

Public-private...from page 10



Secretary Proceso Alcala (2nd from left) and DA Asst. Secretary Salvador Salacup (right) pose for a photo op with Nestle Philippines executives: Senior Vice President for Corporate Affairs Edith de Leon (left) and Chairman and CEO John Miller (2nd from right). photo: MMOJICA

Management, Inc., is an investment banker who is also into real estate development. He recounted how his company forayed into coffee production.

“Our plan is to cover 4,000 hectares in a five-year period through the help of the government and banking sector and in partnership with Nestle as buyer. At present, we were able to plant 333 coffee trees covering 200 hectares in Cebu within only five months and now we are preparing 300 hectares more for planting. We are also eyeing Antipolo and San Mateo as new sites for coffee production,” said Gonzales.

Mr. Simeon L. Kintanar, president, CHMI Agroforest Development Corp., also presented the success story of their coffee project with the local community in Alcoy, Cebu in partnership with the local government unit. He said that they envision of making Cebu the coffee corridor in Central Visayas.

DA Asst. Secretary Salvador Salacup, concurrent spokesperson of DA, served as moderator in the open forum, which was

formally opened after the individual presentations of the panelists relevant to the coffee industry.

Secretary Alcala likewise showed his support in the event by participating in the open forum. He also stressed the importance of the DA's roadmap for the strategic development of the coffee industry in the country.

The forum participants were composed of coffee industry players from the private sector, local government executives, researchers from state universities, and government officials. Nestle top officials were also present in the forum led by Mr. John Miller, Nestle Philippines chairman and CEO.

Due to the favorable response of participants in the forum, organizers are looking forward to holding similar events nationwide in the near future in order to fast track the initiatives to further develop the local coffee industry. ### (Miko Jazmine J. Mojica)

Rice-led...from page 6

provides its findings based on its technical merits and then recommends it to the Office of the Secretary through the National Rice and Corn Program.

Engr. Josefa G. Quillope, head secretariat for the DA Rice Program, in the absence of Asst. Sec. Araullo, presented the “Philippine Food Staple Self-Sufficiency and NFA Road Maps 2011-2016”. She mentioned that rice target road maps were already provided to regions concerned.

The conference-workshop concluded with a collective agreement among technical bureaus concerned that the revised and refined implementing guidelines on the availment of the national rice program R&D fund and procedure for rice project monitoring and evaluation will again be endorsed to the Rice Program Secretariat for review. Outputs will also be forwarded to the DA National Rice and Corn Program.

It was also reminded that project proposals from the DA regional offices, prior to submission to BAR, must be duly endorsed by their respective REDs. The RIARC managers articulated this concern that in order to avoid project duplications. ### (Patrick RA Lesaca)

BAR convenes R&D experts to assist in project evaluation

The Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR), as the lead coordinating and funding agency for agriculture and fisheries R&D in the country, is tasked to formulate agenda and programs for various sectors and commodities, recommend appropriate policies and directions, and evaluate proposals and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of on-going projects. To effectively do this, BAR convened its R&D Pool of Experts for a briefing and orientation meeting on the latest directions and policies of the Department of Agriculture (DA) vis-à-vis the RDE thrusts and priority programs of BAR. The orientation meeting was held on 11 March 2011 at BAR in Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

The newly reconstituted R&D Pool of Experts, composed of experts from DA offices/bureaus/agencies, state universities and colleges (SUCs), and private sector and industry, was created and made official through a signed Special Order No. 19, Series of 2011.

As stipulated in the SO, the pool of experts is composed of 27 teams representing the different priority program areas both for agriculture and fisheries R&D. These include: commodity-based crops (rice, corn, coconut, fiber crops, fruits, legumes, rootcrops, vegetables, indigenous plants, ornamentals, and plantation crops); discipline/thematic-based (soil and water resources, biotechnology, crop protection, irrigation and drainage, plant genetic resources and tissue culture, postproduction, product quality standards, social science and policy, urban agriculture, climate change, and biofuels); fisheries (aquaculture, capture fisheries, and fisheries postharvest and marketing); livestock and poultry, and research facilities development. Each team consisted of 5-10 members who were specifically identified given their specialities and expertise in the field.



BAR Dir. Nicomedes P. Eleazar welcomes the pool of R&D experts in an orientation meeting on the bureau's current RDE thrusts and priority programs. photo: RDELCRUZ

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The role of the R&D Pool of Experts is crucial in BAR's effort to effectively manage and coordinate researches matter not only for us, in the sector but mostly to the beneficiaries of the research results at the grassroot level, our marginalized farmers and fisherfolk. ~ Dr. Eleazar

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PHILIPPINES

BAR convenes...from page 1

BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar, in his presentation, discussed the functions of the pool of experts. "The role of the R&D Pool of Experts is crucial in BAR's effort to effectively manage and coordinate researches matter not only for us, in the sector but mostly to the beneficiaries of the research results at the grassroot level, our marginalized farmers and fisherfolk," Dir. Eleazar stressed.

Specifically, the R&D Pool of Experts is to assist BAR in the 1) formulation of R&D agenda and program for various sectors, 2) recommendation of appropriate R&D policies, directions related to their sector, 3) evaluation of R&D proposals, and 4) review and M&E of on-going and completed R&D projects. According to Dir. Eleazar, the experts will serve on an on-call basis or as needed.

