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TIMGAS

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Spicing up farm life

JHOANNA GARCIA



Timgas

The word Timgas is a Cebuano term which means white and smooth in texture usually in reference to the grains of a high-quality rice. As an adjective, it is synonymous to ageless, enduring, eternal, firm, and everlasting.



Contents

02 Spicing Up Farm Life with Herbs and Spices
Jhoanna Garcia

05 ATI completes two rounds of refresher courses on rice

06 Newly-hired AEWs in SurSur train on Training Management

LSA cooperators, AEWs equip on Digital Farmers Program through TOT

07 OA Coordinators, FAs train on PGS

08 AEWs undergo sweet potato prod'n training

09 ATI Caraga trains SurSur IPs on handicraft making
Surigao del Sur crafts plans for PAFES

10 La Modesta Farm establishes FITS Kiosk
LGU Veruela launches FITS Center

11 Abonong Swak info drive intensified

ATI 13 establishes Urban Garden in Bislig City, SDS

12 SOA on Corn Prod'n launch in AgSur

More BBOs equip on specimen collection

13 LSA cooperators, AEWs trained on Digital Agriculture Course

14 SOA on Smart Rice Agriculture launched in Region 13
Gov. Pimentel inks MOA for agri-fishery dev't in SurSur

15 ATI-Caraga evaluates two FITS Kiosks in AgSur

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Spicing up farm life with

HERBS AND SPICES



By: John Paul Abonitalla and Jason Paul Dads Jampac

Fame or money may be key to one's happiness and wellness. But for Jhoanna Garcia, the zest and zing in life are neither in the badge nor in the wallet. It's in her garden - among the aromatic herbs and spices that blanket her backyard.

Jhoanna, 49, is the proprietor and Learning Site for Agriculture (LSA) cooperator of Jabez Farm located in Brgy. Nongnong, on the hilly side of Butuan City. She discovered her love for herbs and spices because of her fondness for cooking. Instead of buying spices in stores as food seasoning or garnishing, she thought that the more practical and economical way would be to patronize her own plants.

During her trips and meetings with fellow LSA cooperators, Jhoanna realized the importance of putting something on her farm that would make it distinct from the rest. This was the start of her herbs and spices venture.

Jhoanna and her farm

Since then, Jhoanna's passion for organic agriculture became her edge over the other small farmers. Her ardor pushed her to take leadership roles in organizations such as the Butuan City Organic Producers and Processors Association where she is the Secretary and the Women of Organic Agriculture Association - Caraga Chapter where she holds the position of Vice Chairperson.

Spending time on the farm is a well-spent time for her. With only a few farm workers, she and her father were able to grow different fruit trees, vegetables, herbs and spices garden, to name a few.

Before learning about the Agricultural Training Institute, Jhoanna used to teach JADAM, a low-cost farming principles and practices.

She also shares her knowledge about Natural Farming Technology System (NFTS) with farmers and missionaries in the Tribal Mission Foundation International, Inc.

As a follower of her father's love of farming, she keeps on learning by attending various training programs on urban agriculture, processing, and pest management, among others.





Turning point: Healthier options

Growing herbs and spices, at first, was only a hobby for Jhoanna until she started appreciating its value and benefits. Health has also been one of the reasons why she decided to grow her own fresh, natural herbs and spices. At her age, Jhoanna has experienced different illnesses. But thanks to her herbs and medication, she was able to recover fast.

Among her herbs, roselle is her favorite. She thought of it when she attended the entrepreneurial development training at the Department of Agriculture - Regional Field Office 13. After thorough research and trials, she decided to process roselle into a flavored jam.

Empirical studies proved that roselle helps in controlling diabetes, hypertension, cholesterol, and many more. Aside from jam, she now produces bottled juice out of roselle extracts.

Jhoanna believes that venturing into herbs and spices is a lucrative business. Although these are available in supermarkets as seasonings, most cooks and moms still prefer the cheaper, fresher, and naturally grown for their culinary preparations.

Jabez Farm years from now

Jhoanna is motivated to work hard to attaining more milestones in her farming and business ventures. She also wants to be a source of inspiration and knowledge to her fellow farmers.

Years from now, she visualizes Jabez Farm as a premiere “farmacy” in Butuan City and a farm tourism site with an array of farming technologies that farmers can learn from. She also wants to expand her juice business by trying the roselle-guyabano combo and other flavored mixes.

As a way to encourage others, Jhoanna says to never give up on your dreams. While it is true that farming has its ups and downs, but to continue with passion and courage, all the hardships will be worthwhile in the end.



