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BARChronicle

The official newsletter of the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research

Soriano appointed as DA-BAR's new director

Agriculture Secretary William Dar presides the oath-taking ceremony of Dr. Junel B. Soriano as newly-appointed DA-BAR director. PHOTO: ABUHAYAN/DA-AFID

Effective 25 October 2021, Dr. Junel B. Soriano serves as the newly-appointed director of the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR) following outgoing director Dr. Vivencio R. Mamaril who now came back to his home office—the DA-Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards.

Agriculture Secretary William Dar administered the oath-taking ceremony at the Office of the Secretary at the DA's main headquarters, Quezon City on the same date.

Prior to his appointment as DA-BAR director, he served as director of the Rainfed and Dryland Agriculture Center and Professor at the Isabela State University. With his expertise in the fields of agricultural engineering, soil and water conservation and management, irrigation & drainage engineering, project development and resource generation, and research and extension management, among others, he joined offices like the DA-Bureau of Soils and Water Management, International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics, and Bulacan Agricultural State College, to name a few.

During the initial briefings with the bureau's Executive Committee and technical and administrative divisions, the DA-BAR Transformative Research for Development (R4D) framework was discussed. In return, director Dr. Soriano envisions to enhance and implement strategies focused on transforming research outcomes to policies for development or "Research to Policy for Development (R2P4D)."

An expert on agricultural engineering and a farmer, Dr. Soriano now joins the DA-BAR family—one of the staff bureau of the department with a vision to continuously strengthen the R4D system towards a technology-empowered agriculture and fishery sector contributory to inclusive growth. ### ***(Ma. Eloisa H. Aquino)***

WHAT'S INSIDE

Revitalizing the Kapeng Barako through smart demo farm

Batangas Province Governor Hermilando I. Mandanas (middle in red) leads the ribbon cutting ceremony of the inaugurated BARAKO coffee nursery and smart demonstration farm.

Aimed at revitalizing the Kapeng Barako industry in Batangas Province, the Batangas State University (BatStateU) conducted the inauguration and launching of the BARAKO coffee nursery and smart demonstration farm on 21 October 2021 at the Pueblo Farms, Pueblo Subd., Rosario, Batangas and via Zoom.

BARAKO or Batangas Actions towards Revitalization and Acceleration of Kapeng Barako Industry is a project funded by the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR), and in partnership with public and private agencies.

Through massive seedling propagation and dispersal and establishment of a smart demo farm, the project intends to increase the productivity and capacity of Kapeng Barako growers in the province. This can increase the area of Barako plantations and barako coffee production in the coming years, hence, achieve optimum yield and health of coffee trees.

BatStateU president Dr. Tirso A. Ronquillo shared the university's commitment in the production and propagation of Kapeng Barako in Batangas.

"Rest assured that our R&D will always be with us in promoting high-value crops in the province," he added.

DA-BAR director Dr. Vivencio R. Mamaril, in his message, looks forward to the success of the project and in helping the coffee farmers in Batangas through the provided funds.

"This is a seed money, alam natin na if we are going to put value, we will be able to accomplish per proposal then this is really a worthy undertaking of the university," he said.

Messages of support, commitment, and partnerships were also shared by key personalities from the local government units, farmer groups, and partner agencies from the private and business sectors.

Dr. Romel U. Briones, project leader, facilitated the turn-over of coffee seedlings to farmer groups led by Batangas Province Governor Hermilando I. Mandanas.

The project targets to identify and involve at least 300 coffee farmers in seedlings dispersal, capacity building, and trainings on propagation and production of Kapeng Barako. ***### (Ma. Eloisa H. Aquino)***

Plant health management shared in DA-

Plant health management for quality planting materials was shared during the webinar of the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR) on 28 October 2021 via Facebook live.

Dr. Fe Dela Cueva, expert on Plant Pathology from the University of the Philippines-Institute of Plant Breeding, said that plant health management through precision diagnostics ensure the production and distribution of disease-free quality planting materials.

Further, she explained that plant diseases reduce the quality of food and threaten food production. "That is why ensuring disease-free quality planting materials is a key element in crop production through monitoring plant health, early detection of pathogens, and identification of major disease-causing organisms by reducing the spread of diseases, facilitating effective disease management strategies, thereby, increasing crop yield."

This can be achieved, first, through the development of pathogen detection protocols through nucleic acid-based detection or antibody-based detection on various fruits (banana, guava, tamarind, rambutan, durian, duhat, cashew, mangosteen, and lanzones); on vegetables (cucumber, tomato, bitter gourd, eggplant, squash, lady fingers); on root crops like sweet potatoes; and ornamental crops.

Second, through diagnosis and indexing of important diseases of various crops and mass propagation

BAR CHRONICLE highlights the bureau's activities as the country's national coordinating agency for agriculture and fishery R4D, and provides updates on NaRDSAF-member institutions.

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Milkfish project envisions fry, fingerlings increase following launching, MOA signing

With the goal of providing the needed agricultural support to hatchery and nursery operations of cooperators in Central Luzon, the "Enhanced Productivity and Resiliency through Improved Milkfish Hatchery and Nursery Protocols in Central Luzon" project was launched and a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was signed on 14 October 2021 via Google Meet.

Spearheaded by the Department of Agriculture-National Fisheries Research and Development Institute (DA-NFRDI), the project aims to increase the number of fry and fingerlings of milkfish, which will then help increase the income of fisherfolk. In close collaboration also with the DA-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) Central Luzon and Zambales local government unit, the project will specifically strengthen the milkfish hatchery and nursery, as well as the development of linkage system to grow-out farmers in the said province.

