

BARChronicle

The fortnightly newsletter of the DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research

Improved BPI's R4D facility serves as OA hub for farmers, researchers

The newly upgraded Organic Agriculture (OA) Facility of DA-Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) Guimaras National Crop Research, Development, and Production Support Center (GNCRDPSC) was formally launched on May 14, 2025 in San Miguel, Jordan, Guimaras.

With funding support from the DA-BAR's Research Facility Development Grant program, the facility aims to expand its capacity in promoting sustainable farming practices and organic farming, serving as a shared facility for farmers, researchers, students, and interested individuals.

Farmer-participants and students from Guimaras State University joined the inaugural training, featuring hands-on learning on the production of low-cost and locally-available organic inputs, through the preparation of fermented plant juice and oriental herbal nutrients.

"Given the task of formulating and implementing a unified and integrated organic agriculture Research for Development and Extension (RDE) plans and programs from the national to the field level, the bureau recognizes the importance

of forging and maintaining strong collaborations with OA stakeholders toward ensuring the extensiveness and inclusiveness of the OA RDE agenda and program," Raymond Patrick L. Cabrera, BAR-Program Monitoring, Evaluation, and Linkaging Division OIC-head, highlighted in his message.

The launch coincided with the three-day Science & Technology Innovation Fair hosted by DA-BPI-GNCRDPSC, highlighting the synergy of research, innovation, and grassroots empowerment in advancing Philippine agriculture. **ANGELO N. PADURA**



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Benchmarking activity paves way for NIAHS Registry development



EXPERT SAYS —

What's the biggest challenge in simultaneously refining PakGulay, assessing its market, and building cooperative capabilities?

Successfully steering PakGulay means simultaneously tackling product improvement, market assessment, and cooperative capacity-building—a major feat given limited time, manpower, and resources. Each area moves at its own pace: product refinement is slow, the market shifts fast, and strengthening the cooperative needs constant support. Juggling these can easily overwhelm us and slow progress.

Introducing new products is another hurdle, especially with diverse customer tastes, limited marketing experience, and few promotional resources. Gaining the full commitment from cooperative members, who might not immediately see the value of innovation, is also tough. The real challenge is keeping everything connected and moving forward, while ensuring the cooperative stays engaged and ready to take ownership.

Yet, despite these hurdles, PakGulay has gained recognition not only regionally but also in our survey areas, successfully carving out a name in a specific market. Our cooperative members have seen firsthand the positive results of their active involvement, which has truly cemented their commitment and pride in the product's success.



MARY JANE B. IBARRA
Science Research Specialist II
DA-Cagayan Valley



A benchmarking activity for the development of the Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (NIAHS) Registry System took place on May 15, 2025, at the NCCA Building in Intramuros, Manila.

The NIAHS benchmarking activity aimed to align the current registry systems of the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) with the requirements of the soon-to-be-created NIAHS Registry System. These systems catalog properties of cultural, natural, or agricultural value at the local, national, or international level.

Among the registry systems presented were the DA's Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture, the NCCA's Philippine Registry of Heritage (also called Talapamana ng Pilipinas), and six systems used

by the DENR. These are the 1) Protected Area Information System, 2) Ramsar Information Service, 3) Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Conserved Territories and Areas Registry, 4) World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas, 5) World Database on Protected Areas, and 6) Clearing House Mechanism.

Technical teams from DA, DENR, and NCCA also shared experiences on how these registries were developed and being managed.

Further, a draft of the NIAHS sub-criteria—focusing on biodiversity, agro-biodiversity, socio-cultural systems supporting agro-ecological practices, and significant landscapes—was presented by DENR and NCCA.

Serving as the Interim Secretariat of the NIAHS Executive Committee, DA-BAR organized and led the said activity. **LEA BAÑARES-CALMADA**

DA-BAI, DA-BAR launch surveillance proj on *Salmonella* in PH layer farms

Promoting food safety and animal health in the Philippines, the DA-Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) commenced a nationwide surveillance study on *Salmonella enterica* in Philippine layer farms following its inception meeting held virtually on May 2, 2025.

