

VOL. 1 ISSUE #1

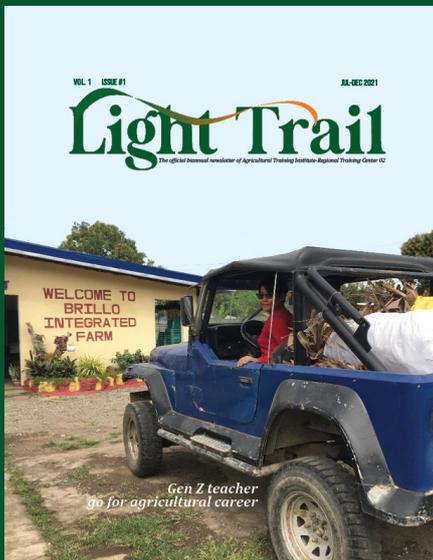
JUL-DEC 2021

Light Trail

The official biannual newsletter of Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center 02



*Gen Z teacher
go for agricultural career*



ABOUT THE COVER

Gwenneth Brillo is a 23-year-old teacher farmer. She worked her way to establish her own Learning Site for Agriculture with the financial and technical assistance of the Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center 02. This passionate Gen Z farmer yearns to influence other people, especially the young generation, with the bright future that an agricultural career offers. At 23, Gwenneth helps farmers through her knowledge and passion in farming.

ABOUT THE TITLE

Light trail is mostly commonly associated with photography which pertains to a point of light with a trail stretching from its final position.

As a bureau of the Department of Agriculture which focuses in delivering extension services and capacity-building of its stakeholders, ATI stretches its hand to extend support to agricultural extension workers, farmers and other stakeholders. ATI lights their way to adapt advanced and effective farming practices and technologies, and acquire new knowledge from it.

Light Trail is the official biannual newsletter of ATI-RTC02 which aims to inform, educate and inspire its readers about agriculture and fisheries through every page.

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Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Training Institute
Regional Training Center 02
San Mateo and Cabagan, Isabela

2,787 RICE FARMERS GRADUATE IN SOA SMART RICE AGRICULTURE IN REGION 2



A total of 2,787 smart rice farmers graduated during the culminating activity of the School-on-the-Air on Smart Rice Agriculture (SOA-SRA) held in different municipalities of Quirino and Nueva Vizcaya provinces on November 22-26, 2021.

The SOA-SRA is a nationwide educational program of the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute (DA-ATI). The school-on-the-air is a regular program of the institute in collaboration with different partner agencies. As the DA's lead agency on training and advisory services, ATI took the lead in the implementation of the program.

The program aimed to create awareness and impart knowledge on smart rice technologies among rice farmers in Quirino and Nueva Vizcaya. In order to reach out to a greater number of rice farmers, radio was used as a media platform. The SOA SRA was aired weekly over DWQP, Cabarroguis, Quirino, DWSI Sonshine Radio in Santiago City and DWRV Radio Veritas in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya on May 13 to October 15, 2021.

Making farmers smarter in rice production, different learning modules were developed and tackled for 20 episodes. Learning contents discussed to them were rice industry situationer (Rice Tarrification Law), climate change, climate-smart technologies highlighting crop insurance program, smart rice farming and smart rice crop diversification and importance of weather advisories, PalayCheck System, ICT applications for rice production, and special topics on marketing and trading including production loan program.

Among the 2,787 SOA graduates, 5 outstanding graduates were selected and recognized in each municipality of

Quirino and Nueva Vizcaya. The selection of outstanding graduates was based on the result of quizzes, final examination and text messages. On behalf of the Center Director Imelda M. Guillermo, Dr. Claris M. Alaska, OIC Assistant Director said in her message during the culminating activity, "Ang SOA-SRA ay isang paraan upang matulungan kayo na lalo pang ma-improve ang inyong kaalaman sa pagpapalay. Ang iba't-ibang ahensya ng gobyerno ay nagtulungan upang maipaabot ang mga extension services para lalo pang mapaganda ang sistema ng ating pagsasaka at mabawasan ang gastos tungo sa masaganang ani at mataas na kita." DA-RFO 02 Regional Executive Director Narciso A. Edillo also expressed his support

and congratulation to the SOA graduates through a video message, "Sana ang lahat ng inyong natutunan at breakthrough ay ibahagi din ninyo sa kapwa magsasaka na hindi nakasali sa anumang pagsasanay kagaya ng SOA upang mabigyan din sila ng mga kaalaman sa pagsasaka na inyong natamo sa nakalipas na halos anim na buwan. Hinihiling din namin na maging ehemplo kayo sa kanila at nawa'y lalo pa ninyong paigtingin ang inyong buhay pagsasaka upang makatugon tayo sa pagkamit ng masagang ani at mataas na kita hindi lamang dito sa buong rehiyon kundi maging sa buong Pilipinas..."

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ATI TRAINS PRIVATE, PUBLIC NURSERY OPERATORS

Twenty-one private and public nursery operators attended a two-day training on nursery establishment, management, and accreditation held on September 22-23 at ATI-RTC 02, Malasin, San Mateo, Isabela.

The training is part of the nation wide capability enhancement of nursery operators to produce quality planting materials.

