the research on abalone was funded by the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) to determine its growing behavior, fine tune the production management technology in a confined condition, and determine influencing factors needed for community involvement in fishery interventions. Complete process documentation was done for the research and to serve as basis for the expansion of community-based research in wider marine waters.

Through the research study implemented by BFAR 7, particularly the Regional Fisheries Research and Development Center (RFRDC) in Calape, Bohol, the team of researchers composed of Gamelba Dumadag, Mario Ruinata, and Rona Abrenica worked on the feeding management and stocking density of the abalone.

The research opened doors for the communities to be involved, especially on the hatchery and grow-out characteristics of the shellfish. With the immediate response and feedback on the lessons learned and experiences of the community, researchers were able to establish and develop a more defined production scheme that further encourages the people to venture.

Based on this experience, the RFRDC developed and submitted another project to BFAR central office and BAR for more community-based participatory research endeavor. This time, it will highlight the importance of the principles of action research and community development.

The project boosted the capability of the community and



Abalone (*Haliotis asinina*)

people's responsibility and accountability to be more proactive and innovative to meet the challenges and opportunities involved in abalone culture. Eventually, the gains derived from this action research and people's involvement will support the fast-paced development of fishery industry in the region for global competitiveness (Marlowe U. Aquino, PhD).

## Northern Mindanao develops strategies to improve fisheries technologies

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in Northern Mindanao has gradually and systematically developed a strategy to bring about its generated technologies to its clientele and end-users. The strategy is the improvement of production management system on *tilapia*, *bangus*, and other fishes for better production and increase profit.

Gigi Arbor, manager of DA-BFAR-10 Regional Fisheries Research and Development Center (RFRDC), said all their efforts in research and development (R&D) including extension and training, are geared toward local and international global competitiveness. They need to provide an avenue to encourage community participation in the production of quality fishery products.

The BFAR-10 regional office established partnership with the local government of Balingasag, Misamis Oriental, to construct a regional hatchery processing facility for multifishes that would help distribute quality fingerlings to farmers and

encourage a steady production of fishes for processing. This will enable the region to be abundant in fishery and at the same time address the fish security and sustainability for its people and communities.

In addition, RFRDC continually provide technical assistance to ensure the desirable sizes for fish processing through improved and innovative production management systems such as *tilapia* culture and *bangus* culture. Such activities are observed and implemented in Lala, Lanao del Norte, for *tilapia* fish fillet processing and *bangus* in Balingasag, Misamis Oriental. These activities support the community-based initiative of an integrated fishery production in mariculture parks in the region.

Through these activities, the DA-BFAR-10, together with the regional fishery council and private sector, developed a fishery comprehensive plan that will be

implemented by all key players and stakeholders in the region from 2008 to 2010. The plan aims to intensify the operation of fishery research, development, and extension, and training activities and ensures abundance of fish production and increase income for people and their communities.

The identified operations and activities will use community-based participatory action research approach including local governance, coastal resource management, and people's participation and empowerment (Marlowe U. Aquino, PhD).



RDELACRUZ

## BAR conducts Collaborative Extension Service Planning Workshop for Regions 4A, 4-B, & 5

Regions 4A, 4B, and 5 conducted the "DA-LGU-SUC Collaborative Extension Service (CES) Planning Workshop" on 15 August 2008 at the Splash Mountain Hotel, Los Baños, Laguna. This is the fourth of a series of activities on CES after the national consultative workshop held at Edsa Shangrila Hotel in May 2008.

The event was actively participated in by members from the Regional Integrated Agricultural Research Centers (RIARCs), Regional Field Units (RFUs) of the Department of Agriculture (DA), local government units (LGUs), and state, universities and colleges (SUCs).

Regional Technical Director (RTD) of Region 4A Aida P. Cariño welcomed the participants. She stressed the need to address the problem on food security considering strategies in working with SUCs on extension activities.

"This will hopefully help address problems on extension delivery system at the LGU level," she said.