Meanwhile, to provide proper perspective on the DA's latest directions and policies, Dr. Eleazar also presented the Agri-Pinoy (*Agrikultura Pilipino*) Framework which serves as the backbone or foundation on which strategic DA programs and initiatives are built on and are being implemented according to priority needs of the agriculture and fishery sectors.

On the part of BAR, Dir. Eleazar presented the repackaged Research and Development, Extension Agenda and Programs (RDEAP) for 2011-2016 which serves as the bureau's reference in prioritizing and funding researches. The RDEAP is a product of a multi-sectoral consultation-workshop held in 2009 and was repackaged to include other recent programs of BAR in a proactive response to the needs of the sector.

"We just started distributing this repackaged document last week. A lot of our recent R&D programs have been added into this document, one of which is the Adlai R&D Program which was initially brought to our attention by Secretary Proceso J. Alcala," he said.

Dr. Eleazar also presents DA-BAR Corporate Plan for 2011-2016, which highlighted the priority thrusts and directions of the bureau in funding R&D.

The orientation meeting was attended by over 100 participants including those from DA offices, SUCs, private sector, and industry. For the SUCs, key officials from the National Center of Excellence in agriculture and fisheries were present including those the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), Central Luzon State University (CLSU), Visayas State University (VSU), and University of Southern Mindanao (USM).
(Rita T. dela Cruz)



UPLB key officials led by Chancellor Luis Rey I. Velasco (center), Vice Chancellor for Administration Roberto F. Rañola (left), and Vice Chancellor for Research and Extension Enrico P. Supangco (right).



In attendance during are 100+ participants from DA offices/bureaus/agencies, SUCs, international R&D partners, private sector and representatives from the A/F industry. photos: RDELCRUZ



She also cleared that in organic farming, it is not true that using botanical pesticides is the only way to control pests. "Botanical pesticides should be the last resort for pest control and there are many other organic farming methods to manage pests," Dr. Calub explained. Among the organic farming methods she enumerated were: diversified/multiple cropping, intercropping, crop rotation, net bagging, netted plots, yellow sticky trap, biological control, and mulching.

Appreciation of benefits needs understanding

In her conclusions, Dr. Calub said that organic farming in the

Philippines is still in its infancy stage and for people to fully appreciate it and its long-term benefits to human and the environment, it has to be well-understood first. Appreciation only comes later when one has a full grasp of its real meaning and implications.

Hence, Dr. Calub called on the need for scientific research and development (R&D) and more advocacy and information campaigns on organic farming in the country. She also recommended the need for the documentation of success stories and effective indigenous knowledge systems (IKS).

To do this, forging partnership and linkages is crucial. "Let's build

effective alliances among government agencies, non-government organizations, academe, people's organizations, civil groups. Let us harmonize our acts towards a sustainable organic Philippines," concluded Dr. Calub.

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Dr. Blesilda M. Calub (left) of FSSRI-UPLB presents "To Be or Not to Be Organic" during the BAR Seminar Series on Organic Farming.

processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions. Most of all, "it is farming with conscience," she underscored.

In terms of the cropping system, Dr. Calub explained that while organic farming practices multiple cropping and minimum tillage, conventional farming practices monocropping and clean culture. Implications to farm income is huge for organic farming since it is a low input cost and its products have premium price which is 10-30 percent higher than the conventionally-grown crops. "It is low cost inputs because it mainly uses farm generated inputs such as farm yard manure, crop residues, and farm grown botanical pest control agents," explained Dr. Calub.

Issues on organic farming and addressing them

One of the impending issues in organic farming is addressing the notion that "organic food is for the rich," which Dr. Calub cleared in her presentation.

According to her, organically-grown crops are more expensive than the non-organic because of the limited supply and availability in the market. It therefore becomes less affordable to common people because the demand high. Also, organic products have premium price mainly because product certification is costly. Organic farming entails higher initial labor cost particularly if the area was previously into conventional farming. Transition and conversion of the farm requires additional expenses.

To address this, Dr. Calub suggested that given the limited supply of

organically-grown products in the market, there is a need to increase production and meet the demand. Consumers must buy directly from the farmers and growers to avoid middle men who add up the cost of the organic products that are available in the market. The cost of product certification must be reduced to compensate the premium price of the organic produce and also to encourage more farmers to engage into organic farming.

On the issue of food security, "organic farming will cause famine" was among the prevailing concerns raised. A farmer who decided to go into organic reduces the yield causing food shortage, economic collapse and eventually may lead to famine. Dr. Calub said, this is unlikely so because "yield reduction depends on the degree of ecological destruction of the land; and yield reduction occurs mainly during the transition-conversion period (from conventional to organic farming) which is within the three-year period." During this period, she suggested that there are forms of support that farmers may avail of like technical, financial

and institutional assistance including support from the local government and market linkage. Organic farming is more sustainable because one of its main features is multiple cropping. The mixed cropping pattern maximizes land use, reduces crop failure, and encourages inclusion of indigenous food crops."

Some conventional farming advocate raised that "We will all die anyway, why bother with organic?" To which Dr. Calub answered, "Somehow we can choose the way we want to die," and to live with a healthy organic lifestyle early in life is better than having to spend later for chemotherapy or other expensive medicines. Eating organically-grown food crops lower health risks."

Dr. Calub mentioned other issues on organic farming that consumer must also be wary of. On the issue that "vegetables or fruits with pests and pest damage are organic," she said that it is possible to produce high quality organic vegetables without pest damage. Pest damage can still occur with pesticide application due to wrong dosage and wrong pesticide for that pest.

