

Adopting farming...from page 13

generated out of his duck, hito and vegetable production. According to Mr. Restituto C. Parreño, one of the farmer-cooperators in Barangay Lepaga, his 10 x 15 sq. m. pond yielded an income of P8,561 after his harvest on June 2011 with a farm gate price of P100 per kilo. The 58 pieces ducks which was delivered to him last December 2010 is now producing an average of 20 eggs per day with a farm gate price of P5.00 per piece. He has now an income of P21,000 out of the eggs produced which were intended for making *balut* and salted egg. A variety of vegetables such as pole *sitao*, okra, eggplant, *patola* and *ampalaya* planted in the vacant areas of his farm yielded an income of P8,430. Fresh vegetables harvested from his farm were delivered to the nearby market and commanded higher prices because they were organically grown.

Oil Palm-based Farming

This project was established at Barangay Gaunan of M'lang, Cotabato. Six hundred forty pieces oil palm seedlings (Provincial Local Government Unit counterpart) were delivered to five farmers of this barangay. Corn seeds were provided as seed material to be planted in between spaces of the oil palm while it is still unproductive.

Another five farmers from the same barangay benefitted the component 2 of this CPAR project. These farmers have an existing mature oil palm in the area. Small ruminants particularly goat were delivered and integrated under the existing main crop. Livestock integration plays a very great



CPAR farmer-cooperator shows the vermicast that they are producing and is using in their farm. Also in the photo are BAR PMED Coordinators Amador Macabeo and Marnelle A. Gadong during their project site visit. PHOTO: DA-RFU 12

role in the farming system since the manure that was being excreted out of these animals served as source of organic fertilizer for the main crop. Relevant training pertaining on oil palm, goat and vermi compost were also conducted to augment farmers' knowledge on management and production systems.

The same with the first component, this component 2 had a very substantial impact among farmers in Barangay Gaunan. Certainly, the costing and success indicators revealed that a farmer can have an average produce of 96 cavans of corn per hectare with an equivalent amount of P53,760.00 with a net income of P22,760.00 after deducting from the production cost. It's good enough considering that the area that was being utilized was just only those in between spaces of newly planted oil palm. Proceeds on goat production could not be accounted as of

the moment since the offsprings were just still on kidding stage during data gathering. However, based on the survey regarding on the current selling price of goat, it can cost up to P160.00 per kilogram liveweight basis.

While CPAR project in M'lang, Cotabato served as a show window of improved farming systems, combined efforts of farmers, extension workers and researchers must be continued in order to fulfill our common goal that is to help farmers particularly in the countryside increase their farm productivity and income and in far ahead uplift their living standards.

The success of every endeavor must not all be gauged on the achievements fulfilled today, instead, how these farmers applied and maximized the knowledge they have gained during the entire duration of the project for their subsistence and progress. Indeed, there is a need to keep

Eleazar visits IDG-funded projects in DA-CVIARC

PHOTOS: CVIARC



BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar, guest speaker, provides the audience with a brief introduction on the bureau's IDG Program as well as other R&D priorities of the bureau. PHOTO: CVIARC



Groundbreaking ceremony for the laboratory building



Groundbreaking ceremony for the dormitory



Ribbon-cutting ceremony for the training center

Dr. Nicomedes P. Eleazar, director of the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR), has recently went to the Department of Agriculture-Cagayan Valley Integrated Agricultural Research Center (DA-CVIARC) to visit projects supported under the bureau's Institutional Development Grant (IDG) program.

Highlighting the visit was Dir. Eleazar's attendance and participation in the groundbreaking ceremony of the Cagayan Valley Integrated Agricultural Laboratory Building in Carig, Tuguegarao City. The project is being supported by BAR together with the DA-Regional Field Unit II (RFU II).

The rehabilitation and construction of the research facility was in line with CVIARC's goal of integrating and harmonizing its laboratory services towards "increasing production and ensuring high quality and bio-safety of agricultural products in region 02 for local consumption, processing and for export."

Leading the groundbreaking ceremony with Dir Eleazar were CVIARC key officials led by Mr.

Lucrecio R. Alviar Jr., regional executive director (RED) and Mr. Orlando J. Lorenzana, regional technical director (RTD).

Dr. Eleazar also joined the officials and staff of CVIARC in inaugurating the DA-CVIARC Research and Extension Training Building in Ilagan, Isabela. He was joined in by RED Lucrecio R. Alviar Jr., and CVIARC officials in the ribbon cutting

turn to page 2



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IN THIS ISSUE...

Eleazar visits IDG-funded projects.....	1
19 NAFC BAR KR2-funded projects reviewed.....	3
BAR orients 21 SUCs on R&D thrusts.....	4
BAR joins int'l rubber confab.....	5
Partner-member countries meet to strengthen.....	6
BAR celebrates Christmas 2011.....	8
BAR intensifies support to livestock R&D.....	10
MinSCAT fishery products and upgrading.....	11
BAR caps 2011 with 5th Bright Leaf awards.....	12
Adopting farming system approach.....	13
Venturing into the money-making seaweeds.....	14

Eleazar visits...from page 1

and marker unveiling ceremonies.

In his speech as the event's guest speaker, Dr. Eleazar stressed how these grants are in line with the new priority plans, policies, directions, and of the bureau as well as with the DA's AgriPinoy framework and overall goals.

Aside from taking part in these ceremonies, Dr. Eleazar also took the chance of being in the area to see and visit other BAR-supported projects under IDG that incidentally have equally significant activities prepared by the regional research center.

A groundbreaking ceremony of another IDG project, "Rehabilitation and Extension of Guest House No.2 into Dormitory," wherein Dir. Eleazar also served as a special guest, was also conducted by the center thereafter.



BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar (3rd from left) is welcomed by key officials of the center headed by Mr. Lucrecio R. Alviar Jr., regional executive director (4th from left), and Mr. Orlando J. Lorenzana, regional technical director (left). PHOTO: CVIARC

He went to the Cagayan Breeding Station in Solano, Cagayan

where he was invited as a guest speaker to the "Goat Field Day".

Another groundbreaking ceremony of an IDG was the "Improvement of DA-CVIARC Guest House 1" which also graced by the bureau chief. Before dawn, Dir. Eleazar toured the Cagayan Breeding Station.

IDG is one of the programs of the bureau in lieu of its continued pursuit towards strengthening the R&D capability of regional research centers by providing them with financial support to the rehabilitation and construction of the various infrastructures and facilities of the center. ### (Mara Shyn M. Valdeabella)

Dr. Eleazar and CVIARC officials look at the signage where the Cagayan Valley Integrated Agricultural Laboratory Building will soon rise. PHOTO: CVIARC



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PHOTOS: PLESACA

intended for the 3.5-hectare seaweed culture area. The seaweed project is composed of 14 modules (modules 1 - 7 for year 1 and modules 8 - 14 for year 2), with an area of 2,500 sq.m. for each fisherfolk-partner. The average fisherfolk-member was composed of two to three families per module. Other materials included Polyethylene ropes, Styrofoam blocks, plastic straws, nets and other related fishing gears.

The culture period of seaweeds is from 45 to 60 days. After which, harvested seaweeds are sun-dried for two to three days under favorable conditions. Moisture content must be at least 35 percent to meet the marketable standards. During rainy season, however, seaweeds are dried using air dry method.

According to Joelyn Sentina, BFAR Reg-VI technical staff, one of the projects had already been completed during the first year of implementation. Fisherfolk-beneficiaries were able finish two-cycles and were able to sell their produce to local seaweed consolidators. Based on production and income proportion, 46 percent of the projected income is obtained or derived after two-cycles.

Seaweeds are algae which generally thrive in the sea or brackish

water. Scientist call them "*benthic marine algae*" which literally means, attached algae that live in the sea. Seaweeds come in three colors: red, brown, and green. *Red* and *brown* algae are exclusively marine while the *green* are common in fresh water.

Smiles of success

"*Iyong tulong na nabigay ng BAR ay siya ring naitulong ko sa aming barangay bilang Kapitan*" (The assistance that BAR provided to us is also the assistance we are extending in our barangay), said Brgy. Captain Pedro Helera, also a fisherfolk cooperator.

"*Nakakakain na kami ng maayos at napag-aaral namin ang aming mga anak*" (We now have enough food to eat and we could send our children to school), revealed the teary-eyed mother, Jocelyn Pueyo. The same sentiment was re-echoed by another successful seaweed grower, Imelda Ganancial. Pueyo and Ganancial are both module team leaders and beneficiaries of the CPAR

project.

After the first year of project (August 2009 – August 2010), the total production of harvested seaweeds in the cove of Panobolon reached 53.35MT amounting to gross income of P800,000. Majority of the fisherfolk in Panobolon decided to continue the seaweed culture even without government support and intervention. This experience was reported to the BAR Project Monitoring Team by the project proponents during the site visit.

Since the program is still in its growing stage, aura of hope and contentment were visible in the faces of the people of Panobolon. For now, with this CPAR project, the fisherfolk are assured of a better tomorrow. They could then say and promise to their children to "sleep tight, for tomorrow they will harvest seaweeds" and never worry for their incomes are assured. ###

This article was based from the project brief, "Community-based Participatory Action Research (CPAR) Seaweed Culture Project in Nueva Valencia, Guimaras" by the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) VI, Regional Fisheries Research and Development Center (RFRDC).

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Fisherfolk-beneficiaries were able finish two-cycles and were able to sell their produce to local seaweed consolidators.

Venturing into the money-making seaweeds industry through CPAR

Patrick Raymund A. Lesaca

The Island of Panay in Western Visayas is more than a haven for white corals and deep sea blue water. The island offers an abundance of wealth in terms of land and water produce. The province of Guimaras, for instance, produces the world's best mangoes while Roxas is recognized for its edible crustacean. The provinces of Iloilo, Roxas, Aklan, and Guimaras are known producers of marine life such as fish, seaweeds, and oysters, among others.

Local farmers and fishermen in the island nestle their hope in their best commodities that would suit and dictate their economic and personal dependence. Rice and corn farmers pray for good weather while local fishermen hope for calm water. These are some of the predictable patterns of their everyday existence.

One important industry in the region is the seaweeds industry in which through a Community-based Participatory Action Research (CPAR) project funded by Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR), is providing the impetus for growth that is slowly and increasingly gaining momentum for the sector.

Specifically, the CPAR Seaweed Culture Project, implemented in Brgy. Panobolon, Nueva Valencia in Guimaras, is reaping a huge success for the community. Panobolon is an island about 15 kilometers from the town of Nueva Valencia with a total population of 1,120 (NSO, 2009). Fishing is the main source of income of the people. They also get their earnings from farming and seaweed culture which at present is the major source of livelihood of the fisherfolk of Panobolon. Tremendous social and economic impacts were observed and recorded in the lives of individual farmer and the community-based fisherfolk organizations.



CPAR project on seaweeds

The CPAR Seaweed Culture Project started in August 2009 in collaboration with the DA-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resource (BFAR) Region VI and the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Guimaras. BFAR-VI and the LGU conducted three-day training on seaweed culture and solar salt making. The training included lectures on the biology and culture of seaweeds. Hands-on training on seaweed planting, fish pot construction and installation of salt beds were also part of the capability building introduced to the fisherfolk of Panobolon.