ATI completes two rounds of refresher courses on rice

Butuan City – In its effort to continually provide capacity enhancement for the extension partners, the Agricultural Training Institute – Regional Training Center XIII successfully conducted another two batches of Refresher Course on Rice Pests and Diseases Management.

The third batch of the training held on April 4 – 8, 2022 was attended by 24 Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) from Agusan del Sur, while 26 AEWS from Surigao del Sur completed the 4th batch of the training on April 18-22, 2022, with the OIC-Assistant Director Violeta T. Laguna as Project Officer.

It was conducted to bring the participants up-to-date on the latest technologies, and updates on the management of rice pests and diseases. The technical experts from the Department of Agriculture – Caraga region and the DA-Regional Crop Protection Center (RCPC) employed varied methodologies such as lectures, participatory discussion, workshops, and demonstrations.

One of the participants from LGU-Bayabas, Rosemyr M. Bulatin affirmed that such methodologies especially their exposure to early morning field activities in collecting and identifying insect pests and disease specimens, even made the learning process more interesting and effective.

The course covered the topics of transformational leadership, One DA Agenda overview of the rice industry, updates on rice pests and diseases infestation in the region, as well as its management.

The participants were also taught on facilitating the rice pests and diseases monitoring and surveillance report in their respective areas of coverage.

It can be recalled that more than 40 AEWs from Agusan del Norte and Agusan del Sur were trained during the first two batches of the training last March.

Three more batches of the refresher course will be conducted until June 2022 by the ATI through the Career Development and Management Services Section – Rice Program, all with CPD units
(By: Mary Grace B. Salve).



Participants identify and collect insect pests and disease specimens during the field activities of the Refresher Course on Rice Pests and Diseases Management.

Newly-hired AEWs in SurSur train on Training Management

BUTUAN CITY – “I realized that fund utilization does not measure the accomplishment in conducting a training, but the relevance and quality of the training itself,” says Engr. Zairha Pude, Agricultural Extension Worker (AEW) from Carmen, Surigao del Sur.

Pude is among the 19 newly-hired AEWs from various Local Government Units (LGUs) in Surigao del Sur who successfully completed the first batch of the Training of Trainers (TOT) on Training Management last April 20-22, 2022.



Engr. Matt Andrew G. Baquiano (first from right) guided the participants during their exercises in conducting a training needs assessment as the first step in a training cycle

As a ladderized training program, said TOT was part of ATI’s commitment to providing capacity enhancement for the LGU counterparts to fully the devolved functions, particularly the provision of farmer-level training in their respective areas of coverage.

As front liners in the delivery of extension services, the trainees were introduced to the world of training, covering the whole phases of training management on the pre, during, and post-training tasks through lecture and discussion, group dynamics, exercises, and other activities to intensify the learning process. They also learned about the nature and characteristics of adults as learners as well as the qualities of an effective trainer.

One of the highlights of TOT was the practical exercises on the training needs survey and the formulation of Training Design. Communication, facilitation, and presentation skills were also imparted to the trainees. Prior to this, the participants were enrolled in the e-learning on Training Management.

The Resource Persons were composed of Heracleo A. Paler, Mary Grace B. Salve, Engr. Matt Andrew G. Baquiano, Jason Paul Dadz E. Jampac, and Ginalyn V. Arbutante.

The trainees will then advance to the 2nd level of the program which is focused on the Extension Delivery System.

All in all, the ATI will conduct five batches of TOT on Training Management and five batches of the TOT on Extension Delivery System intended for AEWs in the region. (By: Mary Grace B. Salve)

LSA Cooperators, AEWs equip on Digital Farmers Program through TOT



Twenty participants completed and received their certificates of completion during the Training of Trainers (TOT) on Digital Farmers Program (DFP) in Balanghais Hotel, Butuan City on April 20-22, 2022.

BUTUAN CITY- Twenty participants completed and received their certificates of completion during the Training of Trainers (TOT) on Digital Farmers Program (DFP). This was conducted by the Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center (ATI-RTC) 13 in Balanghais Hotel, Butuan City on April 20-22, 2022.

The said training was participated by the staff and cooperators from the Learning Site for Agriculture (LSA) farms in Region 13. This was also attended by the selected Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) particularly from the cities and municipalities and the Farmers Information and Technology Services (FITS) Centers.

Participants were able to learn the components of the Digital Farmers Program (DFP) which covers the lessons from DFP 101 and 102. They were able to learn the basic and advanced agriculture applications, introduction and advanced social media marketing, e-commerce platforms and digital transactions.



OA Coordinators, FAs train on PGS

LOS ANGELES, Butuan City- To ensure the trainer's capacity in the establishment and practice of PGS, the Agricultural Training Institute – Regional Training Center (ATI-RTC) XIII conducted its first batch of Training of Trainers (TOT) on Participatory Guarantee System on April 18-29, 2022 at ATI Training Center, Los Angeles, Butuan City.