Implications to farm income is huge for organic farming since it is a low input cost and its products have premium price which is 10-30 percent higher than the conventionally-grown crops.

Phl hosts int'l training on plant breeding and seed production

The Philippines was chosen as the country site for the second phase of the International Training in Plant Breeding and Seed Production conducted yearly by Svalof Consulting, a Swedish seed company, through the funding support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) as part of its bilateral development assistance, on 7-18 March 2011.

Svalof Consulting and Sida collaborated with the Department of Agriculture (DA) and its two staff bureaus, the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) and the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR), in organizing the two-week training in the country.

The training was conducted to 22 international participants representing 17 countries in Asia and Africa, namely, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Egypt, Georgia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Philippines, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda, Vietnam, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The group is composed of plant breeders, seed growers, geneticists, and seed technologists from both the private and public sector.

According to Svalof, the training was especially designed for qualified individuals who could contribute in strategic reforms or hold positions with mandate to run processes of change. The first phase of the training was conducted in Sweden last year.

Before the start of the training, the participants were assigned to write a situation analysis describing the current situation in plant breeding and seed production in their home countries. Based on this analysis and as one of the most important output of the training, they were asked to propose a relevant project which they will carry out in their home countries. For the second phase of the training, each participant is required to present progress reports on their



Svalof Program Director Per Andersson (right), BAR Director Nicomedes Eleazar (2nd from left), and British Consultant Michael Turner (left) share a light discussion with Ms. Rose Mary Aquino of DA-RFU 2, the only Filipino participant in the training. Ms. Aquino is a senior agriculturist at DA-CVIARC and focal person for Asha peanut production and commercialization in the country. photo: MMOJICA

respective projects.

Mr. Per Andersson, Svalof program director, during the opening program held at the Manila Hotel on March 7, said he is thankful for the warm welcome they received from the Philippines and hopes to continue Svalof's collaboration with the country.

"The program aims to broaden the participants' knowledge of modern plant breeding and seed industry, and improve their understanding of organization management and modern technology in the complete chain from plant breeding to marketing," he said.

"As an agricultural country where most farmers are smallholders, the Philippines is always in need of an accessible supply of high-quality seeds of different crop varieties. He said that the government is now working towards empowering the farmers to become seed growers themselves instead of relying from dole outs," said BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar who gave the Welcome Remarks and a brief presentation on the recent R&D management innovations in agriculture and fisheries.

DA Assistant Secretary for Field Operations Edilberto De Luna, meanwhile, represented Secretary Proceso Alcala in the opening program. In his message delivered by Asst. Secretary De Luna, Secretary Alcala said that as food security remains as a top priority of the government, it also has to be proactive in dealing with the two biggest challenges facing the agriculture and fisheries sector, which is globalization and climate change.

"There are three important considerations in planning and implementing our programs in agriculture including lowering production costs, increasing farmers' income, and making the sector more prepared for climate change," he said.

Ms. Rose Mary Aquino, the only Filipino participant in the training, is a senior agriculturist at the DA-Cagayan Valley Integrated Agricultural Research Center (CVIARC). She is also the focal person for Asha peanut production and commercialization in the country, one the programs funded by BAR. During the training, she presented the progress of her project related to this program.

The training was designed with a mix of lectures, group and individual work, study visits, and field studies at different points of Luzon including Cordillera and Southern Tagalog. ### (Miko Jazmine J. Mojica)

The training was especially designed for qualified individuals who could contribute in strategic reforms or hold positions with mandate to run processes of change.

BAR holds 3rd Fellowship Night for NaRDSAF scholars



BAR Dir. Nicomedes P. Eleazar and Asst. Dir. Teodoro S. Solsoloy pose with the BAR scholars and other VIPs in attendance. photo: NDELROSARIO III

Now on its third year, the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) held the “DA-BAR NaRDSAF Scholars' Fellowship Night” to recognize the recipients of its degree scholarship program on 25 March 2011 at the Sulo Riviera Hotel, Quezon City. Gracing the occasion were BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar, Asst. Dir. Teodoro S. Solsoloy, and presidents and key officials of various state universities and colleges (SUCs) and partner-institutions.

Highlighting the activity was the recognition of the 10 graduates (5 MS, 5 PhD) for CY 2009-2010 and the presentation of the 17 on-going scholars (10 MS, 7 PhD) for CY 2010-2011. Presenting them were Dr. Carmencita V. Kagaoan, head of the Institutional Development Division (IDD) and asst. head, Mr. Victoriano B. Guiam, who also served as the masters of ceremonies for the night.

In his message, BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar, underscored the importance of the degree scholarship program to the R&D sector particularly in empowering its human resource. “The strength of any research institution depends on its having and maintaining the right people with the right skills to handle particular jobs. More than the infrastructure,

developing and strengthening human resources in R&D is an endeavor worth investing on,” he emphasized.

“BAR, as the mandated national coordinating body for agriculture and fishery research and development (R&D), recognizes the need for the research community to have qualified and highly trained people to do the jobs crucial to the generation of new knowledge and technology. In doing so, the bureau has been implementing a human resource development program since 2000,” he added.