Funded by the DA-BAR, this project will investigate *Salmonella enterica* prevalence, assess contamination risk factors, and evaluate the traceability of layers and eggs across 121 registered farms nationwide.

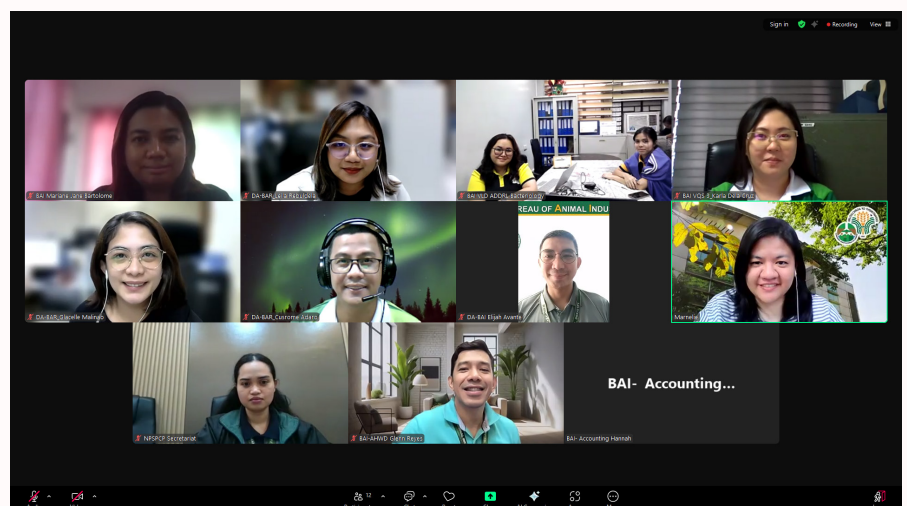
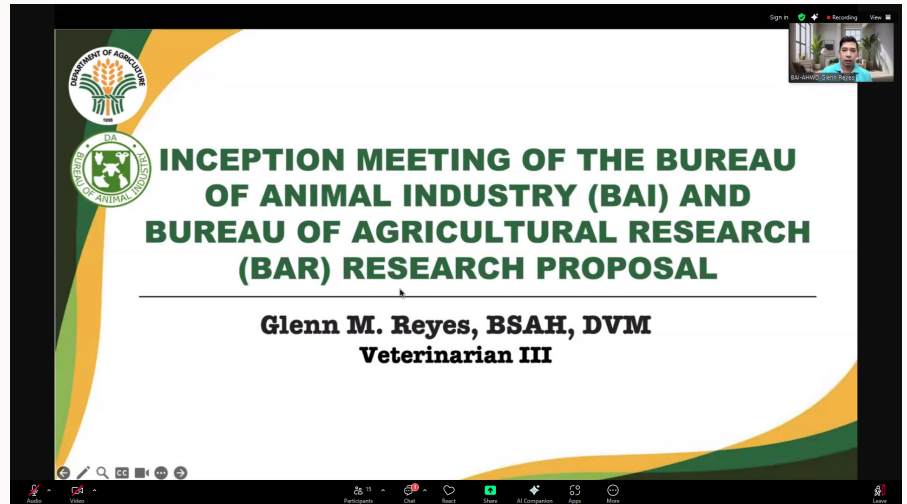
Project lead and veterinarian Glenn M. Reyes presented the approved project proposal during the meeting, emphasizing the importance of tracking *Salmonella* pathways throughout the production chain. Environmental samples such as dust and fecal matter, and direct samples from chicken and eggs such as egg yolk and white will be analyzed.