The CPAR project, which is implemented for two years, hopes to uplift the living condition of the people, and establish and promote an improved production systems and technologies in rural communities for increased productivity and profitability.

One will recall, that on 11 August 2006, M/V Solar 1, an oil tanker sank in Guimaras leaving its shores with spilled 2.4 million liters of oil which contaminated 1,000 hectares of

mangrove areas. The massive oil spill threatened water species and resources. At that time, environmentalists referred to the accident as the worst oil spill in the country's history and estimated the cleanup to take at least a year. (Inquirer Global Nation, 2009). In spite of this unfortunate event, fishermen pinned their hopes in livelihood projects in agriculture, fisheries, and solar-salt making to bring their lives back on track.

The project leader is led by Ms. Remia A. Appari, manager of BFAR-VI/Regional Fisheries Research and Development Center (RFRDC). The project is implemented with the members of the Panobolon Seaweed Growers Association as the fisherfolk-partner and collaborator. The LGU of Guimaras also took part in the identification of the project site in coordination with Panobolon Barangay Captain Pedro Helera.

The project component included the distribution of 16,800 kilograms of fresh *Kappaphycus* sp. seedlings to 36 selected proponents

19 BAR NAFC 2KR-funded projects reviewed, evaluated



BAR Director Nicomedes Eleazar (3rd from left) poses during a group photo op. With him are: (front row, L-R): Joell Lales of BAR-PPDD, Dr. Enrico Supangco of UPLB, Ms. Elgie Namia of NAFC, Mr. Anthony Obligado and Ms. Ma. Elena Garces of BAR-TCD with panel evaluators, project proponents, BAR staff and other guests. PHOTO: DDELEON

To date, there are 32 projects being implemented through the NAFC-BAR under the 2KR program, from which 15 are completed, 12 are on-going, and 5 are in the pipeline.

Nineteen Japan grant-assisted projects funded under the Second Kennedy Round (2KR) Program of Japan Official Development Assistance (ODA) through the Department of Agriculture- National Agricultural and Fishery Council (NAFC) and Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) were presented for an annual review and evaluation on 6-8 December 2011 at Hotel Vida, Clark in Pampanga.

Spearheading the event was the Technology Commercialization Division (TCD) of BAR that also handles the National Technology Commercialization Program (NTCP), one of the bureau's flagship programs.

Mandated to conduct the technology upscaling and commercialization of research and development (R&D) results, NTCP served as the bridge for the 2KR program to reach its intended beneficiaries. Being able to transfer the technologies developed from research and to adopt by the underprivileged farmers and fisherfolk are the conclusive outputs of the two programs.

BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar kicked off the three-day event by welcoming the attendees. He mentioned that DA-BAR-NAFC-2KR review and evaluation is the last leg of valuation done by BAR for its funded projects in 2011.

He also emphasized the importance of technology commercialization as a venue to open gates of opportunities for the beneficiaries to engage and venture into agribusiness. On behalf of the bureau, Dir. Eleazar extended his appreciation, not only to the Japanese government, but also to NAFC and the various partner institutions from the DA-Regional Field Units (RFOs), staff bureaus, attached agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs), and local government units (LGUs). The grant given, worth P55M, was valuable in continuously supporting the endeavors not only of the research institutions but also of the beneficiaries.

To date, there are 32 projects being implemented through the NAFC-BAR under the 2KR program, from which 15 are completed, 12 are on-going, and 5 are in the pipeline.

Chief of NAFC's Special Projects Division Elgie Namia and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Technical Expert Hiroshi Kodama were invited to join the panel of experts. The other members of the panel were Dr. Enrico Supangco of the University of Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), Ms. Josefina Lantican and Ms. Virginia Agcopra of the BAR-Technical Advisory Group (TAG), and BAR technical staff.

The panel evaluated 19 completed and on-going projects. Ms. Namia gave a brief discourse on the history and role of NAFC, BAR, and ODA to the 2KR program.

The presenters were asked to discuss the project overview, underscoring the accomplishments, issues/concerns/challenges and actions undertaken, recommendations and, project milestones. Every after two or three presentations, an open forum was conducted to address queries.

Culminating the activity was the distribution of certificates among the participants and BAR Asst. Dir. Teodoro Solsoloy delivering his parting message. He said that the imparted insights by the evaluators are vital to the outcomes of the project which ultimately will bring forth progress especially in rural communities.

The 2KR Program, otherwise known now as Grant Assistance for Underprivileged Farmers (GAUF), is a commodity assistance program by the Japan government to developing countries including the Philippines. It aims to extend assistance to increase food production and to attain food self-sufficiency through providing farm inputs such as fertilizers, agricultural chemicals and machineries. The program is under the supervision of DA through NAFC and BAR. ### (Diana Rose A. de Leon)

BAR orients 21 SUCs on R&D thrusts and major programs



Speakers and participants during the SUCs Briefing and Orientation. PHOTO: AGUMAPAC

The Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) held a briefing cum orientation on its strategic research and development (R&D) thrusts and major R&D programs to 21 state universities and colleges (SUCs). Of the 21 invited SUCs, a surprising yet welcome number of 44 participants in attended the event.

The briefing/orientation held on 7-9 December 2011 in Clark, Pampanga is the second that the bureau conducted. The first was in September 2011 with 40 SUCs briefed on BAR's thrusts and latest programs.

Dr. Nicomedes P. Eleazar, director of BAR, delivered the welcome remarks, wherein he acknowledged the esteemed presence of the participants and mentioned the significance of the activity.