The program aims to strengthen the R&D capability in agriculture and fisheries sector through a continuous support to the critical mass of research staff of DA and other partner-institutions under the National Research and Development Systems for Agriculture and Fishery (NaRDSAF). NaRDSAF-member agencies include the DA R&D Subsystem that consists of national (staff bureaus/attached agencies) and regional R&D centers (RIARCs/RFRDCs); the national and regional state universities and colleges (SUCs) and Provincial Technological Institutes for Agriculture and Fisheries (PTIAFs); and other government agencies with an agricultural R&D function.

Under the program, the bureau provides financial support to those who want to pursue an MS or PhD degree from any of the 11 accredited universities in the country. These included: UP Diliman, UP Los Baños, UP Visayas, Central Luzon State University, University of Southern Mindanao, Mindanao State University-Naawan, De La Salle University, Ateneo de Manila University, Siliman University, Visayas State University, and University of San Carlos in Cebu City.

Would-be scholars are evaluated based on these selection criteria: relevance of the course to agriculture and fisheries modernization; capability of the applicant to pursue and successfully complete graduate studies; relevance of trainings attended to his or her R&D responsibilities; and number of research projects/studies conducted.

“Through this scholarship which enables researchers and technical staff to pursue graduate degrees in agriculture and fisheries sciences, and/or other related fields, BAR aims to develop a cadre of highly competent agricultural R&D workers in the country,” Dr. Eleazar said.

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Going organic is 'farming with conscience'

Story and photos by: RITA T. DELA CRUZ

In a world that is driven by economic gains, many farmers have averted going organic mainly because of its inevitable implication to farm income. For most farmers, the benefit of using chemical fertilizer comes down to convenience. Chemical fertilizers are readily available in large quantities, easy to apply, and they work fast. It may have caused them higher inputs but the profit is immediate and is ensured. But there are drawbacks too and most of them cause long-term effects.

Farmers have become so high on profit that they have lost their concerns for consumers' health and the environment. They thoughtlessly use synthetic fertilizers and unconsciously spray pesticides in their food crops to achieve profit target.

Apparently, this is “farming without conscience” according to Dr. Blesilda M. Calub in a seminar talk that she delivered at the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) titled, “Organic Farming: Pagsasakahang May Konsensiya” held on 3 March 2011 at the 4/F BAR Conference Hall, Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City. The BAR seminar, which was open to all, was part of a series that the bureau regularly conducts to provide a venue for

discussion on the latest technologies and trends and issues in the agriculture and fisheries R&D sector.

Dr. Calub is a researcher from the Farming Systems and Soil Resources Institute (FSSRI), Agricultural Systems Cluster, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB). She is the project leader of a UPLB-NEDA organic vegetable production project titled, “Enhancing Production and Profitability of Market-Oriented Organic Vegetables in CALABARZON”, which launched the Tayabas Organic Products (TOP) Center, a special market in San Roque, Tayabas in Quezon. Her team conducted training programs for agriculture teachers so that they could orient their students early on about organic farming.

“As the assigned national coordinator for Organic Agriculture R&D of the Department of Agriculture (DA), BAR organizes and sponsors free seminar to keep the public aware not only on R&D-related activities including those in line with our thrusts and programs but most importantly, to inform the people on the importance of organic farming,” said BAR Dir. Nicomedes P. Eleazar in his opening

address. “BAR has long been an advocate of organic agriculture and has been funding R&D projects in view of the program,” he added.

In attendance were more than 60 participants mostly farmers and walk-in individuals from the private sector who are interested in organic farming and wanted to learn more.

To be or not to be organic

Farmers are always given the options. And given today's fast-paced life, there are available information that can suffice even the simplest curiosity on the matter.

“To be or not to be organic,” that was the question posted by Dr. Calub in her presentation discussing the following: 1) differentiation of organic and conventional farming, 2) clarification on the issues associated to organic agriculture, and 3) suggestions to overcome these challenges.

Organic farming, according to Dr. Calub, is a production system that excludes or avoids the use of pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, and genetically-modified organisms (GMOs). It nurtures and sustains both the health of the farmers and consumers and the environment relying on ecological

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productivity. He reechoed the earlier pronouncement of the Secretary that farmers are given the choice or preference to choose whether to go organic or go with the conventional method. "At the end of the day, farmers will decide which one to apply. What is important is that government particularly, us in the DA, has a clear policy on organic agriculture and its benefits," Dir. Eleazar concluded.

On the current programs of BAR Dir. Eleazar presented its two program-pillars: Community-based Participatory Action Research (CPAR) and National Technology Commercialization Program (NTCP). To date, BAR has funded 176 CPAR nationwide (completed and on-going). BAR is also supporting the governments' initiative on climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. "We have 13 programs being implemented including the CPAR and NTCP," Eleazar reported.

Dr. Baxter stated that ACIAR is moving around the country and soliciting inputs from various government agencies and such consultation with BAR is a big help in their preparation for the "AGRI-Pnoy Consultation" to be held in Cebu sometime this year.

The visitors from ACIAR extended their deep appreciation to Dr. Eleazar and BAR staff for accommodating their request for a brief consultation on the current programs and thrust of BAR. ### (Patrick RA Lesaca)

LGU to promote...from page 5

Products from sweet sorghum developed by CLSU through a BAR-funded project. photos: NDELROSARIO III

that it is also important to: 1) identify the target market, whether they belong or represent Class A, B, C; 2) determine critical product among the different available products from sweet sorghum and focus on developing it for marketing; and 3) develop a good packaging for the product.