The training aims to create a pool of experts/trainers and to capacitate potential PGS Groups on the establishment and operations consistent with the organic agriculture standards and corresponding technical regulations. In the 10-day TOT, participants learned the salient provisions including the implementing rules and regulations of the Organic Agriculture Act as amended by RA 11511 on Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS); the organic agriculture standards, and the national list of permitted substances for organic agriculture; the general requirements and procedures for accreditation of PGS group; how to conduct of peer review and certification protocols, and how to apply the applicable current Philippine National Standards (PNS) for organic agriculture.

The 21 participants come from the province of Surigao del Norte OAP Coordinators and two Farmers Association of BACOPFA-Bayugan City and SOFA-Sibagat ADS.

In-depth training on the modules of PGS was discussed by Elena P. Madelo - OA Point Person and Leah I. Napoco - OA technical staff, both from ATI-RTC XIII. Rodolfo L. Domingo Jr, Cindy A. Burdeos, and Euniel G. Atalo, from the Department of Agriculture - Caraga Region, also served as resource persons.

It was spearheaded by the Career Development Management Services Section (CDMSS) through Ms. Elena M. Bacquiano, Training Specialist I and Organic Agriculture Program Point Person.

Its second batch will be conducted on July 11-22, 2022.

(By: Maria Den B. Parro)

As trainers, LSA staff and AEWs were taught on the basics of smartphone and how to discuss those topics to the farmers and youth when they conduct training on DFP 101 and 102 someday.

Protocols on internet safety as well as accessing the internet was also discussed during the training. Ginalyn V. Arbutante, Information Officer II, Fil Victor A. Babanto, Information Officer III, Maria Den Parro, Ag. I and John Paul Abonitalla, Technical Staff served as Resource Persons during the 3-day training. Simulation session was done during the last day of the training. This is to know whether the trained participants are ready for the field wherein they will train the farmers and youths regarding the benefits of the Digital Farmers Program.

Re-entry Plans, Facebook Pages, Social Media Marketing Plans, Pay Maya Accounts and Dream Boards are the outputs of the TOT. It was also agreed that each participant will send a microteaching video five days after the training. The said video will cover the topics on the Digital Farmers Program 101 and 102.

The Training of Trainers on Digital Farmers Program was spearheaded by the Information Services Section (ISS) of the ATI-RTC 13. (By: Ginalyn V. Arbutante)



AEWs undergo sweet potato prod'n training



SAN AGUSTIN, Surigao del Sur- the Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center (ATI-RTC) XIII recently conducted a three-day Training on Sweet Potato Production on May 4-6, 2022 at Alameda Farm.

The training with 10 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) units, was attended by 19 Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) from the five provinces of Caraga region.

The activity aimed to capacitate the participants in various cultural management and practices and identify the different varieties of sweet potato that are suitable in the region. They also enumerate the different value-adding of the products.

Romer Amante, Technical Staff of Department of Agriculture -Caraga Region shared the DA's intervention for sweet potato production in Caraga.

On the hand, Nic Oswald Borines, Instructor I from Caraga State University (CSU), imparted his knowledge regarding sweet potatoes from the different varieties, cultural management to harvesting and post-harvest practices. Also, he discussed the status of sweet potato production and encouraged the participants to give importance in sweet potato industry.

After the lectures and discussions, Borines showed the participants how to set up sex pheromone as a control for sweet potato weevil. Likewise, the participants were able to observe the trapped weevil and identify its damages.

"The training course on sweet potato production gives a lot of knowledge and realization for us individuals who are working as technical staff of High-Value Crop Development Program (HVCDP), Agricultural extensionist and any related agricultural career's: I really appreciate the topics well from the Sweet Potato Situationer in the Region, the different varieties of Sweet Potato and Sweet Potato value adding products. Especially when it talks to the contribution of the region in the field of area planted until the volume of production in the country. This training serves as a

reminder that the sweet potato industry will not leave behind as one of the HVCDP commodities and for me, it is my responsibility as a Provincial Focal Person of Agusan del Sur to support and encouraged the Local Government Unit to continue their plans for the expansion and production on the existing Sweet Potato Areas. I will include this as an action plan for the upcoming LGUs Data Harmonization Planning and Workshop to have actual and realistic profiling data in support of possible interventions for the near future. Moreover, the facilitator and the resource speaker of this training are exemplary to meet their goals in achieving the Learning, Exhibit, Advise, Disseminate. Monecris Dawn B. Tagleong, HVCDP Technical staff of Department of Agriculture-Caraga Region.