A lecture-discussion with experts on nursery establishment and management, accreditation, plant material certification, and propagation techniques were conducted. In addition, the participants had also hands-on activities on asexual propagation such as budding and grafting.

"I have learned the prerequisites in registering my nursery. I learned the good practices in nursery establishment and management. Also, the nursery operation from the preparation of potting media until the seedlings are

ready to plant," said Juliet C. Guieb of HJ Guieb Farms of San Agustin, Isabela.

"I was able to learn the steps and requirements for nursery accreditation, and mother plant and planting materials certification. I've learned the importance of manual of operations. Also, I was able to know how to properly choose a good site for a nursery establishment as how to properly prepare a growing media. Lastly, the most exciting activity was performing the different types of asexual propagation. As an Agricultural Technician, through this training, I will be able to help small nursery operators in our municipalities. As they've said, there is a big opportunity waiting for Accredited Nursery Operators... and that's our goal. The training was a big help to everyone," Ms. Rachele Janice C. Ramirez of LGU-Naguilian, Isabela shared.

■ VB Caliguiran

ATI, PARTNERS CONDUCT GIFT-GIVING ACTIVITY IN CELEBRATION OF NRAM AND OA

In celebration of the National Rice Awareness Month (NRAM) with the theme 'Be RICEpensibly healthy' and the Organic Agriculture Month (OAM) with its theme, Organikong Pagsasaka, Sagot sa Pandemya, ATI-RTC 02 led the awareness campaign and gift-giving activities at Disimungal, Nagtipunan, Quirino and Santiago City, Isabela on November 9-10, 2021, respectively. Selected residents from the marginalized sectors of the two municipalities attended the activity.

The two-day activity aims to create awareness on responsible and healthy consumption of rice and organically produced vegetables. It was successfully accomplished in collaboration with the DA-RFO 02, PhilRice Isabela, BPI-NSQCS, and local government units.

After a brief presentation on the NRAM and OAM, the team handed the participants with pigmented and brown rice, and organically produced vegetables. "As mentioned po sa ating Panatang Makapalaya, 'huwag magsayang ng kanin', dapat po nating isa-puso ito dahil pinaghirapan po ng ating mga magsasaka na siyang nagpo-produce ng ating mga kinakain lalong-lalo na po ngayong pandemya. And in relation sa ating organic agriculture month celebration, dapat nating i-practice ang pagtatanim ng mga gulay na walang halong pesticides," Ms. Mayflor R. Macmac, head of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (PMEU) of ATI-RTC 02 said in her message.



"Ako po ay natutuwa na mai-conduct po dito sa aming barangay ang gift-giving day na kung saan ipinagdiriwang po natin ngayon ang National Rice Awareness Month at ang Organic Agriculture Month Celebration. Labis po kaming nagpapasalamat sa mga agriculture agencies tulad ng ATI, sa ating LGU, barangay officials, at sa lahat po ng mga umattend dito sa activity na ito. Labis po ang pagtanggap namin

upang maisakatuparan ang activity na ito at tayo po ngayon ay nagtutulungan," said Barangay Captain Reynaldo Batas of Dubinan East, Santiago City.

The gift-giving day is indeed a great opportunity to encourage everyone to become a RICEpensibly citizen and adopt organic backyard gardening. ■MCNConstantino

DBP, DA, ACPC OFFER ZERO INTEREST LOAN FOR SWINE INVESTORS IN REGION 2



The Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) offers loan for swine investors in region 2 under its newest loan program, "Swine Repopulation, Rehabilitation and Recovery" (Swine R3). A briefing was conducted by DBP in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture Region 02, Bureau of Animal Industry, and the Agricultural Credit Policy Council hosted by the Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center 02 (ATI-RTC 02) on September 29, 2021.

The Swine R3 credit program was established by DBP and Charoen Pokphand Foods Philippines Corporation to provide financing support to local swine industry. Since the outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) in region 2, hog raisers were greatly affected that caused losses for both backyard and

commercial hog raisers. The Swine R3 program aims to revive the swine industry in support to DA's Integrated National Swine Production Initiatives for Recovery and Expansion (INSPIRE) Program.

DBP's Swine R3 program offers loan for eligible investors in region 2 with a minimum loanable amount of 5 million and a maximum of 15 million with zero interest, payable up to 8 years with a maximum grace period of 2 years. The assistance offered by DBP will be used by the eligible investors for the establishment of bio-secured swine farm products to address concerns on consumers' demand and attain stable pork prices in the country.

Thirty investors in region 2 attended the briefing. "Lahat po ng nandito ngayon, for the information of everybody, are

already approved by the CP Foods Corporation which is our private partner in this endeavor. Sila po yung kaninang binabanggit ni Mayor na hindi naapektuhan ng ASF. So, when we had a meeting with them, 3-4 months ago, sponsored by the Department of Agriculture, hindi na po nagpatumpik-tumpik si DBP. Ginawa po namin agad, nag-forge kami ng partnership with the CP Foods because we believe in their technology", DBP Assistant Vice President Ms. Rallen Verdadero said during her discussion on DBP loan process. "Naniniwala po kami na ang paraan upang marepopulate, marehabilitate at makarecover natin ang swine industry is for us to use the bio-secured facilities", she added.