On the part of BAR, Ms. Ethcel Princess H. Patulot of the Technology Commercialization Division (TCD), who also represented Mr. Anthony B. Obligado, head of TCD thanked everyone for coming especially to

Dr. Talens Rivera for organizing the event. She acknowledged the efforts being offered by the different government agencies in the pursuit of intensifying sweet sorghum production and commercialization in the province.

Ms. Patulot acknowledged the participation and involvement of the LGUs concerned and concluded that BAR through TCD is supporting for the packaging of sweet sorghum products which is sync with the priority programs of the bureau. ### (Patrick RA Lesaca and Ethcel Princess H. Patulot)

BAR holds...from page 4

To date, there are already 136 scholar-recipients of the BAR's Degree Scholarship Program from which, 87 have completed their studies (41 MS and 46 PhD). From these graduates, 59 are from DA, (38 MS and 24 PhD) while 28 are non-DA staff/employees (6 MS and 22 PhD).

More than 100 participants attended the fellowship night including BAR staff, key officials from SUCs and other representatives from partner-institutions.

Also present were Chancellor Luis Rey Velasco of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB),

President Ruben Sevilleja of the Central Luzon State University (CLSU), President Romeo Quilang of the Isabela State University (ISU), President Honorio Soriano, Jr. of the Pampanga Agricultural Colleges (PAC), Exec. Dir. Cecilio Arboleda of the UPLB Foundation, Inc., and Dir. Ernelea Cao of the UP-Natural Sciences Research Institute (NSRI), and Dir. Leandro Gazmin of the



DA-Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service (AMAS). ### Rita T.dela Cruz

LGU to promote Cabiao as sweet sorghum capital



Dr. Zosimo Battad (left) and Dr. Estrella Zabala (right) of PAC, Cabiao Mayor Gloria Congco (2nd from left) and Dr. Talens Rivera (3rd from right) of CLSU look at the sweet sorghum products. photo: NDELROSARIO III

Dr. Talens Rivera (2nd from left) of CLSU and sweet sorghum project leader discusses with Ms. Penelope Reyes-Velasco (left) and Mr. John Vermuellen (right) of Happy Earth, and Ms. Ethcel Princess Patulot (2nd from right) of BAR. photo: NDELROSARIO III

The Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) recently attended a "Community Mobilization for Action Planning" to prepare the capability building and social preparation in promoting and utilizing sweet sorghum in the province of Nueva Ecija as envisioned by Dr. Talens Rivera of the Central Luzon State University (CLSU). The event, organized by CLSU, was conducted in coordination with the local government unit (LGU) of Cabiao, Nueva Ecija. The action planning also involved the new partnership between Cabiao, (Nueva Ecija) and Candaba, (Pampanga) in the prospect of propagating sweet sorghum plants and by-products in the two provinces.

According to Dr. Rivera, this is the first time that they organized a community mobilization involving the various sectors: LGUs, Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), State University and Colleges (SUCs), non-government organizations (NGO), and private sector. She said that this culminating activity aims to make "Cabiao the Sweet Sorghum Capital of the Philippines". Dr. Rivera is the project leader of the BAR funded project, "Social Preparation and

Further Capability Building for the Promotion of Sweet Sorghum Utilization."

Mayor Gloria Crespo-Congco of Cabiao delivered her opening remarks and welcomed all the participants with much enthusiasm over the reality that government agencies including BAR and CLSU, and local municipalities of Cabiao and Candaba, are collaborating on empowering local farmers especially the sweet sorghum growers in the region. Mayor Congco mentioned how sweet sorghum is a smart and versatile crop. And with the intensified promotion of the crop as *food, feed, fuel, fertilizer* it is not surprising that many farmers are interested in planting sweet sorghum. Also, there are lots of food and non-food products that can be produced from sweet sorghum plant, which can address the country's food security.

She said that it would be prudent to focus first on attaining good and competitive price/s for the grains. The mayor expounded on the idea of setting-up "one bakery per barangay" utilizing sweet sorghum flour for pastries and baked products. This will be done in collaboration with Mayor

Jerry L. Pelayo of Candaba, Pampanga, she concluded.

Dr. Rocelyn M. Barroga of the Research, Training and Extension (RET), CLSU pledged their commitment and assured all proponents that the University's RET is willing to extend technical assistance to interested individuals and organizations that would latter venture in the production of said sweet sorghum. Dr. Barroga likewise encouraged participants to work together and help conceptualize the Sweet Sorghum Development Plan.

In terms of the "One Town - One Product" (OTOP) program of the government, DTI - Nueva Ecija provincial director Brigida Pili said and informed those present that sweet sorghum is the OTOP of the province. She added that in order to create economic impact and livelihood in the province, all concerned government and non-government agencies must pursue the talks vigorously—a value chain for sweet sorghum must also be identified, she concluded.

Meanwhile, Provincial Director Leonila Baluyut of DTI-Pampanga, shared the opinion and the position raised by her colleague and further emphasized

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Rice-led program agencies of DA urge to “think-out-of-the-box” to attain rice self-sufficiency

The race for rice self-sufficiency has begun, and in order to intensify its campaign, Assistant Secretary and National Program Coordinator for Rice and Corn Dennis B. Araullo issued a memorandum calling all regional executive directors (REDs), heads of attached agencies and staff bureaus particularly the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI), Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM), Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR), and Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) to join hands and to think *out-of-the-box* on how to help and address this seemingly gargantuan task.