With the increasing Salmonellosis cases in the Philippines from 9,000 in 2022 to 13,000 in 2023, eggs and poultry were identified as primary sources. Results from this project are expected to strengthen national efforts to ensure quality and safer eggs for consumers by informing national policy and improving on-farm biosecurity.

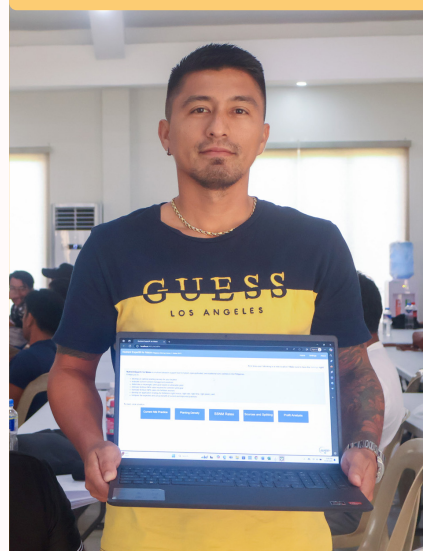
Information materials on *Salmonella* prevention and control will likewise be developed and disseminated to equip layer producers with this crucial knowledge.

The DA-BAR Livestock and Poultry Team and the project team members attended the meeting.

RENA S. HERMOSO



chats on the farm



Ang unang mababago talaga sa dati kong gawain ay 'yong kaalaman. Nagsimula lang ako noon sa pagtatanong-tanong. Pero dahil sa training, nakita ko na puwedeng bawasan ang abono, bababa rin ang gastos, pero hindi maaapektuhan ang kalidad ng ani. Kadalasan kasi sinusunod lang ng mga magsasaka 'yong nakasanayan. Kaya mahalaga na mabigyan sila ng tamang kaalaman. Dapat maituro sa kanila kung paano ang wastong pagpapataba ng lupa, dahil 'yon ang pinaka-importante sa natutunan ko sa SSNM-NE training.

PRINCE DEAN CHARLES G. CLARK
Rice and Corn Farmer, Ilagan, Isabela

DA-BAR, TAU align on water resource management project in Tarlac



DA-BAR Director Junel B. Soriano and Tarlac Agricultural University (TAU) President Silverio Ramon DC. Salunson led the inception meeting on May 5, 2025 in Camiling, Tarlac to align expectations, clarify roles, and ensure a smooth and successful project implementation of the newly-funded project on water resource management.

Project leader Catherine E. Delos Reyes-Pueyo presented the overview of REACH R4D: Regenerative Agriculture for Conservation and Hydrological Sustainability of Small-scale Water Resources, which aims to improve the water storage efficiency of small farm reservoirs (SFRs) and the overall efficiency of shallow tubewells



(STWs) in Nambalan, Sta. Ignacia, Tarlac.

The project will employ regenerative agriculture technology such as dry seeded rice and precision irrigation technology for high value crops production and will draft policy recommendations on the rehabilitation and maintenance of SFRs and STWs.

In his speech, Soriano mentioned the half-a-century-old project in India which inspired the water resource management project in Tarlac.

"We are not just developing water resources and facilities just to harvest water, but ultimately we want to transform the lives

of the people and the farming communities by boosting their livelihood," said Director Soriano.

He further highlighted that the expansion of the initiative relies on collaborative knowledge and resource sharing among different sectors such as government agencies, local government units, the academe, the private sector, and farmer cooperatives and associations.

Silverio, on behalf of TAU, expressed gratitude for the funding and underscored the university's commitment to the sustainability of the initiative.

"The TAU offers extensive research resources and an accessible pool of experts who can provide valuable support to the project," he said. "We look forward to more collaborations with DA-BAR," he added.

The sustainable and science-based approach to water resource management intends to provide farmers with an efficient water supply during the dry season, ultimately leading to optimum crop productivity.