The participants of the Training Course on Sweet Potato Production with ATI-RTC XIII OIC - Center Director Fil Victor A. Babanto and Mary Jane A. Gonzaga, HVCDP Point Person.

The said training was conducted by ATI-RTC XIII and spearheaded by the Partnership and Accreditation Services Section (PASS) with Mary Jane Gonzaga, Development Management Officer I and HVCDP point person. (By: Maria Den B. Parro)



ATI Caraga trains SurSur IPs in handicraft making

CANTILAN, Surigao del Sur- The Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center (ATI-RTC) XIII recently conducted a three-day Training on Handicrafts Making Using Indigenous Materials for the Indigenous People (IPs) from Carrascal and Cantilan, Surigao del Sur on May 16-18, 2022 at San Pedro Country Farm & Resort.



The training aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of the participants with regard to handicrafts making through technology promotion and gave importance in utilizing indigenous materials.

Emma Leah Abenoja, President of the Handicraft Makers Association of Cabadbaran City, served as the Resource Speaker in the three-day training. She discussed the overview of the handicrafts industry and shared the importance of utilizing the indigenous materials available in Caraga Region and how they can be utilized into a more valuable product. "Instead of throwing it away, it can be a good source of income," Abenoja said.



Participants were trained and produce flowers, corsage, leis, and Christmas decors using the corn husks.

“Isip usa ka leader sa hugpong sa mgababaeng Ips sa Carrascal, dako akong pasalamat nga nakatambong ko ani nga training kay amo ning ma share sa among mga kauban sa komunidad. Dili lang kini para sa mga babae kondi apil ang mga kalalakin-an. Dako pod kaayo akong pasalamat sa mga staff sa ATI nga maayo ang pagtagad sa amoa.”

Wendelina Ruayana, IP form Carrascal, Surigao del Sur.

Moreover, the said training was done in partnership with the National Commission for Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) of Surigao del Sur.

(By: Maria Den B. Parro)

Surigao del Sur crafts plans for PAFES



LANUZA & TAGBINA, Surigao del Sur – Municipal and City Agriculturists and Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) from the north and south clusters of Surigao del Sur met for the Planning-Workshop of the Province-led Agriculture and Fisheries Extension System (PAFES).

On May 25, 2022, at the ACM Surfing View Hotel, the participants presented their 2023-2025 plans for the Agriculture and Fisheries Extension (AFE) sector. They were from the north cluster namely: Carrascal, Cantilan, Madrid, Carmen, Lanuza, and Cortes. Similarly, participants of the south cluster composed of Barobo, Tagbina, Hinatuan, Lingig, and Bislig City also presented their plans on May 26th at the DA-Research Outreach Station in Tagbina.

OIC-Regional Technical Director Rebecca Atega of DA-RFO 13, Provincial Agriculturist Marcos Quico, representatives from BFAR, PCA, ATI, and PhilFIDA were also present to critique the presentations. The outputs will be consolidated and finalized by OPAG and will form part of the CPAFEP document.

(By: Jason Paul Dads E. Jampac)

La Modesta Farm establishes FITS Kiosk

LAS NIEVES, Agusan del Norte- The La Modesta Farm which is owned by Victor P. Labastilla is now establishing its Farmers' Information and Technology Services (FITS) Kiosk. The said farm is located in Brgy. Malicato, Las Nieves, Agusan del Norte. It is a certified Learning Site for Agriculture (LSA) of the Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center (ATI-RTC) 13 since May 20, 2021. The farm is focused on rice, vegetables and fruit trees production.

OIC Center Director Fil Victor A. Babanto headed in the evaluation of the said FITS Kiosk on May 30, 2022. Among the group were OIC Information Services Section Chief, Jason Paul Dads E. Jampac and Information Officer II, Ginalyn V. Arbutante. This is along with Concepcion Bantilan, FITS staff from the Municipal Agriculture Office of Las Nieves, Agusan del Norte.

The establishment of the LSA Farm FITS Kiosk is under the Techno Gabay Program (TGP) of the ATI-RTC 13 with the aim of serving farmers, students and other stakeholders by sharing agricultural knowledge through FITS Kiosk in the said municipality.

(By: Ginalyn V. Arbutante)



Mr. Victor P. Labastilla, owner of La Modesta Farm receives Information, Education and Communication materials during the evaluation of his FITS Kiosk in Las Nieves, Agusan del Norte on May 30, 2022.

LGU Veruela launches FITS Center



VERUELA, Agusan del Sur- The Local Government Unit (LGU) of Veruela, Agusan del Sur launched its newly-established Farmers' Information and Technology Services (FITS) Center on June 1, 2022.