DA agencies particularly the Regional Rice Program Coordinators (RRPCs), Regional Integrated Agricultural Research Centers (RIARCs) and Regional Agricultural Engineering Group (RAEG) were convened to participate in a five-day consultation-workshop held on 9-11 March 2011 in Tagaytay City. The activity was joined in by more or less than 65 participants both from the national and regional stakeholders.

Agencies which were first to conduct their consultation-workshop were ATI and BSWM followed by PhilRice. The group discussed the parameters needed to boost rice

production in the coming years and the required intervention among rice stakeholders concerned. Further, the technical bureaus also discussed on the smallscale irrigation projects and extension work and field concerns.

Tasked to provide the workshop overview for the Research and Development (R&D) leg was Mr. Rodolfo Fernandez, BAR focal person for the rice program, who discussed the mechanics of the R&D consultation-workshop and the expected output. He also served as the overall moderator during the activity.

For R&D thrusts and programs, BAR Director Nicomedes P. Eleazar presented the Research and Development, Extension Agenda and Program (RDEAP) for 2011- 2016. The RDEAP serves as the bureau's reference document in the identification of priorities within the country's R&D particularly the rice and corn program. He presented the repackaged compendium of the RDEAP highlighting the steps to be undertaken by the bureau in response to the call for food security and sufficiency. Copies of the document were provided to the participants.

Dir. Eleazar also presented the



BAR Dir. Nicomedes P. Eleazar addresses key concerns on rice R&D photo: PLESACA

“Guidelines on the Availment of the National Rice Program R&D Funds”. In his presentation, he explained at length the schematic application and approval process once a particular proposal reaches the Bureau for evaluation. He urged his fellow colleagues in the DA, state universities and colleges (SUCs) and non-government organizations (NGOs), all submitted proposals must be aligned with the current thrusts of DA and BAR's RDEAP.

He emphasized that BAR only evaluates proposals submitted and

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Researchers from ACIAR visit BAR



Research experts from the Australian Center for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) visited the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR): Dr. Lex Baxter (left), principal regional coordinator for Papua New Guinea and program manager of the Pacific Island Research; and Mr. John Oakeshott (right), Philippine Horticulture manager. Also in the photo is Ms. Mara Faylon (center), ACIAR assistant country manager. photo: PLESACA

Two researchers from the Australian Center for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), Dr. Lex Baxter, principal regional coordinator for Papua New Guinea and Pacific Island Research Program manager; and Mr. John Oakeshott, Philippine Horticulture manager visited the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) for a brief consultation-meeting on the current R&D thrusts and programs of the bureau

on 4 March 2011, 2/F BAR Conference Room, RDMIC Bldg., Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City.

Joining them were Ms. Cecille O. Honrado, ACIAR country manager in the Philippines and Ms. Mara Faylon of ACIAR Philippines. ACIAR is an international organization which aims to achieve more productive and sustainable agricultural systems, for the benefit of developing countries and Australia, through international agricultural research partnership.

According to Ms. Honrado, the visit is part of ACIAR's regional plan to appraise on the latest developments in the Philippines particularly in the field of agricultural research and BAR has been one of the offices to be visited.

BAR Dir. Nicomedes P. Eleazar and key staff from the Office of the Director (OD) Planning and Project Development Division (PPDD), and Applied Communication Division (ACD) welcomed the visitors from ACIAR.

Driven by a strong conviction to uplift the lives of the Filipino farmers and fisherfolk, BAR has embarked on a new dictum and encapsulated it into its vision: 'A better life for Filipinos through excellence in agriculture and fisheries research and development,'

hence was the opening statement of Dr. Eleazar in a presentation during the briefing.

In terms of the current policies and directions of the bureau, Dir. Eleazar discussed the recently completed Research and Development Extension Agenda Programs (RDEAP) for 2011-2016, which serves as an important reference of BAR in prioritizing and funding its R&D in agriculture and fisheries. RDEAP is also a compendium of relevant issues and concerns besetting agricultural research.

Dir. Eleazar mentioned how some of the researchable areas are location-specific depending on the agro-climatic conditions and thus the need for a blueprint to effectively address the concerns of the farming sector both at the regional and national levels.

He also emphasized that all the plans and programs of BAR are aligned and in harmony with the current thrusts of the Department of Agriculture (DA) under the stewardship of Secretary Proceso J. Alcala. For instance, Secretary Alcala is now pushing for organic farming and since he is the principal author of RA 10068 or 'Organic Agriculture Act of 2010', he is fully support the program not only by BAR, but the entire DA.

Dr. Baxter asked for the objectives of organic agriculture and in response Dir. Eleazar said that the law is keen on developing further the practice of organic agriculture in the country that would cumulatively condition and enrich soil fertility and increase farm

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BAR Dir. Nicomedes P. Eleazar (left) and ACIAR Country Manager Cecille Honrado (right). photo: PLESACA

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP to intensify local coffee industry



DA Sec. Proceso J. Alcala (left) and CHMI Agroforest Development Corp. President Simeon L. Kintanar (right) greet each other. photo: MMOJICA



BAR Director Nicomedes Eleazar (right), one of the invited panelists at the forum, discusses a possible collaboration on coffee R&D with a researcher from one of the state universities (left). Also in the photo is Ms. Digna Sandoval, BAR's focal person for crops at the Technology Commercialization Division. photo: MMOJICA

The 1st Philippine Coffee Investors' Forum was held on 9 March 2011 at the InterContinental Manila in Makati City to serve as a venue for the government and private sector to share knowledge and opportunities in order to boost the growth of the coffee industry in the country.

