

# BARChronicle

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

## DA leads 15,000 stakeholders; prepares crafting of food security plan under the new normal

Following President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's call to come up with a food security plan, the Department of Agriculture (DA) led the 15,000 stakeholders who attended the series of discussions and consultations at the regional and national level as an initial step and in preparation for the updating of the commodity industry roadmaps under the new normal.

With the theme, "Food for Today and Beyond: Transforming the Philippine Agriculture," the stakeholder participants include key officials and representatives from national and local government offices, private sector, farmer and fisherfolk groups, international organizations, academe, youth leaders, non-government and civil society organizations, and the media.

The pre-summit roundtable discussions (RTDs) and Regional Food Security Summits (RFSSs) culminated during the 2021 National Food Security Summit (NFFS) on 18-19 May 2021 at the Bureau of Soils and Water Management, Diliman, Quezon City and via video conferencing.

Agriculture Secretary William



Secretary Dar (second from right) and Cabinet Secretary and Task Force on Zero Hunger Chairperson Karlo Alexei Nograles (joining virtually, first row, middle) lead the private sector and members of the Pilipinas Kontra Gutom in their pledge of support and commitment towards a unified vision of a food-secure and resilient Philippines and a whole-of-nation approach in eradicating hunger and malnutrition in the country. PHOTO COURTESY OF AJACALAN/DA-AFID

Dar acknowledged the farmers, fishers, and agripreneurs whom he considered as frontliners in ensuring food security in the country.

He underscored the involvement, engagement, and participation of various stakeholders as well as the renewed and strengthened public-private-people partnership.

"We need the support of all stakeholders and sectors, especially our local governments, in making our food production and distribution systems more inclusive, resilient and sustainable," Secretary Dar said.

Through the series of discussions and consultations, participants provided specific recommendations on the 11 major agriculture and fishery commodity groups: livestock (swine) and yellow corn (feed); poultry and yellow corn (feed); rice; fruits (banana, pineapple, mango);

coconut; sugarcane; coffee and cacao; vegetables; aquaculture; and capture fisheries.

This shall serve as basis in updating the commodity and industry roadmaps, identifying policy recommendations, and crafting strategic action plans in addressing the emerging challenges and opportunities in the agriculture and fisheries industry.

"We will complement the resulting national food security plan with our 'OneDA reform agenda,' anchored on four major pillars, namely consolidation, modernization, industrialization, and professionalization," he added.

National Scientist Dr. Emil Q. Javier, in his synthesis, acknowledged the numerous organized consultations in the regions and the RTDs that looked into major strategic directions ▶ 4

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# Community-based participatory projects in the Visayas report success as they near completion

Four projects under the Community-based Participatory Action Research (CPAR) program of the Department of Agriculture (DA)-Bureau of Agricultural Research report success during the completion and progress review held on 20 May 2021 via video conferencing.

The community-based projects were implemented by DA-Central Visayas in Negros Oriental, Siquijor, and Bohol.

## Corn-based farming in hilly areas

Package of technologies (POT) for the development of a corn-based farming system in hilly land areas were introduced in Valencia, Negros Oriental.

Soil and water conservation measures like creating contour lines/hedgerows, soil traps, contour canals, and rock walls helped in increasing corn yield from 980 kilograms to 2,000 kilograms per hectare.

Postharvest losses were also reduced from 25 to almost 10 percent with the construction of a multi-purpose solar dryer made from local raw materials and UV plastic.

Farmers were also introduced to hybrid and open-pollinated



Farmer-cooperator from Bohol uses the drum seeder technology to reduce labor cost.



Rice farmer in Bohol reports success in the project.

varieties, and planting of other vegetables, root crops, banana, and legumes to increase their income by 20 percent, or an approximate additional net income of PhP 320,796 per hectare per year.

Further, the project promoted the utilization of organic fertilizers and pesticides in the community.

## Diversifying lowland vegetable-based integrated farming system

The project aimed to boost vegetable production in Enrique Villanueva, Siquijor and establish agribusiness and livelihood enterprises in the community.

Diversification of the farming system resulted in a 90 percent increase in vegetable production, providing an additional net income of PhP 5,353.27 to as much as PhP 85,663.49 depending on the crops planted.

A farmers' association was also organized to further empower farmers.

They now engage in agribusiness enterprise by processing peanut products such as peanut butter, kisses, and *milkpeyato*. They were also trained in small ruminant production and breeding.

Through such interventions, net income was increased by an average of PhP 28,218.65.