Assistant Vice President Verdadero also emphasized why they have to prioritize investors because of the unavailability of ASF vaccine and bio-secured facility is best at present. The 30 investors were already pre-screened and inspected by the CP Foods wherein they have already submitted initial documents. Per minimum requirements on Restocking and Repopulation, individual borrowers must be registered with Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA), while associations/cooperative borrowers should have at least 20% of their members registered. Also, the applicant's farm should satisfy Biosecurity Level 1, as indicated in the DA Administrative Order No. 7, as certified by the local government veterinarian.

Moreover, 30 investors were awarded with notice of approval by the CP Foods Corporation and are subject for further site inspection by DBP together with DA, BAI and ACPC.

Present during the briefing were San Mateo Municipal Mayor Atty. Gregorio A. Pua, DA-RFO 02 Regional Technical Director for Operations Dr. Roberto Busania, BAI National Coordinator for...

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NEWLY TRAINED SEED GROWERS TO BOOST INBRED RICE SEED PRODUCTION IN NUEVA VIZCAYA

The Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center 02 conducted a Basic Training Course on Lowland Inbred Rice Seed Production and Certification for new seed growers on September 20-24, 2021 at Nueva Vizcaya Experiment Station (NVES), Villaros, Bagabag, Nueva Vizcaya. The training was conducted in support to the seed component program of Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) wherein seed growers are one of the major stakeholders of the rice industry sector and responsible in producing and providing quality seeds for quality rice production and consumption.

Through the training, the potential seed growers were equipped with knowledge and skills on rice industry. The Regional Rice Seed Industry Situationer and OneDA Key Strategies were discussed by Ms. Corazon Cardenas of DA-RFO 02.

Dr. Fidel Ramos of PhilRice presented the rice seed production technology and updates on the newly released varieties. Through Engr. Richie Vea and other BPI-NSQCS staff, the agency's laboratory standards and seed certification procedures were elaborated with actual demonstrations and hands-on activities.

"We are lucky and bless at nakasali ako sa training na ito. Madami akong natutunan sa training na ito. Maraming salamat po sa mga bagong kaalaman at teknolohiya na inyong ibinahagi samin. Sana tuloy-tuloy parin ang ganitong programa ng ating gobyerno para mas maraming farmers ang matulungan upang mapataas ang ani at kita," Jonavel S. Tolentino of Villaverde, Nueva Vizcaya said. *"Nagpapasalamat ako sa mga agencies na bumubuo ng training na ito dahil natuloy pa rin ang training kahit mayroong pandemya. Dito sa training, napatunayan*

ko kung gaano kahirap ang maging seed grower dahil sa dami ng pagdadaan ng palay na aanihin bago magkaroon ng high quality seeds na itanim ng ating kapwa magsasaka," Gemma Concepcion of Aritao, Nueva Vizcaya added.

Aside from lectures and discussions, the participants experienced the actual roguing activity in the field – one of the important farm activities that ensures high percent purity of the seeds produced. Through this training, the participants are now confident to produce quality rice seeds and adopt technologies in this challenging agricultural sector. The training was conducted through a partnership between ATI- RTC 02, PhilRice-Isabela, BPI-NSQCS 02, DA RFO 02, DA-NVES and Office of the Provincial Agriculturist of Nueva Vizcaya.

■ **BGSanchez**

ATI HOSTS NATIONAL TOT ON NURSERY ESTABLISHMENT, MANAGEMENT, AND ACCREDITATION

The Agricultural Training Institute hosted a two-day National Training of Trainers (TOT) on Nursery Establishment, Management, and Accreditation on August 5-6, 2021. The TOT was conducted through a blended approach.

Participants from region 02 were technical staff from Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI)-National Seed Quality Control Services Regional Office, DA-Regional Field Office 02, deputized plant nursery evaluators and plant material inspectors, and ATI-RTC 02 technical staff. They joined the TOT at ATI-RTC 02 San Mateo, Isabela.

A lecture-discussion on guidelines and policies governing Plant Nursery Accreditation and Plant Material Certification Program of the Department of Agriculture (DA) was conducted via Google Meet during the first day.

Meanwhile, on the second day, the participants had a hands-on activities on sexual plant propagation, and asexual propagation such as grafting, budding, air layering, cuttings, and marcotting. The participants were also exposed to different method of fruit germination and plantation seeds.

■ **MCNConstantino**



2,787 RICE FARMERS... from page 3

Meanwhile, as a testimony of the impact of the SOA-SRA in the lives of rice farmers, Ms. Valeriana Saldares of Nagtipunan, Quirino said, *"Mayat nga suruten tayu iti naadal tayu dituy SOA-SRA. Kayat ku nga ikkan iti meaning daytoy makuna nga SMART. Ti umuna, S-sustainable, daytoy nga naadal tayu ket makatulung tapnu agbalin nga sustainable iti panag-talun tayu. Iti next, M-manageable, kailangan tayu nga mamanage iti oras tayu iti farm tayu kasta met lang iti panagadal tayu iti SOA-SRA. Iti A-attainable, apay? Nalaka tayu lang nga ma-attain detuy it-ited nga programa iti gobyerno nu datayu ket nagaget, nasaririt ken haan tayu pay nga nasadut. Ket nu intayu nga arakupen detuy nga programa ket agbalin tayu nga smarte ken nasayaat nga farmer. Letter R-resilient, nu mayat iti apit tayu ket mayat para iti pamilya, barangay, municipal, probinsya ken the whole Philippines will become resilient in rice production. Ken iti last, T-timeframe, amin nga banag nga aramiden*