The event was organized through the National Convergence Initiative between the Departments of Agriculture (DA), Agrarian Reform (DAR), and Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) together with Nestle and in collaboration with Land Bank of the Philippines and Banco De Oro Unibank (BDO).

Mr. Marriz Manuel B. Agbon, head, National Convergence Initiative and president, Philippine Agricultural Development and Commercial Corp. (PADCC), presented the developments of the convergence initiative for the coffee industry. He said that they are identifying specific coffee clusters in each province and identified Northern Mindanao, Davao, and SOCSARGEN (South Cotabato, Sarangani, General Santos City) as comprising 51 to 52 percent of coffee production in the country.

Mr. Dante S. Delima, program director, DA-High Value Crops Development Program, meanwhile presented the action agenda of DA and its deliverables for 2011 on the development of the coffee industry. He said that there are currently 10 priority regions for coffee and DA allotted P50M for robusta

production this year.

According to him, 70 percent of coffee produced in the Philippines is robusta variety, one of the most popular and commercial varieties of coffee. Other coffee varieties planted in the Philippines are arabica (aromatic), liberica (*kapeng barako*), and excelsa (bitter). He stressed the importance of quality and affordable planting materials for mass propagation of coffee.

Financing programs for coffee growers and investors through the assistance of Land Bank and BDO were discussed by Mr. Liduvino Geron, Land Bank 1st VP for the agrarian and domestic banking sector and Ms. Rhoda Orsolino, BDO senior VP for Commercial Banking Group (Luzon), respectively.

"We are prepared to fund new coffee plantations and the rehabilitation of existing areas for coffee. We are also ready to finance irrigation systems if needed. Borrowers are also allotted a grace period to repay the loan until cashflow is generated," said Geron.

"On our part, BDO's support to agriculture and fisheries is now slowly picking up. Our bank is open to individual borrowers provided they can comply with all the requirements of the bank which are needed to secure their ability to repay the loan," explained Orsolino.

On tax incentives for coffee investors provided by the Board of Investments (BOI) under the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Mr. Guillermo S. Laquindanum, director, Supervision and Monitoring Department, discussed the simplified procedures for investors who would like to avail of tax incentives.

"Investments in agribusiness or agriculture and fisheries commercial production and processing are at the top of our Investment Priority Plan (IPP)," he said.

The private sector likewise shared some of its successes in developing the local coffee industry.

Mr. Noel S. Gonzales, founding chairman and CEO, Corporate Holdings

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Nat'l conference highlights 25 years of achievement on rice research



DA Asst. Sec. Dennis B. Araullo of the DA National Rice Program.



PhilRice Executive Director Ronilo A. Beroño



photos: courtesy of PHILRICE

The Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) hosted the 24th National Rice R&D Conference in PhilRice Muñoz, Nueva Ecija on 16-18 March 2011 with the theme: "*Optimizing 25-year R&D Achievements to Help the Country Achieve Rice Self-Sufficiency in 2013*" which also gave way to the celebration of the PhilRice's 25th year anniversary.

This annually conducted conference highlighted the significant achievements in rice R&D and provided a venue for knowledge exchange on rice R&D. These achievements were from the national and regional rice R&D projects/programs conducted by the Department of Agriculture (DA) and PhilRice R&D stations, state colleges and universities (SUCs), non-government organizations (NGOs), local government units, farmer groups, and national and international agencies which are anchored on the technology needs of the integrated rice crop management and rice-based farming systems. These projects/programs were designed for more efficient and effective systems of technology

generation, packaging, and delivery for the Filipino farmers.

Prior to the series of R&D outputs presentation, the conference started with the welcome remarks from PhilRice Executive Director Atty. Ronilo A. Beroño and followed by the opening message from Agriculture Secretary Proceso J. Alcala, represented by DA Asst. Sec. Dennis B. Araullo of the DA National Rice Program.

In his message, he emphasized that the big challenge of feeding the nation's population requires us to double our efforts just to achieve the goal of rice self-sufficiency by 2013. This requires rice producers to increase the production by at least 10 percent per year. To attain this goal, the DA National Rice Program will focus on irrigation facilities, research & development and extension through collaborative efforts with other concerned partners.

During the three-day plenary sessions, the invited speakers presented the accomplishments of their respective completed rice R&D

program/projects which are in innovative technologies and approaches for boosting rice productivity, grain quality, and nutrition, rice varietal development, farm machineries, mitigation and adaptation strategies to climate change and other emerging problems, technology promotion/delivery, rice growing environments, upscaling of the PalayCheck and Palayamanan systems, and socio-economics, impact assessment, policy and market researches. Plans were also presented as guide in helping attain rice self-sufficiency and address the challenges and emerging problems of the rice industry. Among these plans are: the Food Staples Self-Sufficiency Road Map and the Philippine Rice R&D Programs for 2011-2016.

Also held during the conference were the awarding of the winners for the best papers, development projects and posters, field tours around PhilRice facilities and experimental farms, and the unveiling of the new PhilRice logo. ### (Raymond Patrick L. Cabrera and Rodolfo F. Fernandez)

2 BAR-assisted applications for trademarks approved



Two approved trademarks: the stylized "G" logo for the Kalipayan Products and the Likas Kaya, producer of organic fertilizers with the "three-arrow device" in green.

The Intellectual Property (IP) Philippines has recently awarded two trademark certificates to *Kalipayan Products* and *Likas Kaya*, which the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) through its Intellectual Property Rights Office (IPRO), assisted in the filing and processing of their IP applications as well as in providing legal and technical assistance.