According to DA-NFRDI Freshwater Fisheries Research and Development Center chief Dr. Maria Theresa Mutia, this project in Zambales is the second part of the milkfish project since the first one was successfully implemented in Quezon.

The launching and MOA signing of the DA-BAR-funded project, which was graced by agency officials, aims to ensure the promotion of established protocols for milkfish production to sustainably provide fingerlings to grow-out ponds in Zambales; hence, improving the income of fisherfolk.

Despite the challenges with regards to the operations of milkfish hatcheries and nurseries, DA-BFAR Central Luzon regional director Wilfredo Cruz in his opening remarks, mentioned that these two phases (hatcheries and nurseries) of the research are still crucial for the country's milkfish industry.

"*Itong project na ito ay napakahalaga* and relevant *lalung-lalo na* in terms of bangus....To the cooperators, I would like to encourage everybody *na mahalin natin ang* project *na ito. Nakikita ko ang ibibigay nito na* assistance in terms of materials," DA-NFRDI acting executive director Dr. Lilian Garcia highlighted.

With the project being funded by the DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR), director Dr. Vivencio Mamaril, mentioned that the bureau aims to fund development projects or researches that have a direct impact on the farmers and fisherfolk.

Hence, more than gratitude, DA-BAR director Dr. Mamaril emphasized in his message, "*Ang biyaya ay pinagyayaman, pina-uunlad, at pinagtatagumpayan*," as he hopes to witness growth and improvement in the lives of the bureau's beneficiaries.

After the key messages, as well as presentation of the project—DA-BFAR Central Luzon regional director Cruz and DA-NFRDI acting executive director Dr. Garcia then led the MOA signing activity. ***### (Jireh Alodia R. Laxamana)***

-BAR webinar

and distribution of healthy planting materials to different DA-Regional Field Offices (RFO) and local government units in the regions.

And third, through collaboration with various institutions, including technical staff from DA-RFOs, provided knowledge through capacity building and training on disease diagnosis and plant micropropagation.

Dr. Dela Cueva, in her parting message, reminded that plant health monitoring is an important aspect of crop farming, and with the available information on plant diseases, appropriate control measures were recommended to ensure the plant health and the production of clean planting materials. ***### (Maria Elena M. Garces)***

Calamansi stakeholders convene to discuss industry's future in Oriental Mindoro

In response to Agriculture Secretary William Dar's pronouncements during a field visit in September 2021, a meeting on the possible actions for the enhancement of calamansi industry in Oriental Mindoro was held at theDepartment of Agriculture (DA)-MIMAROPA satellite station, Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro on 4 October 2021.

DA-MIMAROPA regional executive director Antonio G. Gerundio, together with DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) director Dr. Vivencio R. Mamaril and DA-Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) assistant director for Operations and Technical and Production Services Dr. Jonar I. Yago presided over the meeting.

Joining them were DA-MIMAROPA regional technical ►4

4 facilities under the Bayanihan 2 inaugurated


Food/Fruit Processing Laboratory


PHOTOS COURTESY OF GDIMAYUGA


Solar Power System

To help increase the production of priority commodities in MIMAROPA, four facilities in Victoria, Oriental Mindoro were rehabilitated and established under the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR)-funded project titled, Enhancing Technology Transfer and Capacities in the MIMAROPA Region, lodged under the Bayanihan 2.

Inaugurated on 4 October 2021, these facilities were: Food/Fruit Processing Laboratory, Plant Tissue Culture Laboratory, Lakatan Banana Tissue Culture Nursery, and Solar Power System.

First, the Food/Fruit Processing Laboratory was rehabilitated to serve as a venue for processing and value-adding of potential crops in the region, as well as training for interested beneficiaries.

Second, the Plant Tissue Culture Laboratory was rehabilitated to enhance the production of banana and garlic tissue culture planting materials for distribution to farmers and other stakeholders in the region.

Third, three units of the Lakatan Banana Tissue Culture Nursery Shed were rehabilitated. The said plant nursery was established to support the mass propagation of the Lakatan banana quality planting materials.

Lastly, the Solar Power System was installed as an alternative source of electricity in the station, as well as to promote green technology in performance of research for development.

Attending the inauguration were DA-MIMAROPA officials: regional executive director Antonio G. Gerundio, regional technical director Dr. Louella Rowena J. Lorenzana, Research Division chief Marissa R. Luna, and Regional Integrated Agricultural Research Center station head Coleta C. Quindong.

Joining them were DA-BAR director Dr. Vivencio R. Mamaril and DA-Bureau of Plant Industry assistant director for operation Dr. Jonar I. Yago. ### ***(Rena S. Hermoso***

◂3...Calamansi stakeholders

director Dr. Louella Rowena J. Lorenzana, Oriental Mindoro provincial agriculturist Christine M. Pine, Mindoro State University (MinSU, formerly known as Mindoro State College of Agriculture and Technology) president Dr. Levy B. Arago, Jr. among other technical staff and representatives.

DA-BPI assistant director Yago explained that the secretary wanted to expand the calamansi production area, identify existing cultivars or accessions, determine the package of technologies for calamansi production, and establish an indexing facility.

Meanwhile, DA-BAR director Mamaril detailed how the bureau can give its assistance to improve the calamansi industry.

Further, DA-MIMAROPA regional executive director Gerundio provided his inputs on how the regional field office and MinSU


PHOTO COURTESY OF GDIMAYUGA

can efficiently and effectively work together to address the challenges of the calamansi industry.

Another meeting will be set later this year to discuss the outputs and deliverables of the stakeholders present and ways forward. ### ***(Rena S. Hermoso)***

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