tayu ket ikkan tayu iti timeframe kasta met ti panagpagay tayu manipud iti seed selection inggana post-harvest tapnu maala iti kuskustu nga maapit mu" [It is important for us to use what we have learned in SOA-SRA. I just want to give meaning with the word SMART. First, S-sustainable, what we learned is very useful for our rice farming to become sustainable. Next is M-manageable, we need to manage our time in our farm like what we learned in SOA-SRA. A is attainable, why? We can easily attain the programs offered by the government if we develop industry in us. If we embrace this program, we will become smart farmers. Letter R-resilient, if we can increase our yield, a lot will be benefited like our family, communities, the whole Philippines will become resilient in rice production. And the last, T-timeframe, in everything that we do, we need to put a timeframe especially in our rice farming from seed selection until post-harvest in order for us to achieve a higher yield.]

"Adu iti naadal ku dituy SOA tayu, nangruna iti panagpili ti bin-i tapnu umado ti apit ken dagiti teknolohiya ti panagtalun. Daytoy six months nga innak pinagding-dinggeg ti school-on-the air, inyapply ku ti taltalun mi ken bangkag mi. Ket adda met ti immaduan ti apit. Isu nga agyamyamanak apu ta adda inted yu nga kastuy nga programa. [I learned a lot of things from this SOA, especially on selecting good seeds to increase our yield and the different rice farming technologies. I applied on my rice field the lessons I learned from the six months of listening the SOA. And there was an increase on my yield]," said Erlinda Verzosa of Bagabag, Nueva Vizcaya.

Hence, it is hoped that the technologies and knowledge gained by the 2,787 rice farmers will be utilized meaningfully as a way to improve their lives as they become smart and resilient farmers and achieve 'Masaganang Ani, Mataas na kita'.

■ **MCSimeon**

ATI-RTC 2 BRINGS KNOWLEDGE, INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGIES CLOSER TO STAKEHOLDERS



With the goal to bridge the gap between information and technology, and the farmers, traders, processors, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders, the Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center 2 (ATI-RTC 2) awarded Farmers Information and Technology Services (FITS) logistics, supplies and IEC materials support for the establishment of 25 FITS Kiosks and enhancement of 6 FITS Centers. It was held at ATI-RTC 2 on December 14, 2021.

The FITS Kiosk and FITS Center serve as library of farmers and other stakeholders making knowledge, information and technologies accessible for them. It is also one way to strengthen the link among the technology generators, technology

servers and technology adopters.

During the awarding ceremony, ATI-RTC 2 Center Director Imelda M. Guillermo emphasized that Learning Sites and MLGUs play a big role in improving access to information, knowledge and technology of farmers and other stakeholders. She also recognized their efforts being the partner of the center in delivering extension services in region 2. Meanwhile, Dr. Claris M. Alaska, OIC Assistant Center Director presented the FITS Kiosk and FITS Center project overview giving emphasis on the goals of FITS and the functions of Learning Sites and MLGUs in providing access to information, knowledge and technologies.

The 25 FITS Kiosk were awarded with display cabinet, printer, tarpaulin and IEC materials. On the other hand, 6 MLGUs were also granted with tablet, display cabinet, printer, tarpaulin and IEC materials. These grants were given upon the request of the different learning sites and MLGUs through a letter of intent approved by the Center Director. A Letter of Agreement was signed between the center and the FITS Kiosk and Center Managers to forge the implementation of the project. A monitoring will also be done to make sure that they will be able to maintain and follow the agreements set.

In her impression Ms. Gwenneth R. Brillo, Farm School Owner of Brillo's Integrated Farm said, *"Maraming Salamat po sa ATI-RTC 02 headed by Madam Imelda Guillermo and to all the staff. Maraming salamat po sa lahat ng tulong ninyo, from the start sinuportan ninyo po kami at ginuide niyo po kami. Kaya labis po kaming nagalak at natutuwa (agyaman) dahil sa patulong ninyong pagsuporta at kung hindi dahil po sa inyo ay wala po kami dito ngayon. Bilang pinakabata sa lahat ng farm school owners ako po ay maraming natutunan at marami pa pong matututunan. Lahat po tayo ay nagtutulungan at hindi po tayo naghihilahan pababa. Iyon po ang maganda pagdating sa ATI-RTC 02. Sa lahat po ng binigay niyo, printer, IEC materials at cabinet ay napakalaking tulong po ito lalo na sa ating farmers. Sa pamamagitan po nito ay mas marami pang matututunan ang ating mga farmers, mas marami pa po tayong maibibigay na impormasyon sa kanila patungkol sa pagsasaka. Iyon lamang po at ang goal po natin ay mapataas ang ani at mapababa ang gastusin ng ating mga farmer. Maraming Salamat po."*

Moreover, it is expected that the 25 FITS Kiosks and 6 FITS Centers will be able to help bridge the gap between technology generators and technology adopters by improving access to information they deserve. **■ MCSimeon**

BIOSECURITY AND SURVEILLANCE RESPONSE INTENSIFIED TO FIGHT AGAINST ASF

Twenty-four members of Cagayan Valley Swine Farmers Association (CAVASFA) joined the webinar on biosecurity and surveillance under the Bantay ASF sa Barangay (BABay ASF) initiative spearheaded by the Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center 02 to intensify its response against African Swine Fever held on September 15, 2021.