Said launching ceremony was attended by the LGU's Local Chief Executives, farmers, and farmer-leaders. It was kicked-off with a ribbon-cutting as it welcomed various learners of the FITS Center.

OIC Center Director Fil Victor A. Babanto also joined in the said activity representing the Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center (ATI-RTC) 13. Together with him was Jason Paul Dads E. Jampac, Media Production Specialist II and Ginalyn V. Arbutante, Information Officer II. Mr. Jampac presented the overview of the Techno Gabay Program (TGP) along with its components, functions, roles and responsibilities of the FITS Center and Partner-Agency.

President Joy C. Capistrano of the Agusan del Sur State College of

Agriculture and Technology (ASSCAT) based in Bunawan, Agusan del Sur also present during the ceremony. She emphasized their possible contributions to the FITS Center such as the need of technical expertise in agriculture-related topics and other extension-related activities and trainings of the LGU.

Signing of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the FITS center highlights the launching ceremony. Among the signatories were the Municipal Mayor, Municipal Agriculturist and Sangguniang Bayan member, Chairman of Agriculture Committee of Veruela, Agusan del Sur. ASSCAT President and ATI-RTC 13 OIC Center Director.

OIC CD Babanto awarded a catalytic fund worth Php100,000.00 in a form of check during the ceremony as support to the FITS Center for the acquisition of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) equipment.

The establishment of the FITS Center is one of the components of the Techno Gabay Program. It aims to help farmers, students and other stakeholders by bringing them the updated agricultural knowledge right at their doorstep through the FITS Center.

(By: Ginalyn V. Arbutante)

Abonong Swak info drive intensified



Dr. Rodolfo P. Estigoy (Center, in blue long sleeves), Senior Technical Adviser for Strategic Communications of DA Central Office, met with the Regional Info Campaign Team for Abonong Swak to discuss the implementation of information drives to be conducted in Caraga. The meeting took place this morning, June 2, 2022, at DA-RFO 13. Among those present were Emmylou Presilda (Information Chief, DA-RFO 13), Marisa Garces (Rice Focal Person, DA-RFO 13), Jason Paul Dads E. Jampac (MPS II, ATI-RTC 13), and representatives from DA attached agencies and line bureaus such as PhilRice-Agusan and BSWM-Caraga.

BUTUAN CITY – The Department of Agriculture – Regional Field Office 13 (DA-RFO 13) and a representative from its Central Office met with DA line agencies and bureaus to discuss the implementation of the information drive for the Abonong Swak program on June 2, 2022 at the DA-RFO 13 office site at the Capitol Drive.

Dr. Rodolfo P. Estigoy, Senior Technical Adviser for Strategic Communications of DA-Central Office, met with Information Officers of DA-RFO 13, Agricultural Training Institute – Regional Training Center 13 (ATI-RTC 13), Bureau of Soils and Water Management Caraga (BSWM-Caraga), and the Philippine Rice Research Institute – Agusan Station (PhilRice-Agusan).

It was learned during the meeting that Information Education and

Communication (IEC) materials from the Central Office such as brochures, posters, and audio recordings have arrived but need to be localized for further understanding and appreciation by the local farmers. Moreover, there will be demonstration sites for the Abonong Swak to be established in all provinces of the region and training programs for farmers and Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs).

The rolling out of the Abonong Swak campaign is the government's response to the rising price of fertilizers and other inputs. It supports the Balanced Fertilization Strategy (BFS) which is a combination of organic and inorganic fertilizers thereby lowering production costs while still enjoying higher yield.

By following the organic-inorganic combination, farmers are **expected to save P2,000 to P4,000 per hectare.** (By: Jason Paul Dads E. Jampac)



ATI 13 establishes Urban Garden in Bislig City, SDS

BRGY. MAHARLIKA, Bislig City, Surigao del Sur - The Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center (ATI-RTC) XIII in partnership with the City Agriculture Office of Bislig City conducted a Technical Briefing for the establishment of the Integrated Urban Agriculture Garden on June 1-3, 2022.

The activity aimed to educate the peri-urban dwellers to produce their own food and, ensure the availability, of safe and affordable



(L-R) City Agriculturist Alice Millan, Engr. Matt Andrew Baquiano and Barangay Captain Samuel Lahoy during the signing of Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the establishment of Integrated Urban Agriculture Garden in Brgy. Maharlika, Bislig City, Surigao del Sur.

food in urban areas. Also, for them to appreciate the importance of organic farming and its advantage to health and the economy as well as establish a model urban garden in the community.

A total of 21 participants were composed of Barangay Officials and Barangay Health Workers (BHW) from the said village has participated in the said activity.