Dr. Nicomedes P. Eleazar delivers his welcome remarks. PHOTO: AGUMAPAC

BAR officials and technical staff were in attendance to lead in the briefing of the bureau's major programs: Mr. Joell H. Lales of the Planning and Program Development Division (PPDD), Dr. Carmencita V. Kagaoan of the Institutional Development Division (IDD), Ms. Salvacion M. Ritual of the Project Monitoring and Evaluation Division (PMED), Ms. Julia A. Lapitan of the Applied Communication Division (ACD), Ms. Digna L. Sandoval of the Technology Commercialization Division (TCD).

The first day included a presentation on the Corporate Plan for 2011–2016 by Mr. Lales, followed by a briefing on the *Research, Development and Extension Agenda and Programs (RDEAP) 2011–2016*, with a more detailed presentation delivered thereafter on *Organic Agriculture RDEAP, Philippine Rainfed Agriculture RDEAP, and Climate Change RDEAP* by Ms. Maylen D. Villareal, Ms. Maureen G. Mangaring, and Ms. Marinelle S. Espino, respectively. On the same day, BAR major R&D programs were also introduced by corresponding BAR key officials, including the *National Technology Commercialization Program* (Ms. Sandoval), *Institutional Development Grant and Human Resource Development Program* (Dr. Kagaoan), and the *Scientific Publication Grant* (Ms. Lapitan). The day's event was capped off with an open forum.

The morning of the second day was a continuation of BAR's briefing on the *Research Grant Guidelines* particularly the *R&D Grant System and Implementing*

Guidelines presented by Ms. Marah G. Garcia of PPDD, the *Process Flow of Proposal Screening/Review and Monitoring & Evaluation* by Ms. Ritual of PMED, and *Capsule & Detailed Proposal Preparation* by Mr. Raymond Patrick L. Cabrera of PPDD. The rest of the day was spent on the writing workshop, where participants were first briefed and guided on how to compose proposals in line with the BAR programs presented.

The last day wrapped up with the presentation of outputs, proposals from eight SUCs. The SUCs that presented included the University of Eastern Philippines, Palawan State University, Negros State College of Agriculture, University of Antique, Cotabato Foundation College of Science and Technology, Northern Iloilo Polytechnic State College, Mindanao State University–General Santos, and Maasin City College. The delivered presentations covered project proposals on climate change, organic agriculture, institutional development grant, technology commercialization, indigenous plants for health and wellness, basic and applied researches.

To formally close the event, Dr. Teodoro S. Solsoloy, BAR assistant director, delivered the closing remarks emphasizing on BAR's role in R&D, with the bulk of the efforts to be found in the participation of SUCs, and thus reiterated and encouraged said SUCs to keep submitting proposals and thanked them once again for participating. ### (Maria Anna M. Gumapac)

Adopting farming system approach to increase profit: A CPAR success story in M'lang, Cotabato

Joan P. Sadoral
DA-RFU 12

The municipality of M'lang is one among the luckiest towns in the entire region 12 (SOCCSKSARGEN) which benefited the Community-based Participatory Action Research (CPAR) project. This town lies under the southern portion of North Cotabato Province in Central Mindanao. It is composed of 37 active barangays with a total land area of 41,191 hectares. It is bordered with several towns to which: in the north, by the municipality of Matalam; in the south, by the municipality of Tulunan; in the east, by the municipality of Makilala and Kidapawan City and in the west by the province of Maguindanao. It falls under the fourth class type of climate which is characterized by more or less even distribution of rainfall throughout the year. For years, multi-crop farming was being practiced by farmers as source of their livelihood along with rice, sugarcane, rubber, corn, fruit trees, coconut, oil palm and banana as major commodities (www.mlang.gov.ph).

Despite its abundant resources and favorable climatic conditions for growing crops, its agriculture sector, particularly the marginalized farmers, are affected with different problems including the lack of capital, low production, unstable price of farm produce, lack of postharvest facilities, lack of technology information, long dry months, use of traditional corn varieties, unavailability of seeds, credit facility, and high cost of farm inputs. These problems were identified during the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) conducted in the two most depressed barangays of M'lang: Lepaga and Gaunan.

To address such issues, a project titled, "Farming System Approach through Community-based Participatory Action Research (CPAR) in M'lang, Cotabato was conceptualized. The project started October 2009 with funding support from the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR). It was implemented by the Central Mindanao

Integrated Agricultural Research Center (CEMIARC) of the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Unit (DA-RFU) 12 with Mr. Chito L. Dela Cruz and Mr. Arleen S. Catigbe as project leaders. This project was carried out in collaboration with the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist of North Cotabato Province and the local government of M'lang.

The impetus of bringing CPAR into the most depressed communities of M'lang is to help farmers improve their traditional farming systems through demonstration, promotion, adoption and commercialization of improved technologies that could greatly help them increase their farm productivity and uplift their living standards in far ahead.

Specifically, it aimed to 1) introduce improved technologies in Agribusiness Farming System that could enhance high productivity and income; 2) strengthen linkages and coordination with local government units LGUs, government organizations (GOs), non-government organizations (NGOs) in the implementation of CPAR program; 3) improve production efficiency and profit of every commodity per year in the two most depressed barangays of M'lang; 4) assess the economic benefits of members and non-members of CPAR; and 5) empower farmer skills on improved technologies being introduced in the sites through training, field tours and field days.