ASF vaccine has just started its trial on April 23, 2021 and is yet to be further studied before it will be made available, Biosecurity and surveillance is the government's best option at present. Said webinar aims to broaden the knowledge of swine farmers on assessment procedures of ASF, biosecurity

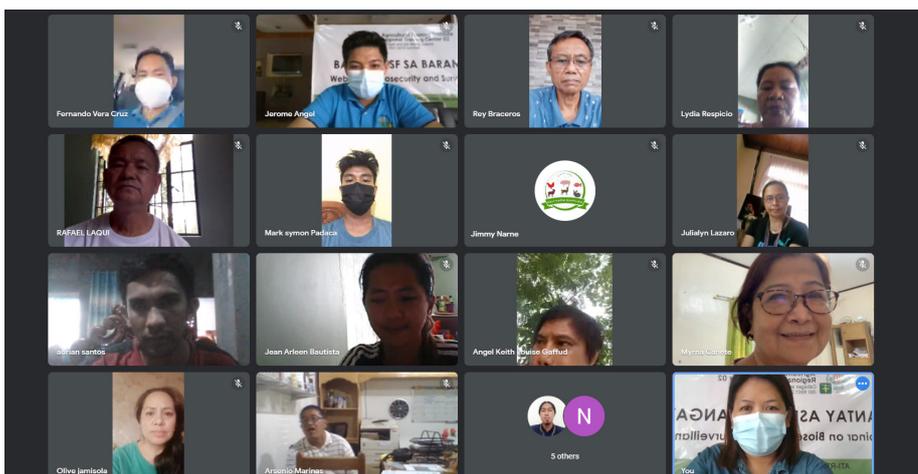
and surveillance. It also intends to achieve an effective ASF monitoring and strengthen biosecurity implementation at the farm level and border control.

Meanwhile, Dr. Manuel M. Galang, Veterinarian III of the Department of Agriculture Region 2 shared ASF updates in the region. On the other hand, Dr. Helen C. Sevilla of Provincial Veterinary Office of Isabela tackled the rationale of the Bantay ASF sa Barangay Program, biosecurity and surveillance checklist and audit, sample collection, and the guidelines in the movement of swine.

In her impression, Ms. Myrna Canete of Cauayan City, Isabela shared, *"Thank you sa mga lectures at least*

na realize namin kung gaano talaga ka importante ang biosecurity sa ASF at hindi lang siguro sa ASF kundi sa lahat ng diseases na pwedeng maka aperto sa farm natin. So kailangan lang talagang maging maayos at masinop ang pagmanage natin sa ating mga farms at sa fellow members dapat nating gawin yung mga protocols para sa good effect."

With the stricter biosecurity measure implemented by the Department of Agriculture to contain and prevent the spread of ASF, cooperation of swine raisers is crucial in the achievement of adequate supply of pork in the country and prevent the increasing price in the market. **■ MCSimeon**



DBP, DA, ACPC...

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African Swine Fever Prevention and Control Program Dr. Samuel Joseph Castro, ACPC Program Development Division Chief Mr. Noel Clarence Ducusin, ATI-RTC 2 Center Director Imelda M. Guillermo, CP Foods General Manager Mr. Darwin Lictawa and DBP City of Ilagan Lending Center Head Ms. Carolyn Bago.

As the support arm of the Department of Agriculture, ATI-RTC 02 is committed to support the government's efforts to fight against ASF through its information campaign activity on Bantay ASF sa Barangay (BABay ASF) and its training and extension endeavor on biosecurity. **■ MCSimeon**

ATI, BLOGGERS COLLABORATE TO INFLUENCE NEXT-GEN FARMERS AND TECHNOLOGIES CLOSER TO STAKEHOLDERS

The Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center 02 through the Information Services Section steered the 1st Regional Bloggers Event with its goal to bring agriculture to the next-gen farmers on July 28-30, 2021.

Local bloggers from Cagayan and Isabela joined the three-day event who will be sharing knowledge, information, products, services, and technologies of the different Learning Sites for Agriculture (LSAs). Recognizing the potentials of bloggers, the institution partnered with them to help influence the young or next generation to not just appreciate but also engage into farming due to the aging farmers at present.

The event also serves as a marketing strategy that helps attract potential customers to learn about the products and services of LSAs.

During the first day of the event, a briefing was conducted to orient the bloggers about the mandate of ATI, its functions, and services including the products and services offered by the different learning sites.