Engr. Matt Andrew G. Baquiano, Agriculturist II of ATI-RTC XIII served as the resource person for the topics on the basic urban gardening technologies. He demonstrated how to make organic concoctions such as Fermented Plant Juice (FPJ), Fermented Fruit Juice (FFJ), Fish Amino Acid (FAA), and Oriental Herbal Nutrients (OHN). Further, he discussed different technologies for crop production, care management, and maintenance. He also encouraged the participants to use available materials to produce homemade organic fertilizer and pesticides.

Indeed, the said activity was successful through the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the City Agriculture Office (CAO) of Bislig City represented by Alice Milan, City Agriculturist, and Samuel Lahoy, Barangay Captain, and Engr. Matt Andrew Bacquiano, Agriculturist II of ATI-RTC XIII.

(By: Maria Den B. Parro)



The program started with patch by Fil Victor A. Director of ATI-RTC strengthening and continues to would empower constituents through using different media. 551 enrollees from the (LGUs) to complete the 16



a welcome message via phone Babanto, the OIC-Center XIII. ATI has envisioned the agriculture sector implement programs that the farmers and their information dissemination Further, he encouraged the 14 Local Government Units episodes of the program.

Armando Valiente, Provincial Agriculturist of Agusan del Sur, also gave his message. He thanked the support given in granting the SOA program which is a great help for corn growers and is one of the province's top commodities.

Moreover, the overview of the program was given by Ressel Angelie S. Fetalsana, ATI Information Officer II and project officer. Jason Paul Dads E. Jampac, OIC-Chief of the Information Services Section discussed the One DA agenda and the programs of ATI.

Jessamine Vea, Provincial Corn Coordinator, gave the pretest and also the closing remarks reminding all the municipal coordinators and enrollees of the requirements of the SOA and the need for updating the knowledge of the participants.

The said SOA is anchored by Joel Corvera, Provincial farm-caster designate and the provincial SOA coordinator. It can be heard over the radio and can be watched live at the ATI Caraga Region Facebook page. (By: Ressel Angelie S. Fetalsana)



SOA on Corn Prod'n launch for AgSur



BUTUAN CITY, Agusan del Norte – In partnership with the Provincial Agriculture and Veterinary Office (PAVO) of Agusan del Sur, the Agricultural Training Institute – Regional Training Center (ATI-RTC) XIII officially launched the Wais sa Mais: School on-the-Air (SOA) Program on Corn Production on Thursday, June 9, 2022 at 5:30 AM – 6:30 AM over 93.5 FM Hope Radio Philippines Butuan.



More BBOs equip on specimen collection

Caraga Region – In its war against the spread of African Swine Fever (ASF) in the region, three more batches of Training on Specimen Collection for Barangay Biosecurity Officers (BBOs) were conducted by the Agricultural Training Institute – Regional Training Center (ATI-RTC) XIII.

LSA Cooperators, AEWs trained on Digital Agriculture Course

SURIGAO CITY- Twenty-three participants comprising Agricultural Extension Workers and Cooperators and staff from the Learning Site for Agriculture Farms were trained on Digital Agriculture Course on June 8-10, 2022. This is through the Training of Trainers (TOT) which was conducted by the Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center (ATI-RTC) 13 in Surigao City.

Participants were able to learn the components of the Digital Agriculture Course (DAC) which covered the lessons from DAC 101 and 102. They were able to learn the basic and advanced agriculture applications, introduction and advanced social media marketing, e-commerce platforms and digital transactions.

As trainers, LSA staff and AEWs were taught on the basics of smartphone and how to discuss those topics to the farmers and youth when they conduct training on DAC 101 and 102 someday. Protocols on internet safety as well as accessing the internet was also discussed during the training.

Ginalyn V. Arbutante, Information Officer II, Jason Paul Dads E. Jampac, MPS II, Maria Den Parro, Ag. I and John Paul Abonitalla, Technical Staff served as Resource Persons during the 3-day training. Simulation session was done during the last day of the training. This is to know whether the trained participants are ready for the field wherein they will train the farmers and youths regarding the benefits of the Digital Agriculture Course.

It aims to capacitate the BBOs to gain additional knowledge and skills on specimen collection for laboratory testing, appropriate handling of specimen and restraining techniques, and preparation of animals for collection. Having the right specimen for the laboratory test will be a help to detect animals that have survived an infection of ASF and in surveys to determine whether the disease might be endemic in an area.

Two batches were held at Almont Beach Resort, Lipata, Surigao City. The first batch was on June 7-8, 2022 with 20 participants from the municipalities of Surigao del Norte specifically from Sison, Mainit, Alegria, Tubod, Malimono, Tagana-an, Bacuag, San Francisco, Placer and Claver.