## Testing of multi-storey cropping with native chicken

Sustainable multi-storey cropping with native chicken integration is to be introduced to the farmers in Maria, Siquijor.

Partial establishment of the multi-storey farming system in hilly agricultural lands was accomplished. Preparation of planting materials is being fast-tracked for the integration of banana, cacao, and coconut in the farming system.

Meanwhile, trainings on farm planning, soil and water conservation and management, POTs on banana, cacao, and coconut production, native chicken health care and management, and organic vegetable production and its economic potentials were held.

## Improving rice-based farming system in irrigated lowland area

The project aimed to improve farm productivity and increase the income of farmers in Ubay, Bohol.

Labor cost was reduced by an average of 54.5 percent for the two

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# ects in Central mpletion



Farmer from Ubay, Bohol boasts his abundant harvest from the project. PHOTOS COURTESY OF DA-CENTRAL VISAYAS

sites through the adoption of the drum seeder technology.

Farmers were also introduced to new generation seeds to reduce input costs. Preliminary results showed that high-yielding registered inbred seeds only costed them PhP 1,840 per hectare compared to hybrid seeds that cost them PhP 6,000.

Coupled with improved cropping pattern, farmers' income significantly increased with an additional PhP 107,252.38 which translates to 290 percent because of the integration of vegetable and watermelon production.

Finally, six trainings were also conducted to capacitate farmers on rice production using the drum seeder, peanut production, high-value crops production, organic fertilizer and pesticide production, watermelon production, and basic farm record keeping and accounting.

CPAR is an extension modality and an innovative approach to research for development that focuses on the verification, demonstration, and adoption of agriculture and fishery technologies at the community level. ### (Jhon Marvin R. Surio)

## Best practices of tilapia hatcheries and nurseries shared in a webinar

Best practices of tilapia hatcheries and nurseries in Laguna and Batangas were shared to the public through the webinar conducted by the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR) on 27 May 2021 via Facebook live.

Dr. Ma. Theresa Mutia, chief science research specialist at the DA-National Fisheries Research and Development Institute (NFRDI), discussed the initial results of their project that aimed to ensure a sustainable quality seed stock of tilapia.

Five hatchery cooperators and five nursery cooperators were trained on tilapia hatchery and nursery operations through this project funded by DA-BAR. The package of technology, proven to be technically and economically feasible, was developed by DA-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center.

Dr. Mutia shared the best practices that were identified by the cooperators themselves.

First, using a hand tractor in pond levelling is more efficient than using an animal drawn plow. This reduces the length of time from two days to three hours thereby lessening their expenses and maximizes their productivity.

Second, applying teased at 50 kilograms per hectare reduced the occurrence of pests in the pond. The cooperators noticed that it was effective in managing the pests compared to when they were using a prohibited pesticide.

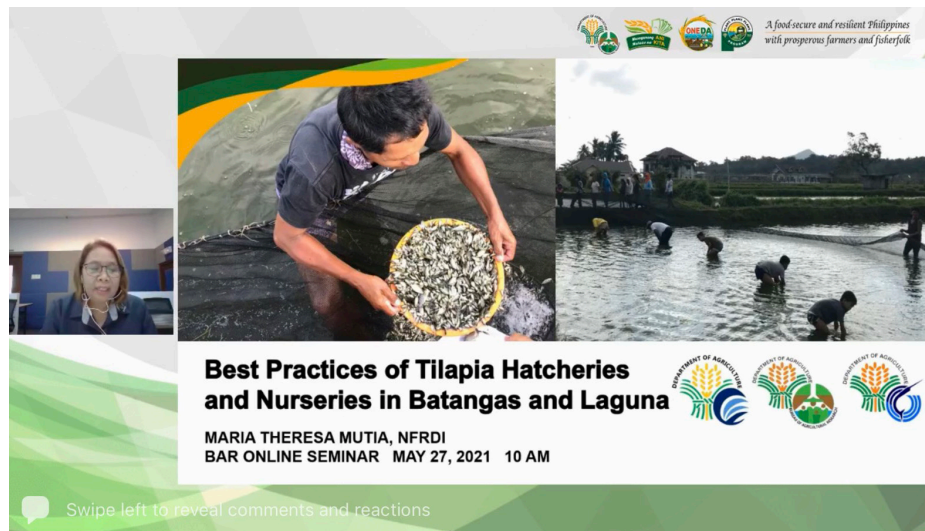
Third, following the right dosage of lime and fertilizers improved the growth of natural food and overall condition of the pond. The cooperators, in the past, were not following the correct amount and relied on estimating the amount needed.