KRISTINA S. ESTRADA

"Synergy in Action" workshop boosts DA-BAR's teamwork and cohesion

To foster stronger collaboration and elevate service delivery, the DA-BAR conducted its 2025 team-building workshop, "Synergy in Action: Mastering Group Dynamics for Team Success," from May 13-15 in Zambales. This initiative aligned with the bureau's core values of continuous growth, sustainability, and innovativeness.

The workshop, led by Jayson M. Victoriano, Associate Professor V at Bulacan State University, emphasized that true team synergy wasn't accidental; it was a deliberate outcome built upon a deep understanding of group dynamics, including trust, communication, leadership, and shared accountability. Participants engaged in

interactive activities and reflective discussions designed to enhance their awareness of individual and collective behaviors that impacted overall team performance.

By mastering these group dynamics, employees will significantly enhance internal collaboration and project execution, ultimately leading to better outcomes for the communities and stakeholders they serve. A stronger, more cohesive team also will translate to more efficient research, more responsive service delivery, and more sustainable agricultural practices.

Led by the Human Resource Management Unit (HRMU),

the training aims to deepen employees' understanding of group dynamics, improve communication and leadership skills, and foster a culture of sustainable teamwork across the organization. **LARA ABEGAIL S. ESPIRITU**



DA-BAR wraps up 2025 Sportsfest

The DA-BAR concluded its 2025 Sportsfest with an awards presentation on May 14, 2025, in Olongapo City, Zambales.

The Blue Farm Fusion triumphed as the overall champion, dominating the run/walk (team), basketball (women), table tennis (men), team intro/chant, run/walk (women), and special pageant leaderboards.

Claiming second place was the Purple Rice Warriors, who earned top spots in the amazing race, basketball (men), dodge ball, table tennis (women), darts (women), and scrabble competitions.

Finishing third overall and securing first-place position in volleyball was the Green Crop Crusaders.

The Peachy Planters led in patintero, badminton, run/walk (men), darts (men), and chess, while the Red Harvesters celebrated winning the muse title.

Director Junel B. Soriano, in his speech, expressed his optimism on the activity, "I am confident that this activity will significantly strengthen our bonds, build mutual trust, cultivate stronger communication, and enhance collaboration across all units and divisions."

He further hopes that the sportsfest will have a lasting positive impact in the workplace, "I truly believe that the spirit of sportsmanship that you have shown will translate into the workplace, fostering improved relationships, communication, trust, and collaboration."

Themed, "Bagong Pilipinas, Bagong Lakas: Strength In Unity, Strength Through Sports," the sportsfest was organized by the Association of BAR Employees to promote teamwork, camaraderie, and sportsmanship among the bureau's workforce. **KRISTINA S. ESTRADA**



Procurement Unit leads training on RA 12009



To equip select technical staff and procurement officers with a thorough understanding of Republic Act No. 12009 (New Government Procurement Act) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), the Procurement Unit of DA-BAR's Administrative and Finance Division conducted an in-house training on May 2, 2025, in Quezon City.

The RA 12009 introduces significant changes in the government procurement procedures, ensuring transparency, efficiency, and accountability in the use of public funds to enhance the bureau's existing procurement system.

Reynaldo R. Villon, supervising budget and management specialist of the DBM-Cagayan Valley, discussed strategic procurement planning, different modes of procurement under the said law, and contract implementation and sanction mechanism. He also shared best practices in the implementation of procurement process.

DA-BAR Director Junel B. Soriano emphasized the importance of the activity to fully understand the IRR of new RA 12009, which he understands, is easier, flexible, and provides more options, taking into consideration, not only of the lowest bidder, but more so on the importance of the quality of the product. **MARIA ELENA M. GARCES**



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

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TECH HIGHLIGHT



PakGulay Veggie Crunch

Pak Gulay Food Products takes pride in incorporating vacuum frying technology as an innovative approach to enhance the quality of fried fruits and vegetables, presenting a distinct alternative to traditional atmospheric frying methods.

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