The second batch was done on June 9-10, 2022 having 20 BBOs in attendance from the barangays of Surigao City. The last group was composed of 21 individuals from Butuan City conducted on June 14-15, 2022 at Balanghai Hotel.



Mr. Manuelito C. Suan, Learning Site Cooperator and one of the participants during the Training of Trainers on Digital Agriculture Course willingly learn in accessing various agricultural applications using his smartphone and assisted by his youth partner.

Moreover, re-entry plans, facebook pages, social media marketing plans, PayMaya accounts and dream boards are the outputs of the TOT. It was also agreed that each participant will send a microteaching video five days after the training. The said video will cover the topics on the Digital Agriculture Course 101 and 102.

“First of all, I already imagine how heavy our responsibility will be to our farmers in terms of sharing the knowledge and letting them adopt the updated agricultural technologies through the Digital Agriculture Course for RCEF. But through this Training of Trainers, it really helped us Learning Site Cooperators in teaching our farmers in improving their farming productivity and income. We, as LSA cooperators and staff still need support from ATI and other government agencies for the success of all our endeavors.” Stated Manuelito C. Suan, one of the participants during the training.

The Training of Trainers on Digital Agriculture Course under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) was spearheaded by the Information Services Section (ISS) of the ATI-RTC 13.

(By: Ginalyn V. Arbutante)

“I am very thankful for this training for BBOs. Now, we can share ideas and knowledge to my fellow in the community for the security of our co-hog raisers to prevent the spread of ASF. Hope the government will continue this training and capacitate us who are in the swine industry,” said Melchor F. Escaro, one of the participants during the 9th batch.

It was done successfully in partnership with the Provincial and City Veterinarian Offices of Surigao del Norte, Surigao City, and Butuan City.

It was spearheaded by the Partnership Accreditation Services Section (PASS) through Florita G. Lozada, Agriculturist II and livestock point person, in support to the National Livestock Program (NLP). (By: Ressel Angelie S. Fetalsana)

SOA on Smart Rice Agriculture launched in Region 13

LOS ANGELES, Butuan City- The School-on-the-Air Program on Smart Rice Agriculture (SRA) is now launched in the four provinces of Region 13. The said program was first aired in Surigao del Sur on June 15, 2022 via Radyo Bandera Station based in Tandag City. Hosted by Fritzieh C. Trujillo, the assigned farmcaster and Provincial SOA Coordinator of the province.



In Agusan del Norte and Agusan del Sur, the program was launched on June 17, 2022 via Hope Radio Station-Butuan City. Agusan del Norte's Provincial SOA Coordinator Benjie M. Villaruben served as host of the program handling listeners and SOA enrollees for Agusan de Norte and Sur.

On the other hand, Farmcaster and Provincial SOA Coordinator Angel R. Fazon hosted the SOA program in Surigao del Norte as it launched on June 23, 2022 via Radio Mindanao Network radio station based in Surigao City.

Dubbed as “Mga Bag-ong Teknolohiya sa Pang-humayan”, the SOA-SRA has an overall target enrollees of 2,200 regionwide. This will be airing from June-September this year.

This is along the aim of helping catalyze agriculture modernization through the massive and sustained education of smallholder farmers and local intermediaries on modern and innovative technologies and approaches to smart rice production. It shall also share cutting-edge technologies and innovative approaches to help maximize rice productivity in medium and low yield provinces through radio, amplifying the limited reach of agricultural extension workers.

The SOA-SRA is funded under the National Rice Program of the Department of Agriculture through the Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center (ATI-RTC) 13 as the implementing agency.

This is in coordination and partnership with the Local Government Units through the Provincial and Municipal Agriculture Offices of Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Norte and Surigao del Sur. (By: Ginalyn V. Arbutante)

Gov. Pimentel inks MOA for agri-fishery dev't in SurSur

TANDAG CITY, Surigao del Sur – Reelected governor Alexander T. Pimentel of Surigao del Sur led the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) of the Province-led Agriculture and Fisheries Extension System (PAFES) on June 15, 2022 at the Provincial Sports Center, Tandag City.

He was joined by Local Chief Executives and heads of office from the local and national government and the private sector who were also signatories of the MOA. Among the dignitaries present were Engr. Ricardo Onate Jr., Regional Executive Director of DA-RFO 13; Rebecca Atega, OIC Asst. Regional Director of DA-RFO 13; Fil Victor A. Babanto, OIC Center Director of ATI-RTC 13; Dr. Caesar Joventino Tado, Branch Director of PhilRice-Agusan; and Joel Oclarit, Regional Manager of PCA-13. The ceremonial signing was one of the highlights during the opening of the five-day Araw ng Surigao del Sur celebration.