This project has two components: 1) Rice-based Farming System (Rice + Ducks + Fish + Vegetables + Mungbean + Melon) and



CPAR farmer-cooperator in Brgy. Lepaga shows his tilapia fingerlings as part of the inputs from the project. PHOTO: DA-RFU 12

2) Oil Palm-based Farming System (Oil Palm + Corn + Vegetables) and (Oil Palm + Livestock).

Rice-based Farming System

For the first component, 10 farmer-cooperators from Barangay Lepaga benefitted from the project. Farm inputs such as ducks (580 heads), African hito fingerlings (14,000 pieces), fish feeds (juvenile floaters) and quality vegetable seeds were delivered to these farmers. Package of Technology (POT) particularly the use of appropriate and improved varieties, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Integrated Nutrient Management (INM) and Crop-livestock-fish production have been introduced to them. Training pertaining on crop production and management aspects were conducted for them to acquire additional knowledge and information that could greatly help in the implementation and success of this project.

For more than a year of implementation, the impact of this project was very much substantial. Indeed, the costing and success indicators revealed that a farmer can yield up to 76 cavans of rice per hectare with a corresponding monetary value of P53,200 gross income. After deducting the production cost from the gross income, he can still have a net cost of P25,000. This data is intended only for rice production excluding the income

turn to page 16

BAR caps 2011 with 5th Bright Leaf awards

Third time's a charm for the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) as another writer bags an award during the 5th Bright Leaf Agriculture Journalism Awards held on 3 December 2011 at the Sofitel Philippine Plaza, Pasay City.

Twenty eleven closes perfectly for BAR as current managing editor of its publications and senior writer, Rita T. dela Cruz of the Applied Communication Division, bagged the Best Agricultural News Story (National) for her published article, "A coco plantation makes a good carbon sink - study".

The Bright Leaf Agriculture Journalism Awards is an annual competition usually held during the last quarter of the year, with a mission to promote the Philippine agriculture by awarding authors of notable photographs and stories published throughout the country.

With entries increasing every year, the Bright Leaf Agriculture Journalism Awards remains true to its vision: "Ploughing the Philippine media landscape in search of agriculture journalism masters"—giving due recognition to men and women who tell important stories on both old practices and new technologies in Philippine agriculture.

Attending the event were representatives from various government agencies, private sector, media, and tobacco stakeholders. Guests included: DA Asst. Secretary Salvador S. Salacup, BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar, Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) Director Clarito M. Barron, DA-Information Office Director Noel O. Reyes, National Tobacco Administration (NTA) Director Edgardo D. Zaragoza, National Food Authority (NFA) Administrator Lito Banayo, and Philip Morris Fortune Tobacco Corp. (PMFTC) officials led by



BAR Chronicle editor/writer, Rita dela Cruz (2nd from left, front row) joins this year's winners of the 5th Bright Leaf awards. Dela Cruz wins the "Best Agricultural News Story (National)" for her article on climate change.

PHOTO: RBERNARDO

President Chris J. Nelson who provided the opening remarks.

Senator Francis Pangilinan, chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Food, served as the keynote speaker during the awarding. In his speech, Senator Pangilinan shared his appreciation for recognizing the work of agricultural journalists that help the public understand "the importance of agriculture and fisheries in the life of our nation". He called on the media practitioners "to put primacy in the agriculture and fisheries sectors and to articulate a new thinking in agriculture".

On her winning piece published in the Philippine Star on 3 April 3 2011, dela Cruz explained: "Climate change is a very timely topic. I think more than keeping the people aware on its (possible) adverse effects in the agriculture sector, there is also an urgent need to highlight more on the effective strategies and what the R&D sector can do to address this phenomenon".

Another writer from DA, Ms. Adora D. Rodriguez of the Information Office won the Best Agricultural Feature

Story (Regional) is for her article, "Discovering Tea in Zamboanga" published in The Philippine Star on 27 March 2011. This is her second time to win for the same category.

Other winners of included: Ms. Marilou E. Guieb (Best Agricultural Feature Story (National), Mr. Mauricio E. Victa (Tobacco Photo of the Year), Mr. Richard T. Balonglong (Agriculture Photo of the Year), and Mr. Mach Alberto D. Fabe (Agriculture Story of the Year). This year's Oriental Leaf Award went to Mr. Fernando Zapata of the Philippine Star.

BAR writers who previously won the Bright Leaf were Mr. Edmon Agron for his article, "R&D: Efforts to Manage and Restore Sea Cucumber Population Underway" (2010 Best Agriculture Feature Story, national) published in BAR Chronicle and Ms. Miko Jazmine J. Mojica for her piece, "When Fish Catch a Cold, the Rest of the World Sneezes" (2009 Best Agriculture Feature Story, national) published in BAR R&D Digest. ##### (Zuellen B. Reynoso)

BAR joins int'l rubber confab; Solsoloy chairs plantation and biotech session

The Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) joins more than 400 participants from government, international and regional research organizations, private sector, and civil society in the "2011 International Rubber Conference and Annual Meetings" organized by the International Rubber Research and Development Board (IRRDB) in Chiang Mai, Thailand. This year's conference focused on "Rubber Research towards a Better World and Quality of Life".

Representing the bureau were BAR Assistant Director Teodoro S. Solsoloy and BAR Project Monitoring and Evaluation Division Head Salvacion M. Ritual. They were joined in by other members of the Philippine delegation, namely: Dr. Alfredo Cayabyab of the Southern Mindanao Integrated Agricultural Research Center (SMIARC), Engr. Roger O. Bagaforo of the Western Mindanao Integrated Agricultural Research Center (WESMIARC), Dr. Roselyn F. Paelmo of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), Dr. Cecilia N. Gascon of the Southern Luzon State University (SLSU), and Jerry Gil S. Murao of JDM Agroventures.