The opening remarks was given by BAR Assistant Director Teodoro S. Solsoloy wherein he highlighted the respective roles of the three agencies thus: "DA serves as the lead agency in giving national direction, funds, field commands; LGU provides the manpower, local supervision of targets and activities and mobilization of local institutions; SUC provides the technical manpower, appropriate technologies, and applied research."

"We can solve the rice crisis. We can provide the food requirement. We can create jobs in the countryside," Dr. Emil Q. Javier, president of the National Academy of Science of Technology (NAST) asserted in his message. He further stressed the need for an overall coordination at the national level.

Meanwhile, Technical Adviser Santiago R. Obien presented the highlights of the national consultative workshop and the



DA-SUC CES status based from the previous regional consultations.

From the presentation, the DA-LGU-SUC goals and commitments encompass the following: 1) bringing science and technology to the farmers and fisherfolk; 2) mobilizing SUCs' power and technologies to the farmers through the LGUs; and 3) strengthening and developing LGU capability covering manpower and physical resources.

Dr. Jose Hernandez of the Institute of Plant Breeding (IPB) presented the Proposed RD&E Plan for Region 4A, 4B, and 5 titled, "Regionalizing the National Agricultural Program for Food Security: Towards a Multi-Partnership RDE Framework." Dr. Hernandez presented this in behalf of University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) Chancellor Luis Rey I. Velasco.

"Strengthen and sustain a multi-stakeholder partnership with DA-RFUs, SUCs, Provincial and Municipal Local Government Units (P/M LGUs), NGOs/POs/FOs, and relevant private sector-business groups," Dr. Hernandez said on the overall objective of the project.

Ginintuang Masagana Ani (GMA) Rice Program Coordinator Frisco M.

Malabanan presented the updates on the GMA Rice Program of the Department. He also highlighted the FIELDS Program of the government in promoting rice-self sufficiency in the country.

In the afternoon, participants were grouped based on their respective regions for them to identify their FIELDS activities and interventions in support of the Rice Self-Sufficiency Program, in which all provinces are required to prepare their provincial plans and programs and clarify roles and responsibilities of each institution within the regional framework.

Director Wilfredo B. Carada of the UPLB-College of Public Affairs gave the synthesis for the whole day workshop.

He emphasized the role of UPLB as a national resource that will interface with other SUCs and LGUs in making things happen through capacity-building interventions, trouble shooting, technical support, and policy advocacy support.

The groups agreed to refine a doable level of rice self-sufficiency plan for all LGUs in the regions by 2010. Investments in the FIELDS Programs at the cluster or provincial level were also identified to sustain increases in rice production. (Ma. Eloisa E. Hernandez)



MEHERNANDEZ





## PCA concludes 7<sup>th</sup> National Coconut Festival; BAR participates in product exhibit

The Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) concluded its 7th National Coconut Festival from 7 to 10 August 2008 at the SM Mega Trade Hall 2, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City with the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) participating as one of the exhibitors. This is in celebration of the 22nd National Coconut Week.

Deputy Administrator Carlos Carpio welcomed the participants in behalf of Administrator Oscar G. Garin. In his

message, he thanked all the Filipino farmers who participated in the activity. He said that the theme, *Kasaganaan at Kaunlaran sa Pinagymang Niyugan* highlights the cooperative thrust of the government to boost coconut production, increase the productivity of coconut farms, raise farmers' income, contribute to food security, spur the growth of coconut-based products processing and trade, and provide tremendous opportunities in wealth generation for all stakeholders.

"The theme serves as our marching

order to pervasively push the industry's development," Carpio stressed.

Attending as keynote speaker for the event was Senator Edgardo J. Angara.

"We have the best of two possible worlds. We can produce food from coconut and we can produce fuel out of coconut," he enthused. Sen. Angara encouraged coconut farmers to plant seedlings that can bear fruits in a span of four years and rehabilitate their areas in Aurora, Quezon.