After the orientation, bloggers first visited the A.R. Santiago Fish Farm in Gaddanan, San Mateo, Isabela owned by Magsasaka Siyentista Arnel R. Santiago. Mr. Santiago gave a brief information about his farm and the step-by-step process of fish production. The bloggers also tried to sort, weigh and pack tilapia fingerlings which they truly enjoyed. In her Facebook post, Ms. Trixella said, "it was a tiring day, but filled with lessons that I can use as a perk in the near future. Raising fingerlings is not an easy task as this requires the same attention yall [you are all] giving to your babes/jowas. I am glad that I get to orient by the owner itself [himself] and asked multiple questions that I am curious, Mr. Arnel Santiago. Thank you so much."

On the second day, bloggers enjoyed rice machinery operation using a four-wheel-drive tractor and walk-behind rice transplanter at R and D Oliveros Farm in Sotero Nueva, Roxas, Isabela. According to them, it is their first time to try operating both machines and made them realize that farming is now made easier, faster, and enjoyable because of these new technologies. In a Facebook page post, Ms. Karen Clair Sucuano said, "currently, R and D Oliveros Farm School upgraded their farm into a mechanized one and hoping that one day, their dream to make its all operation become a fully mechanized agriculture be realized".

Blessed with natural resources, RP Eder's Garden Integrated Farm in Centro 2, Luna, Isabela was enjoyed by the bloggers especially its green environment combined with refreshing and relaxing ambiance coming from the natural environment. Upon arrival, Mr. Rodol Eder and his wife offered the bloggers a sumptuous lunch that are freshly harvested from their own farm. After their lunch, Mr. Eder invited them for a farm tour and feeding of animals such as chicken, duck, rabbit, goat, and other livestock. Meanwhile, the farm visit highlighted the demonstration of Mr. Eder on how to formulate feeds in support to his livestock production making it more sustainable.

With her advocacy to make the youth appreciate the gift of nature, agriculture and its healthful and economic benefits, Mrs. Hermelita Valdez, owner of Valdez Integrated Farm in Bannawag, Angadanan, Isabela is encouraged to work with passion in order to preserve nature and its benefits for the young generation. Valdez Integrated Farm is focused on high-value crops specifically coffee. Since coffee has potential in the market, Mrs. Valdez was pushed to establish her own coffee processing business including the processing of other products such as calamansi wine and turmeric



powder. The bloggers also experienced fishing and feeding the fishes while swaying through the floating boat in the middle of the fishpond. Meanwhile, Mr. Marcelo Valdez, husband of Mrs. Hermelita Valdez assisted the bloggers for a farm tour, explaining to them the benefits of their farm in their lives and sharing stories on how they started developing their farm. After which, Mrs. Valdez demonstrated to them how to roast coffee. The bloggers also tried roasting coffee in a hot pan enjoying its aroma.

Moreover, it was a rare experience for bloggers to harvest fresh eggs from the poultry production of RAMIS Integrated Farm situated in Marasat Grande, San Mateo, Isabela. RAMIS Integrated Farm has taught the bloggers on how simple farming becomes a business. The bloggers were toured around by Engr. Rufino Guillermo, owner of the said farm together with his son, Mr. PJ Guillermo who is his co-manager in the farm. As an accountant, Mr. PJ was able to make money from farming applying his expertise in accounting and marketing. With his experience in the farm, he was very willing to share it with the bloggers by assisting them around the farm and giving them a glimpse

of how they started and how they were able to develop their farm into a profitable one. In his impression, Mr. Francis Jove said that he did not expect that he will be invited to join the bloggers event because, in the first place, he is not into agriculture. However, during the briefing, he realized how important their role is, as a youth and influencer, that is to promote agriculture and be the next generation farmers because the farmers are now aging.

Ms. KC Sucuano also extended her thanks to ATI for acknowledging their potential and skills as bloggers who will be sharing knowledge, information, and technologies in agriculture to the next generation considering the number of their followers on social media. With their potential, she said that they will do their best to influence the young generation to engage into farming.

In collaboration with the local bloggers, ATI Region 2 is optimistic that through the power of social media, more young generation will be influenced to engage and appreciate the benefits of agriculture making them the "next-gen farmers".

■ MCSimeon

SEED GROWERS RETOOLED WITH RICE SEED PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES, CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

Twenty-nine seed growers from different parts of region 02 participated in the Retooling Course on Lowland Inbred Rice Seed Production and Certification on August 23-25, 2021 at the Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center 02, Malasin, San Mateo, Isabela.

The three-day activity aims to enhance their knowledge on the updated rice farming technologies, seed industry policies, guidelines and standards, and mechanisms in seed production and certification.

Through lecture and discussion with the expert resource speakers of PhilRice-Isabela, Dr. Fidel M. Ramos discussed the Rice production technologies while the updates on national rice varieties were provided by Engr. Christian Paul De Leon.

Moreover, the discussion on pests and diseases was presented by Mr. Cennon

Mallillin of the Regional Crop Protection Center. On the other hand, Engr. Richie Vea of the Bureau of Plant Industry discussed the updates on policies and guidelines in the certification of the rice seed produced. Aside from those topics, a module on ICT tools in agriculture was discussed by Mr. Vladimir B. Caliguiran of ATI Region 2 for them to keep updated on digital decision-support tools that they can use in the management of their rice fields and farming interventions.