The conference focused on the potential molecular tools that would address the challenges facing the international rubber community. Dr. Solsoloy served as chair of the plantation agronomy and biotechnology sessions. Research papers presented in this session were: 1) Identification of HbN1N2 as the key invertase responsible for sucrose catabolism in rubber-producing laticifers, a rate-limiting step determining rubber productivity; 2) Transgenic plants over-expressing HbCuZnSOD cytosolic isoform are more tolerant to a water deficit, 3) Addressing the fears of the natural rubber supply chain regarding the dissemination



BAR Asst. Dir. Teodoro S. Solsoloy and BAR-PMED Head Salvacion M. Ritual represent the Philippines in 2011 International Rubber Conference in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

The conference focused on the potential molecular tools that would address the challenges facing the international rubber community.

of genetically modified rubber trees; (4) Effect of slow release fertilizer on three-whorl polybag rubber planting; and 5) Establishment of standard values for nutritional diagnosis in soil and leaves of immature rubber tree.

Meanwhile, other members of the delegation presented papers during the conference. Papers presented included: 1) Transfer of technology project in Davao region (Dr. Cayabyab), 2) Community-based Participatory Action Research (CPAR) on rubber-based farming system in the Philippines (Engr. Bagaforo), 3) Grassroots level rubber-based agroforestry initiatives in the Philippines: Capitalizing on lessons and experiences (Dr. Paelmo), 4) Performance evaluation of rubber, *Hevea brasiliensis*, towards commercialization in Quezon Province (Dr. Gascon), and JDM88

agro-ventures rubber based farming system (Mr. Murao).

Other highlights of the rubber conference were the presentations of the IRRDB liaison officers on the recent significant development in rubber R&D including topics on: plant protection, biotechnology, plant physiology, socio-economics, agronomy, latex harvesting, environment, plant breeding, and training of trainers group. The scientists/researchers from the Philippine delegation was included as members of the technical group being recognized for their expertise in the fields of plant breeding and socio-economics.

IRRDB is a network of distinguished rubber producing countries which serves as an avenue for pool of scientists across the globe to discuss and present research and development (R&D) objectives. ### (Jacob Anderson C. Sanchez)

Partner-countries meet to strengthen AFACI's agricultural tech info network



To recognize and highlight the importance of information to agricultural development, specifically web-based information that can be easily accessed by the farming sector, a three-day "Expert Workshop for Agricultural Technology Information Network in Asia (ATIN)" was held on 8-10 December 2011 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

The workshop, organized by Korea's Rural Development Administration (RDA) and funded under the Asian Food and Agriculture Cooperation Initiative (AFACI), was attended by 30 participants from 11 countries including, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Korea, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, and Philippines. AFACI, established in November 2009, is an initiative composed of various Pan-Asian projects including the establishment of an information network that would allow easy inter-country access to technology and information in agriculture and expand analysis of its database for users' needs.

Each country was represented

in by two participants including the principal investigator/focal person for the ATIN project and a staff/webmaster who is involved in managing the database/information. For the Philippines, the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR) is the partner organization which was represented by Ms. Melissa A. Resma, head of BAR's Information Management Unit (IMU) and Ms. Darlene Y. Rontas, bureau's webmaster.

What is ATIN?

Information derived and generated from various Research and Development (R&D) initiatives/projects are available, but effective dissemination and easy access to these information continues to be a hurdle among researchers and farmers. While information is available, "many in the agricultural sector is having a difficult time accessing web-based information causing major constraint to agricultural development," according to report.

The reports added that "even though agricultural information has much

to offer in terms of knowledge to the researchers and farmers, poor networking and absence of deliberate management remains a barrier." It was on this backdrop that ATIN was envisioned—to collaborate and forge existing agri-based database networks and systems among partner-countries in Asia and to construct and expand a web-based standardized platform for sharing knowledge and data gathering on agricultural science and technology information.

Under the standardized platform of ATIN, access to technology and sharing of information will be facilitated allowing easy access of farmers, researchers and other stakeholders. As the database is continuously updated, use of information will be expanded to policymakers, R&D managers which will help them in making decisions in their respective organizations.

ATIN is to be implemented for three years (2010-2013) with a budget of US \$300,000 and a yearly allotment of US\$10,000 for each of the 10 partner-agencies. These are: Bangladesh

MinSCAT fishery products and upgrading R&D facilities funded

The Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR), through its National Technology Commercialization Program (NTCP) and Institutional Development Grant (IDG) Program, supports the expansion and commercialization of the fishery products in Region IVB through the project, "Commercialization of Fishery Products (Tuna in Oil and Bangus French Style) Through Improved Packaging and Labeling".

Leading this initiative is the Mindoro State College of Agriculture and Technology (MinSCAT)-Bongabong Campus in Region IVB in response to the government's effort to address food security and sufficiency in country by increasing food production.

"Fisheries as the flagship of the college is engaged in the transfer of fishery technologies. The canning of tuna in oil and bangus in French style started as a practicum of students. Products were canned for instructional purposes," Dr. Edna Piol, project leader explained.

"With the positive feedbacks on its quality, palatability, and sanitary process, MinSCAT decided to can more tuna in oil and bangus in French style to cope with the consumers' demand," Dr. Piol said.

The decision to increase volume of production of the fishery products lead to the development of the project which BAR is funding. Specifically, the project aims to commercialize the develop technology in canning tuna in oil and bangus in French style; and to encourage livelihood activities using the transferred technology. The project also hoped to provide employment opportunities to fisherfolk and out-of-school youth in the locality and increase the income of fisherfolk through value-adding.