The four-day exhibit presented seminars and technology demonstrations from various partner-institutions and showcased product lines from coconut, virgin coconut oil, herbal bath soaps, beauty care products, estrol biodiesel, and results of R&D projects, among other things.

BAR, through its Management Information Systems Division (MISD) led by Assistant Head Julia A. Lapitan, facilitated the product exhibit. Showcased at the booth were BAR regular publications and books funded under the Scientific Publication Grant (SPG).

SPG provides a smooth flow of information among stakeholders in the R&D System such as farmers, fisherfolk, policymakers, administrators, and extension specialists. Some publications funded under SPG include Package of Technology of Different Vegetable Crops, The 7th ESAFS International Conference, The Philippines Recommends for Broiler Production, The Philippine Recommends for Agricultural Waste Processing and Management, and Training Manual on Analysis of Remotely Sensed Data and Implementing Geographic Information Systems in Agriculture and Natural Resources. (Ma. Eloisa E. Hernandez)

## BAR IKM services and programs assessed

In the era of cyber technology, information plays a vital role in the development of communities. This role has been considered by the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) in implementing its mandate in coordinating and managing the Department of Agriculture-National Research and Development System in Agriculture and Fisheries (DA-NaRDSAF) through information and knowledge management (IKM).

With the voluminous R&D products derived from the different BAR-funded research projects, BAR IKM services and programs are evaluated in terms of product packaging and processing, delivery mechanism, content, acceptance, relevance, and dissemination and application to intended users and clientele. The BAR IKM assessment is undertaken by the University of the Philippines Public Administration Research and Extension Foundation, Inc. (UPPAF) in coordination

with the Center for Local and Regional Governance-National College of Public Administration and Governance and the UP College of Mass Communication – Department of Communication Research.

The IKM assessment is timely because of the continuous innovative process of ensuring quality outputs and services of BAR. This boosts its corporate image as it moves towards its 22nd year as a national R&D coordinating body of DA. The right kind, right time, and appropriate means of information and knowledge products and services are important in making more effective and efficient activities in R&D management to support community initiatives on all levels of development.

BAR's critical role in agricultural development lies in making agriculture a business activity through information-sensitive and information-oriented resource management. This role has been translated in several programs and services which are anchored on information and knowledge

management supportive of R&D in agriculture and fisheries.

The assessment started in August and will end in November 2008. Partners and clientele of BAR were identified by the assessing body, including the preparation and development of the evaluation instrument that ensures validity, reliability, and quality of outputs. Results will be shared to improve the programs and delivery of services of BAR as responsive agency in R&D management and in the development of communities through appropriate information and knowledge management for agribusiness and sustainable development.

The assessment methodology consists of three components: *communication research and development, capability building for staff, and enhancement of information management systems*. Expected outputs are intended for the improvement of the overall R&D information and knowledge management program of BAR and NaRDSAF. (Marlowe U. Aquino, PhD).

## New BFAR research center in Bicol inaugurated

Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar led the inauguration of the rehabilitated administrative building of the Regional Fisheries Research and Development Center (RFRDC) in Bicol at the SDDFN Compound, Cabid-an, Sorsogon City on 14 August 2008.

The rehabilitation/improvement project was funded by BAR under its Institutional Development Grant (IDG) in collaboration with the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Regional Office V (BFAR Region 5) based in San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur.

The IDG is handled by BAR's Infrastructure Development Unit (IDU) to manage the R&D Infrastructure Development Program and strengthen the capacities of national and regional agriculture and fisheries R&D centers.

RFRDC 5 Manager Aida S.

Andayog invited Director Eleazar to grace the inauguration of the renovated building. During the event, a display of value-added products derived from seaweeds and other fishery resources were showcased. Some of these products which were developed through the center's projects include

seaweed noodles and chips, shrimp extract with coconut oil, and canned tuna and beans.