The activity was conducted in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture-Region 2, Philippine Rice Research Institute-Isabela, Bureau of Plant Industry, Regional Crop Protection Center and Agricultural Training Institute Region 2. This training program is regularly offered in the months of February and August to help seed growers refreshed with the information they must and should know as rice seed producers in the region.

■ BGSanchez

DESTINED TO BE A FARMER-TEACHER: THE GWENNETH BRILLO STORY

► MAICAH CHRISHAINE CONSTANTINO

“When you do things from your soul, you feel a river in you -- a joy,” said Ms. Gwenneth Reyes Brillo, owner of Brillo Integrated Farm in Callao, Alicia, Isabela. At her young age of 23, Gwenneth found joy as a farmer herself, and in serving her fellow farmers in her community, after she was certified as a Learning Site for Agriculture cooperator by the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI).

With her father’s motivation, Gwenneth took Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness and enrolled in Professional Education major in Agriculture Fisheries and Arts in 2018. Passing the Licensure Examination for Teachers in 2019, she dreamed to become a teacher. “However, the teaching job waiting for me in a senior high school changed when God has directed me to his perfect plan -- to be a Gen Z farmer-teacher,” Gwenneth proudly shared.

Gradually, she found joy in farming. She believes that agriculture has it all – food, money, joy and passion. “If all available local resources are maximized and used productively, farming can be a life changer. You can save more and earn more than what a typical farmer thinks,” Gwenneth expressed.

She was overwhelmed with the outpouring blessings from God. After her attendance to the training of trainers on the production of high-quality inbred rice and seeds, and farm mechanization in 2019, she was tapped as part time registrar, facilitator and trainer in different farm schools. It was an opportunity for her to become a catalyst and a motivator to young farmers.





Sharing her passion

Gwenneth's learnings from the trainings and experiences managing a LSA molded her to become a farmer-teacher. She proudly says that she is a product of ATI and she would like to share her knowledge and experiences to her fellow farmers and at the same time, to learn from them.

Being an ATI certified learning site for agriculture facilitated her application for farm school in the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). Her first implementation of the farmers' field school gave her a qualification map of 200 farmer-scholars. It has become her doorway to inspire other farmers and to bring change in their lives by teaching them the right technology in rice farming. "I will make use of my learning site and farm school as an avenue for discoveries and learnings with my fellow farmers, the young and old farmers, typical and modern farmers, men and women, and everyone who are agricultural enthusiasts," she said.



As a learning site

One day, Gwenneth realized the importance of managing her own farm. She applied her two-hectare rice-based integrated farm for certification as a learning site for agriculture under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund in ATI in 2020. Fortunately, it was approved.

ATI provided her financial assistance amounting to P100,000 for the establishment of her one classroom. She was also given technical assistance in improving the farm.

As a learning site, the farm showcases the production and selling of mushroom fruiting bags, pinakbet vegetables, fruit tree seedlings, organic chicken eggs, small ruminants and fish (tilapia) from their aquaculture, aside from palay as the main crop.

The learning site has two training halls for the farmers' field school and agricultural crop production training. It has a penthouse that can accommodate guests for an overnight stay, an administration building and a mini-library. Its drying pavement is also used for parking and recreational activities when not in use for drying.

All spaces in the area are maximized and planted with different crops showcasing integration and diversification, which the farmers can learn different farming systems. "I want to show to the farmers that there is money in farming. We produce food for the family from breakfast to dinner, and can be an additional source of family income, if only, farmers are diligent and productive," she stated.

She also practiced different crop management strategies in rice farming through PalayCheck System she learned from the training. She believed that applying the right technology in rice production will reduce cost of production and eventually increased yield.



As a farmer-teacher

Through the FFS she implemented for one season, farmers were very eager to learn new techniques and right technology in farming, and excited to apply the learnings in their own field. During field monitoring, she ensures that farmers simultaneously gain outcomes of the application of knowledge and skills especially on the reduction of production cost and increase in yield. "It pays to be passionate and patient in teaching the farmers. The FFS is actually sharing and learning with the farmers considering their tacit knowledge in farming, slowly, you will reap what you want -- the improved practices of the farmers," Gwenneth said.

She is happy and blessed dealing with, and helping other farmers by simply giving them the chance to learn. Gwenneth mentioned in an interview that her ultimate goal of influencing the millennials to learn and love agriculture just started and wishing for a continuous inspiration to them.

She is also into training farmers on food processing and oyster mushroom production. She believes that one way of attracting the millennials to venture into farming is through recreation and letting them experience the fun part of farming.

Ms. Brillo hopes to inspire another 23-year old farmer like her who will be successful in agri-preneurship someday. "The unending opportunities in agriculture is always there, you just need to look for ways on how to acquire it, and wait patiently for God's perfect time," she ended. ■

“
The unending opportunities in agriculture is always there, you just need to look for ways on how to acquire it, and wait patiently for God's perfect time.
 ”

An Engineer by profession, A Farmer

“
Ang farming ay isang marangal na trabaho. You feed the people. Para sa'kin ito yung pinaka-humble na profession.”