With support from BAR, MinSCAT was able to produce 983 kilos



of canned tuna and bangus from August to December 2011. Three trainings on fish canning and fish preservation methods were also conducted in Bulalacao and Labasan as part of the technology transfer component of the project.

The status and accomplishments of the project was presented by Dr. Piol during the "Review and Evaluation of NAFC-2KR Funded Projects" on 5-8 December 2011 at Hotel Vida, Clark, Pampanga.

"Through augmented funds, we were able to support the product development particularly the packaging and labeling of the fishery products for promotional purposes," BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar said. "As part of our strategy in supporting researches and technologies under NTCP, we make sure that the state universities and colleges (SUCs), as the technology developers, have established collaboration with farmer/fisherfolk organizations right from the start of implementation to ensure the sustainability of the project," the bureau chief added.

The BAR-NAFC 2KR project is also made possible through the support coming from the Japan Official

Development Assistance's (ODA) - 2KR Program Grant Assistance for Underprivileged Farmers which aims to fast track the transfer of mature technologies for the immediate use of the farmers and fisherfolk thereby increasing their production and incomes.

Through this project, MinSCAT has also upgraded (expansion and repair) its Fish Processing Center and procured fish processing equipment through BAR's IDG program which aims to strengthen the

capabilities of R&D centers by upgrading research facilities. The IDG is a funding facility for the acquisition of scientific equipment, renovation and rehabilitation of research facilities, and other critical needs of R&D centers under the National Research and Development System in Agriculture and Fisheries (NaRDSAF).

Based on the terminal report submitted to BAR, the five hectares pond developed by the MinSCAT was divided into nine compartments to serve as the site for technology development and verification studies for aquaculture. The nine compartments completed included three grow-out pond, three transition pond, two nursery pond, and one algae pond. Part of the IDG supported project was the improvement of water supply canal and widening of the main dike.

MinSCAT has two more IDG-supported projects, namely: 1) "Rehabilitation and upgrading of existing research facilities of MinSCAT Bongabong Campus" and 2) "Establishment of a model greenhouses for research, demonstration and extension activities" with another one in the pipeline. ### (Ma. Eloisa H. Aquino)

The project also hoped to provide employment opportunities to fisherfolk and out-of-school youth in the locality and increase the income of fisherfolk through value-adding.

BAR intensifies support to livestock and poultry, 27 R&D projects funded



PHOTOS: ACONSTANTINO AND ZREYNOSO

the native animals in the country started with the goal of conserving our very own native animals. "It was a mere projection that in the future people will look for organic food," Dir. Eleazar added.

Consumers nowadays are becoming more health conscious. Given this, promotion of native swine and native chicken is very timely and relevant. This is also why DA through BAR has launched the Health and Wellness Program which is in harmony with the implementation of RA10068 also known as the Organic Agriculture Act of 2010.

Native pigs are typically small, black-colored, and spotted animals. Resistant to parasites and diseases, they can thrive well on locally-available feeds. Native pigs can adapt to local conditions, likewise can tolerate heat and cold environments.

One successful completed project on native pigs is titled "Native Swine for 'Lechon de Leche' Production": *Improving Feed Availability through Integration of SAKWA as Forage Feed in Coconut-Based Production System* in collaboration with University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB). "Native swine was identified as one of the agribusiness enterprises which has good potential because it has already an existing practice, which only needed enhancement with an existing market," said Dr. Mary Jean G. Bulatao, *Lechon de Leche* Production project leader.

Currently, 2 sites and 12 farmer partners have been selected in Quezon (Brgy. Latangan, Mulanay and Brgy. San Juan, San Narciso). "The 10 farmer partners from the sites received the complete module with 2 ready-to-breed gilts and 5 weanlings each including 2

farmers receiving 1 boar each. A total of 50 weanlings, 20 ready to breed gilts and 2 boars," reported Dr. Bulatao.

BAR has also tied-up with Bureau of Animal Industry- National Swine and Poultry Research and Development Center (BAI-NSPRDC) through a project titled, "*Conservation, Evaluation and Commercialization of the Philippine Native Pigs*" which aimed to conserve and maximize the potential of expanding the *lechon* market. Earthkeepers, a non-government organization, is the project cooperator. On-going projects include: (1) *The Potential of Native Pigs for Organic Meat Production* (University of Rizal System); (2) *Improvement of Processing Technologies for Meat and Skins from Selected Strains of Native Pigs* (BAI); (3) *Agricultural Systems Approach to Commercialization of Native Swine in Bondoc Peninsula* (UPLB); (4) *Promotion of Native Swine Production in Tagkawayan, Quezon* (Southern Luzon State University); and (5) *Development and Commercialization of Selected Strains of Philippine Native Pigs* (BAI-NSPRDC).

For 2011, nine projects on native chicken were funded including: (1) CPAR on Organic Farming Technology for Coffee-Based Farming Systems (Coffee + Blackpepper + Banana + Papaya + Native Chicken in Alfonso, Cavite and (2) CPAR on Citrus-based Farming System (Pummelo+ Vegetables + Native Chicken) in Padre Garcia and Rosario, Batangas. Both are being implemented by DA-Southern Tagalog Integrated Agricultural Research Center (STIARC). ### (Ma. Eloisa H. Aquino)

The Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) strengthens its support to the livestock and poultry industry by funding 27 research and development (R&D) projects, 21 of them on native chicken and six on native swine. Moreover, two other R&D projects are in the pipeline. The projects are funded through the bureau's flagship programs: the Community-based Participatory Research (CPAR) and National Technology Commercialization Program (NTCP).