On the sideline, Director Eleazar also visited the RDE project of BFAR V -

RFRDC which was also funded by BAR, the semi-intensive milkfish production. Mr. Dennis V. Del Socorro is the current director of BFAR Region V. (Miko Jazmine J. Mojica)



BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar (third from right) leads the inauguration of the rehabilitated building of the RFRDC in Bicol. Joining him are RFRDC 5 Manager Aida S. Andayog (fourth from right) and RFRDC staff.

### Cacao industry...from page 1

good quality planting materials accessible to them, as well as giving them assistance from proper and effective crop management to postharvest techniques and ensure that Philippine cacao will meet the quality standards required by the market.

Moreover, market linkage and applicable credit schemes are seen critical in establishing the industry where small farmers can benefit from.

"We need to establish the Philippine National Standard for cacao and complement it with continuous R&D support for the package of technology and varietal development. I'm glad that we had this meeting at DA-BAR. We can now design a comprehensive R&D program for cacao," stressed Ramos.

Research managers and

representatives from DA's Regional Integrated Agricultural Research Centers (RIARCs) and Agricultural Experiment Stations (AES) present in the meeting gave brief status reports on the cacao production in their respective areas specifically in Southern Mindanao, MIMAROPA (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan), Central Visayas, Northern Mindanao, and Southern Tagalog.

The biggest cacao-producing area in the country is Southern Mindanao, particularly Davao, followed by CALABARZON (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon), particularly Quezon and Cavite.

Recognizing the potential of the industry's growth in the region, BAR is funding an Integrated RD&E Program for Cacao from 2008 to 2012 to be implemented by the Southern Mindanao Integrated

Agricultural Research Center (SMIARC).

Cooperating agencies from different sectors in the project include the University of Southern Mindanao (USM), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI), University of Southern Eastern Philippines (USEP), provincial local

government units (PLGUs), and CocoaPhil and its partner organization, Agricultural Cooperative Development International, and Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (ACDI/VOCA).

According to Ramos, *Criollo* is the most expensive and sought-after variety of cacao due to its quality and rarity. The variety, which can only be found in Ecuador and The Philippines, is also known as "*porcelana cacao*" because of its seeds' white color. *Criollo* is not found throughout the country since it is highly susceptible to pests and diseases.

"I believe that if we could establish a strong R&D program and develop our standards, we could promote this variety and cash in from this definite competitive advantage," added Ramos.

BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar expressed the bureau's enthusiasm to support the revival of the cacao industry in the country. He said that he will seek the involvement of other concerned agencies from the different stakeholders of the bureau to integrate all R&D efforts for cacao.

"We could also look into the opportunity of growing cacao organically as this will appeal to the market better and look for ways to use the wastage from its postharvest to maximize our gains from this crop," said Director Eleazar. (Miko Jazmine J. Mojica)



Cacao meeting at BAR Conference Room



# 8 Outstanding BAR employees awarded



MA. ELOISA E. HERNANDEZ

From the 44 nominees, eight staff members of the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) were given the 2008 Outstanding Employee Award. Awardees were announced during the opening program of the Agriculture and Fisheries Technology Commercialization Forum and Exhibit and 21<sup>st</sup> BAR Anniversary Celebration on 21 August 2008 at the SM Megatrade Hall, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

Senator Edgardo J. Angara and Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap handed over the plaques to the winners. Assisting them were BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar and Assistant Director Teodoro S. Solsoloy.

The awarding of outstanding employees is given by the bureau every year in recognition to employees who have demonstrated exemplary performance and dedication in their respective duties and responsibilities.

Asst. Dir. Solsoloy is the chair of the Search Committee with members from the Bureau's Technical Advisory Group, namely: Dr. Manuel F. Bonifacio, Dr. Santiago R. Obien, and Ms. Josefina M. Lantican.

Aside from the plaques, all awardees received cash prizes. Likewise, grand winners for each category have the priority to attend trainings abroad.

This year's winners include:

## Division/Unit Head:

Proving that his first time was not won out of mere luck, Planning Unit Head **Joell H. Lales** once again bagged this year's award for this category. Concurrently, he works as senior executive assistant to the director of BAR. When asked how he is as a boss, one of his staff-members revealed how professional and organized he is both in the kind of work that he does and the way he delegates tasks. "He is good in motivating his staff to do better in their respective work assignment," they added.