The *Kalipayan Products* was awarded the trademark for their stylized "G" logo and device which they could now use in their product labels. "The approved trademark consists of a very

stylized letter G in black color in continuous writing with rough edges," described Dr. Andrea B. Agillon, head of the BAR's IPRO. The *Kalipayan Products*, owned by Ms. Ma. Elena A. Tabora, is the producer of Negros Occidental's original *Gourmet Tuyo*, noted for its Pinoy flavor and is now eyeing the global market.

Meanwhile, the *Likas Kaya*, which produces organic fertilizers, was awarded the trademark of the word "Likas Kaya" and three-arrow device in green color. The trademark was applied by Mr. Arnold N. Venturina, president

of the Occidental Mindoro National State College.

"They own the trademark which is good for 10 years," said Dr. Agillon. "The trademark for the Stylized Gourmet took awhile as we had to re-file it because it was denied. "Gourmet" as a trademark is already known so in consultation with the Ms. Tabora, we advised them to apply for the "Stylized G" instead.

As defined in the Intellectual Property Code (R.A. 8293), "trademark is any visible sign capable of distinguishing goods". It could be a sign, device or mark by which the articles produced or dealt in by a particular person or organization are distinguished or distinguishable from those produced or dealt in by others, and must be affixed to goods or articles. Trademark rights (which is usually used with a "TM" superscript symbol) can prevent others from using a confusing similar mark.

BAR provides IP assistance not only for its funded research outputs but also to other public and private institutions. The assistance provided comes in many forms from very simple provision of information to as complicated as drafting claims.

"The bottlenecks in IPR are usually in accommodating applications for Patents and Utility Model since not all researchers or clients have ready research papers to review, evaluate and write for IP application. If ever there are reports, these are commonly not written with formal scientific contents, discussions and references which otherwise would have made patent or utility model applications easier. It takes a lot of time and effort for the inventor to grasp the requirements for novelty and inventive step in case of patents, and or the requirements of a registrable tradename or label to pass for a trademark. Several meetings and discussions are ensue before the IP management staff can sit, concentrate and do the formal writing and drafting the claims for the applications," explained Dr. Agillon. ### (Rita T. dela Cruz)



Mr. Arnold Venturina (left) of Likas Kaya receives the IP trademark certificate from Dr. Andrea Agillon (right) of BAR-IPRO. photo: ACONSTANTINO

10 BAR-funded rubber R&D projects in Mindanao reviewed



Project evaluators from UPLB: (L-R) Dr. Cesar Quicoy, Dr. Roberto Rañola, and Dr. Mary Ann Tavanlar. photo: AVELASCO

Ten rubber RDE projects in Mindanao, funded by the Bureau of Agricultural Research, were reviewed on 24 March 2011, 4/F RDMIC Bldg., Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City.

The 10 rubber projects were : 1) Developing Baseline Information System for the Philippine Rubber Industry; 2) Potential Major Diseases of Rubber: Determining the Incidence and Distribution Profile of Tapping Panel Dryness, *Corynespora* Leaf Fall, and SALB in rubber-growing provinces of the Philippines; 3) CPAR on White-Corn based Farming System under Newly Developed Rubber Plantation in South Cotabato; 4) CPAR: Rubber-based Farming Systems in Western Mindanao; 5) Rapid Propagation of Rubber via Somatic Embryogenesis; 6) Developing Molecular Marker Kit for Identification and Authentication of *Hevea* Clone; 7) Rubber Development Program for Southern Mindanao; 8) Evaluation and Production of Promising Clones of Rubber Using Improved Nursery Management Practices in Mindanao; 9) Adoption of Improved Technology on Rubber Nursery for the Production of Quality Planting Materials and; 10) CPAR: Rubber-based Farming Systems in Basilan.

Holding annual reviews is one of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategies of BAR to have an efficient and effective R&D management and a means to identify significant accomplishments of the projects after a year of implementation. The activity also provides a venue for the researchers, project leaders and rubber experts to exchange ideas, share experiences and information on the issues and concerns and problems encountered during the implementation.



Project evaluators from BAR: PMED OIC-Head Salvacion Ritual (right) and Coordinator Rodolfo Galang (left) photo: AVELASCO

Project implementers were composed of researchers from Mindanao State Colleges and Universities and the Regional Integrated Agricultural Research Centers (RIARCs) in Mindanao.

Each of the project leaders presented the highlights and significant findings to date. The evaluators provided the recommendations, as well as key points on how to extract the best result/findings out of the project. The project evaluators were composed of experts from the University of the Philippine Los Baños (UPLB), namely: Dr. Roberto Rañola, Dr. Cesar Quicoy, Dr. Mary Ann Tavanlar, and Dr. Arturo Castillo; and from BAR, namely: Ms. Josefina Lantican, Ms. Salvacion Ritual, Mr. Joell Lales, Mr. Rodolfo Galang, Ms. Digna Sandoval; and Mr. Amador Macabeo. Also sitting in the pool of evaluators was Ms. Alicia Acoba of the Bureau of Plants and Industry (BPI).

Miss Salve Ritual, OIC head of the Project Monitoring and Evaluation Division (PMED), the division of the bureau that spearheaded the said activity, said that they will also hold a similar review for the rubber projects in the Luzon and Visayas zones. ### (Amavel A. Velasco)