Native swine and native chicken are two of the priority commodities listed under the bureau's Research and Development, Extension Agenda and Programs (RDEAP) 2011-2016. The RDEAP is the medium term plan of DA for its agriculture and fisheries R&D which serves as the basis of BAR on which specific research proposals will be funded. Problems and researchable areas intended to address the livestock sector are on: breeding, nutrition, production and management, processing and marketing.

"Since 2005, with the institutionalization of the NTCP, BAR has been supporting the livestock sector by funding and continuously supporting projects on native swine and native chicken. These projects are being implemented in collaboration with other R&D institutions and non-government organizations," said BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar.

The idea of further promoting

Partner-countries...from page 9

Agricultural Research Council (BARC), Cambodia's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Indonesian Agency for Agricultural Research and Development (IAARD), Lao PDR's National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI), Mongolia's National Agriculture Extension Center, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry (MoFALI), Nepal's Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC), Philippines' Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR), Sri Lanka's Department of Agriculture (DOA), Thailand's DOA, and Vietnam Academy of Agricultural Sciences (VAAS).

Now on its second year of implementation, Korea's RDA is leading this initiative.

Highlights of the ATIN Expert Workshop

Lao PDR's NAFRI co-hosted the ATIN expert workshop with the objective of developing the implementation plan to construct and network the web-based agricultural information system, and discussing the publication and distribution of



(L-R) Dr. Saejung Suh, secretary general of KOPIA Group of RDA, Korea; Dr. Bounthong Bouahome, director general of NAFRI; and Dr. Yang-hee Cho, secretary general of AFACI, Korea during the opening.

agricultural books to be funded under the AFACI project.

Welcoming the participants was Dr. Bounthong Bouahome, director general of NAFRI, who reiterated the importance of the activity particularly in addressing the need for easy and effective access to relevant information that farmers and researchers could immediately use in the field. Meanwhile, Dr. Saejung Suh, secretary general of the Korea Project on International Agriculture (KOPIA) Group of RDA, underscored the

importance of the expert workshop as a good avenue for sharing information, experiences, and knowledge among partner-countries.

Partner-countries presented country reports including case studies on the agricultural websites being maintained by their organizations, existing national or international information network standardization projects, educational materials on available agricultural technologies, and web-based extension service. Participants also discussed the platform configuration in lieu of the information system that has been established. Through this workshop, participants had the opportunity to strengthen the network with other participants from member countries and develop the implementation plan for the AFACI projects.

For the Philippines, Ms. Resma, head of BAR's IMU, presented the "Status of Agricultural Information Service in the Philippines" highlighting the *BAR Online* and its features, performance gauge, mechanism for sharing data, and other web-based information services.

As a result of the meeting, AFACI will fund the publication of three agricultural books which was earlier supported by BAR, through its Scientific Publication Grant (SPG), namely: 1) *Package of Technology of Different Vegetable Crops*, 2) *Handbook on the Identification and Control of Pigeonpea Insects Pests and Diseases*, and 3) *Mga Pamamaraan sa Organikong Gulayan* (Organic Vegetable Farming Guide). These books will be showcased during the 50th Anniversary of RDA in May 2011. ### (Rita T. dela Cruz)

ATIN was established to forge existing agri-based database networks and systems among partner-countries in Asia and to construct and expand a web-based standardized platform for sharing knowledge and data gathering on agricultural science and technology information.

Ms. Melissa Resma, head of BAR's Information Management Unit, presents the "Status of Agricultural Information Service in the Philippines". PHOTO: AFACI



BAR celebrates Christmas 2011

BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar



Merry Christmas everyone!



IMU



PMED



ADMIN



FINANCE



IDD



PPDD



ACD



TCD

In keeping with the spirit of gift giving and the festivities of the yuletide season, the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) joins in celebrating its annual Christmas activity on 22 December 2011 at the 4/F BAR Conference Hall.

The event started with the Thanksgiving Mass which was officiated by Fr. Noel Rosas of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish. Highlighting the day were the divisional presentations, games, and raffles of minor and major prizes.

BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar delivered a meaningful Christmas message for the staff and other invited partners of the bureau. He stressed the importance of celebrating the event as a way of showing unity and harmony among members of the BAR family.

The program proper was led by Mr. Patrick A. Lesaca and Ms. Zuellen B. Reynoso of the Applied Communication Division (ACD) who served as masters of ceremony.

The dance contest champion was competed in by the eight divisions/units of BAR showcasing their own unique ideas and interpretations of the essence of Christmas. The participating divisions/units were: Institutional Development Division (IDD), Information Management Unit (IMU), Planning and Program Development Division (PPDD), Project Monitoring and Evaluation Division (PMED), Technology Commercialization Division (TCD), Administrative Unit, Applied Communication Division (ACD), and Finance Unit.

The criteria for judging were: 30 percent for the costume, 40 percent for the execution, and 30 percent for the overall impact. The judges were BAR Dir. Eleazar, Asst. Dir. Teodoro S. Solsoloy, and BAR technical advisers: Mr. Bert Villa, Ms. Josefina Lantican, and Ms. Virginia Agcopra.

Winners of the dance presentations were IMU (first), IDD (second), and ACD (third).

Meanwhile, winners of the best Christmas decoration were also announced. Winning the grand prize was ACD with TCD and IDD taking home the second and third prizes, respectively. Criteria for judging included: 20 percent originality, 20 percent thematic presentation, 25 percent for the use of (recycled) materials, 25 percent use of (indigenous) materials, and 10 percent for the group effort.

The Christmas decorations of each division were also judged by BAR technical advisers. ###
(Leila Denisse E. Padilla)

PHOTOS: RBERNARDO, ACONSTANTINO and EAQUINO