The B.H Roque farm is a treasure property of the family of Mr. Christian Paulo Magsino as they can't let go the farm because it's where the memories of their late grandfather remain. It signifies the dedication and hardwork of their grandfather and how he established the farm to be what is today.

This were the reasons that Engr. Magsino considered as he gladly and finally decided to leave his work as an agricultural engineer by profession from (PhilMech) then he wholeheartedly took the responsibility to manage their family farm. Aside from its being a treasure property, his grandmother continuously encourages him to go back in their hometown to just focus on their farm. Being an agricultural engineer is certainly a great advantage for him to help for the enhancement of their farm. *“Ang farming ay isang marangal na trabaho. You feed the people eh. Para sa'kin ito yung pinaka-humble na profession”*, he explained. He likes farming because it teaches anyone to be patient especially now to the modern-world, it's so fast-changing. It takes a lot of time to plant and to harvest

by Heart

► MAICAH CHRISHAINE CONSTANTINO

at the same time but it's always gonna be worth it.

He believes that farming is his calling as most of his participants appreciate his dedication and hardwork to help them. As a young farmer with no background in farm practices, he bravely engaged in farming. He is grateful that he made the right choice to leave his previous work and learn to love farming.

According to him, *"Bonus nalang yung pera na kikitain ko kasi mas nagma-matter yung nakakatulong ako."* Managing the farm and conducting trainings is never easy but through his dedication, passion, and motivation he continuously do his part as a partner of learning site of Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center 02 (ATI-RTC II).

Likewise, the farm offers for techno-demo sites for new machineries and sells pigmented rice such as red and black. It provides technical assistance for rice production and other necessary farming practices use for better yield rice production.

Christian Paulo main goal is to provide additional information effectively and efficiently to the farmers. ■





4H CLUB: *Extending help to youth through extension kits*



RCEF in Cagayan Valley

WHAT HAS RCEF-EXTENSION ACCOMPLISHED IN 2021?

The Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund-Rice Extension Services Program intends to enhance the capabilities of the Rice Fund beneficiaries on modernized inbred rice and seed production and other relevant skills for improved competitiveness and income.

This component uses various methods to effectively implemented its objectives such as conduct of trainings, distribution of IEC materials, radio programs and plugs, technical assistance to rice farmers, establishment and enhancement of FITS centers and kiosk, and partnership with partner-agencies and private persons or organization.

During two years since its implementation, Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center 02 stretched the resources from RCEF to efficiently deliver services to rice farmers and stakeholders in Cagayan Valley. This shall produce good impact on them in the long run.

In this effort, the country is hopeful to improve its rice industry through competitive Filipino rice farmers with high quality inbred rice and seeds produced locally.



MAKE SURE YOU ARE UP-TO-DATE WITH RCEF-EXTENSION UPDATES HERE!



RCEF Extension Program Facebook Page



ATI-RTC02 Facebook Page



A Hacks



WHY TRY ORGANIC FARMING?

- 1** Eliminates the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides that may cause lymphoma, leukemia, breast cancer, asthma, and other immune system disorders.
- 2** No presence of chemically-derived plant growth regulators that are known to cause cancer, infertility, and poison the liver, and also known as environmental pollutants.
- 3** There is no presence of chemically-derived plant growth regulators that are known to cause cancer, infertility, and poison the liver, and also known as environmental pollutants.
- 4** No livestock feed additives and genetically modified organisms that may cause climate change and environmental problems.



START WITH YOUR ORGANIC COMPOST

Green Materials (Fresh)

Nitrogen-rich materials

- ✓ market wastes
kitchen and food wastes
agricultural wastes
- ✗ oily, greasy and fatty liquids
meat, fish, and dairy products

Brown Materials (Dry)

Carbonaceous materials

- ✓ dried leaves
coco peat
coco-saw dust
corn cobs and stalk
rice straw
- ✗ unwashed egg shells
human excreta, and cat and dog
manure
lime

MAKE A GOOD QUALITY COMPOST

% 25-30:1 ideal carbon-nitrogen ratio to avoid nitrogen shortage for crops (too high) and plant damage or "burning" (too low)

👉 40-65% moisture content

pH pH range from 6-8

🔍 dark brown to dark grey in color

👃 sweet smelling or earthy odor, and non-sticky or greasy

🐛 free from insects or nematodes

GAD Corner

Gender and Development

2021 Second Semester Highlights

What is National Rural Women's Day?

National Rural Women's Day celebrates and recognizes the role and tremendous contribution of rural women to our country's economic development and food security. "World Rural Women's Day" was celebrated for the first time in October 15, 1996.



ATI-Regional Training Center 02 joined in the celebration by involving rural women in various programs being implemented by the center such as trainings, school-on-the-air program, and distribution of knowledge products. Through these, rural women in region 2 are given opportunities to expand their knowledge on farming and agriculture like their male counterparts.

ATI-RTC 02 supports Anti-Violence Against Women Campaign

ATI-RTC 02 joins in the campaign to end violence against women from November 25-December 12, 2021. For this year, the campaign highlights the safe spaces Act or RA 11313 to ensure safe spaces for everyone especially to vulnerable individuals such as women and children.





#ATILEADS
#ATIRTC02
#ATIINSPIRE
#ISHAREKNOWLEDGE



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