The next steps, which the cooperators are already practicing, include conditioning the breeder early in the morning; selecting and pairing healthy breeders which follows the sex ratio of one male is to three female breeders; and collecting fry using a fine mesh scoop or seine net for three to four times a day.

This is followed by stocking the fry with proper acclimatization for at least 10 to 15 minutes in the morning or until the fry has adapted to the temperature.

Next is harvesting fingerlings early in the morning or late in the afternoon. Harvested fingerlings must be properly sorted before packing.

Dr. Mutia shared that previously the cooperators were not keen on doing meticulous record keeping. ▶ 4



Dr. Ma. Theresa Mutia, chief science research specialist at the DA-NFRDI, served as the resource speaker during the DA-BAR webinar on 27 May 2021. SCREENSHOT COURTESY OF DA-NFRDI

# Restructured divisions, units undergo procurement processes training

Following the organizational restructuring of the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR), the bureau's key officials, Bids and Awards Committee, and end-user representatives underwent training on Republic Act No. 9184, or the Government Procurement Reform Act, and its 2016 revised implementing rules and regulations on 10, 12, and 14 May 2021.

The training webinar served as a refresher or follow-up course for concerned staff with regards to

their duties in performing activities involving procurement, delivery, and payment of goods and services among others.

This was also to enhance appreciation among officials and staff regarding the importance of implementing the abovementioned law for efficient service delivery of DA-BAR despite the pandemic crisis.

Topics that were discussed include efficient procurement measures during a state of calamity or implementation of community quarantine; key

features of the RA 9184 and procurement organizations; procurement planning and budget linkage, including early procurement activities; standard bidding procedures for goods and infrastructure projects, as well as for consulting services; and alternative methods of procurement.

Dr. Cheryl Ramos, Administrative Services Division director; and Ronnie Gutierrez, chief procurement officer, of the Central Luzon State University were tapped as resource persons for the three-day activity. Both were Government Procurement Policy Board recognized trainers. ### (Jireh Alodia R. Laxamana)

## ◀1...DA leads 15,000 stakeholders and possible policy reforms that cut across the whole sector.

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization Director General Qu Dongyu and President Rodrigo Roa Duterte shared their messages during the opening and closing ceremonies of the 2021 NFSS, respectively.

DA key officials, chief executives from national government agencies and academe, senate and congress, local government offices, farmer/fisherfolk representatives, and youth leaders and young agripreneurs shared their respective thoughts and recommendations on attaining food security during the plenary sessions.

During the closing ceremony, the collective support and commitment of the government, and the private and business sectors in the country led by Cabinet Secretary and Task Force on Zero Hunger chairperson Karlo Alexei Nograles and members of the Pilipinas Kontra Gutom were shown through their pledge of support and commitment.

Also, one of the highlights was the launching of the United Nation Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) as participated also by UNFSS convenors. The said summit aims to achieve a more sustainable and equitable food systems which leads to ensuring a food-secured nation.

Secretary Dar concluded the event with the department's vision of "A food-secure and resilient Philippines with empowered and prosperous farmers and fisherfolk.

Your active participation and recommendations have re-invigorated us that the agriculture sector holds so much potential in helping the country given this pandemic and attain sustained growth and development in the future," Secretary Dar ended

The DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research led by director Dr. Vivencio R. Mamaril, as one of the members of the NFSS Steering Committee, handled the summit's program of activities in partnership with the Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries. The bureau also handled the invitation and confirmation of participants. Further, Director Mamaril served as moderator during the Sectoral Workshop on pineapple.

The bureau, as instructed by the Secretary, also coordinated the conduct of RFSS with the DA Regional Field Offices and regional stakeholders, outputs of which were consolidated under the guidance of tapped experts. ### (Ma. Eloisa H. Aquino)

## ◀3...Best practices of tilapia

Through the project, cooperators realized the importance of good record keeping especially in terms of monitoring their expenses.

"Ang record keeping ay isang paraan para ipaintindi sa kanila na ito ay kanilang negosyo," she added.

Lastly, ensuring that they have buyers before stocking the breeders and maintaining a good and harmonious relationship with their farm workers.

Dr. Mutia ended her discussion by emphasizing that smallhold fisherfolk can always seek assistance from DA-BFAR and DA-NFRDI as well as other DA offices.

"Public service po tayo so anybody can avail or ask for assistance sa ating mga opisina," she said.

Attended by 120 participants, the webinar is a monthly activity of the bureau to disseminate technologies and breakthroughs in agriculture and fishery research for development. ### (Rena S. Hermoso)

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