Governor Pimentel expressed his gratitude to all who supported the implementation of agriculture programs in the province especially the Department of Agriculture (DA) in Caraga Region. He mentioned the special fund for the provision of farm equipment that the governor believes will help the province boost its local agriculture.

Furthermore, the governor said that his administration will continue to advocate for the preservation and protection of the environment against mining activities that have negatively impacted the rice granary in the province. In closing, he promised to continue supporting the programs of DA as the agency has been very supportive of Surigao del Sur. (By: Jason Paul Dads E. Jampac)



AEWs get updates on RCM Version 4.0

Bayanihan, Butuan City- Twenty (20) Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) from selected enhanced Farmers Information Technology Services (FITS) Center of Caraga Region were trained on Rice Crop Manager (RCM) Advisory Service last June 14-17, 2022, at MSC Center for the Poor Brgy. 27 Bayanihan, Butuan City.

Resource persons explained and demonstrated new features added to the application with its new version, RCMAS 4.0. The optimized version has the following components: user registration, farmer and farm lot registration, geo-referencing of farm lots, generation, and printing of farmer ID cards, sending of auto-generated text messages to farmers' mobile phone numbers, and farm monitoring to complement RCM and further increase benefits to farmers.

Fil Victor A. Babanto, DA-ATI, OIC-Center Director welcomed the participants during the first day of the training he also gave an overview of RCM and a lecture on the topic of RCM User Registration. Moreover, Ms. Maria Den B. Parro, Agriculturist I of ATI-Caraga discussed the RCM using the online mode while Ms. Gerlie B. Antipaso, Agriculturist II of Department of Agriculture –



Caraga Region discussed the RCM using the Offline mode, the Site-Specific Nutrient Management (SSNM) and RCM troubleshooting.

Further, Reynan P. Mamalis, from DA-Caraga Region introduced the use and operation of the Geo Positioning System (GPS) for field measurement as a tool for field area validation for the farmers' GPX lot registration.

During the field demonstration, participants were exposed to the field and able to apply the tools using the Rice Crop Manager Advisory Service. Forty (40) Rice Farmers of Brgy. Banza, Butuan City had been interviewed, registered, and acquired their one-page printed RCM recommendation for their field and received their RCM ID cards. Also, 70% of the farm lot registration successfully uploaded the GPX tracks/measurement.

Maria Den B. Parro, project officer of the said training presented the synthesis showing the activities of the four-day training during the closing program. (By: Maria Den B. Parro)

ATI-Caraga evaluates two FITS Kiosks in AgSur

TRENTO, Agusan del Sur- The Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center (ATI-RTC) 13 recently evaluated the proposed Farmers Information and Technology Services (FITS) Kiosk of Seglo Integrated Farm and Princess Nora Free Range Chicken Farm in Trento, Agusan del Sur.

OIC-Center Director Fil Victor A. Babanto spearheads the said evaluation on June 24, 2022. Together with him is OIC-Information Section Chief Jason Paul Dads E. Jampac. Information Officer II Ginalyn V. Arbutante also joined in the team.

During the evaluation, CD Babanto handed various Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials to the LSA Cooperators and were displayed in the said FITS kiosks.

The Seglo Integrated Farm is owned by Mr. & Mrs. Alfred and Sharon Honor. It is a certified Learning Site for Agriculture of the ATI-Caraga since June 28, 2021. Located in Brgy. Kapatungan, Trento, Agusan del Sur. With rice, catfish and poultry as their focus commodity.



OIC Center Director Fil Victor A. Babanto (2nd from right) spearheads the evaluation of Seglo Integrated Farm in Trento, Agusan del Sur on June 24, 2022.

On the other hand, Mr. Bernabe B. Baguios is the Learning Site for Agriculture Cooperator of the Princess Nora Free Range Chicken Farm. The said farm is located in P-10, Poblacion, Trento, Agusan del Sur and was certified on February 3, 2022. The 1.5hectare farm is planted with vegetable, coconut, and fruit trees and with poultry.

The two LSA Farms FITS Kiosks have positive results as evaluated by the team. Both Farms are now ready to accommodate visitors such as farmers, students and other stakeholders who are willing to learn about agriculture through their respective FITS kiosk. (By: Ginalyn V. Arbutante)


THE e-EXTENSION PROGRAM


Department Order No. 03 series of 2007 designates the Agricultural Training Institute as lead agency for the provision of e-Extension services in collaboration with the various agencies, bureaus and organizational units of the DA. This is to integrate and harmonize ICT-based extension delivery system for agriculture and fisheries.



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