*Dr. Marlowe U. Aquino*, head of the Management Information Systems Division (MISD) and *Dr. Carmencita V. Kagaoan* head of the Project Development Division (PDD) are the runners-up.



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RDELACRUZ

## Technical Supervisory:

PDD Assistant Head **Salvacion M. Ritual** (left, standing) was announced grand winner for this category. She is head of the Project Packaging Section (PPS) of PDD which is tasked to prepare, evaluate, and package R&D proposals for possible local and foreign funding.

Other awardees for this category are *Digna L. Sandoval*, coordinator for crops at the Technology Commercialization Unit (TCU) and *Julia A. Lapitan*, assistant head of MISD and head of the Applied Communication Section (ACS).



RBERNARDO

## Technical Non-Supervisory:

"Put first things first" is an important attribute for an effective and efficient staff according to BAR's head writer, **Rita T. dela Cruz**. She took home this year's award for this category. *Rayts*, as she is fondly called by friends, first serve at the bureau as a contractual employee in 2000. Three years after, she got a permanent post at MISD and was assigned to manage the bureau's regular publications.

Merit awards went to *Jude Ray P. Laguna*, executive assistant to the assistant director and technical support staff at the Agriculture and Fisheries Policy Research Unit (AFPRU) and *Ricarte V. Castro*, regional coordinator for CAR and ARMM.

## Non-Technical Supervisory:

Despite the limited manpower of BAR's Budget Unit, **Judith A. Maghanoy** sees to it that quality service is delivered as expected. She has been working at the bureau for 20 years now starting as a clerk before finally getting her stint as a budget officer. She maintains a good working relationship with the people he works with, as echoed by one of her staff members.



RBERNARDO

## Non-Technical Non-Supervisory:

**Gretel F. Rivera** (right) has served three directors during her 14 years of service at BAR as document control officer. As such, she ensures that the quality management system and procedures at the bureau comply with the international standard. Concurrently, she serves as ISO Internal Quality Auditor. Winning the award for the first time is a huge achievement for her. "A rewarding and fulfilling one," she cheerfully revealed.

Also receiving a citation under this category is *Elvira S. Rapada* (left), head of the Infrastructure Development of the Institutional Development Section (IDS) of PDD.



RDELACRUZ

## Support Services:

The first recipient for the category went to **Magdalena M. Calimutan** of the Finance Unit. Initially working as a contractual employee, she previously received the Outstanding Project-based Staff Award during the term of Dr. Eliseo R. Ponce. She worked as OIC for the Internal Control Unit for almost a year before getting her current post consolidating the monthly reporting of the Journal Entry Voucher (JEV).

From the same unit, *Dorotea B. Caliza* was recognized as the runner-up under this category.



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## Technical Project-Based:

Taking home the grand prize for this category is **Engr. Ethyl G. Bulao**, technical staff at the Project Evaluation Section (PES) of PDD. She has been with BAR since 2003. She turned down a possible permanent position in another institution but certainly finds no tinge of regret because of the fulfillment she is getting in her current job may it be in the professional aspect or simply being with her friends and colleagues. Despite other additional workload at PDD, she confessed that she is happy and fulfilled to successfully accomplish them on time.

MISD writer, *Ma. Eloisa E. Hernandez* is this year's first-runner up followed by RCD coordinator, *Apolonia A. Mendoza*.



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## Non-Technical Project-based:

Previously working in a private institution, **Gladys A. Gammad** of TCU has been serving at the bureau for a year now. Showing great dedication to her work and believing in the adage, "always give your best shot" are reflective on how she handles her tasks and how her colleagues perceive her.

According to her, winning the award is a self-fulfillment and it inspires her to always do her best. Thus, she is able to handle pressures both at work and at home being a responsible and loving mother to her two kids.



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