

# BUSLO

OFFICIAL QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF AGRICULTURAL TRAINING INSTITUTE - RTC III



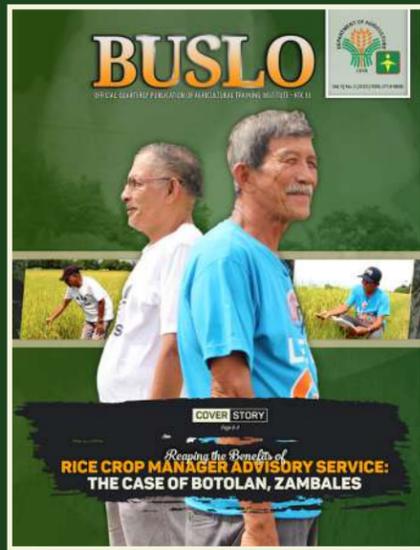
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COVER STORY

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*Reaping the Benefits of*  
**RICE CROP MANAGER ADVISORY SERVICE:  
THE CASE OF BOTOLAN, ZAMBALES**



## ABOUT THE COVER

Numerous technologies as well as applications on rice production have since popped up to help the farmers increase their yield as well as income. One of these applications is the Rice Crop Manager Advisory Service or RCMAS.

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## FEATURE

### Reaping the Benefits of Rice Crop Manager Advisory Service: The Case of Botolan, Zambales

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**About BUSLO:** Buslo symbolizes the preservation of bountiful harvest in Central Luzon being the rice granary and vegetable basket of the Philippines. Like the humble vessel present in every Filipino, the publication aims to store and bring relevant and timely news to every farmer, fisherfolk and extension workers in the region.



The Bataan team comprised of RIC and 4H members bags the Grand Champion and Best in Adobo Award during the activity.

## ATI-CL celebrates FFM through Search for Best KusinHero Cooking Contest among RIC, 4H

The Agricultural Training Institute-Central Luzon (ATI-CL) celebrated the Filipino Food Month (FFM) through a cooking contest entitled "Central Luzon's Best KusinHero Cooking Contest" among Rural Based Organizations (RBOs) on April 25, 2022 in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, which was also broadcasted in ATI-CL's Facebook Page.

With the theme "Pagkaing Pilipino Susi sa Pag-unlad at Pagbabago," 22 Rural Improvement Clubs (RICs) and 4-H Club members of Central Luzon served as the contestants of the said competition. Each province selected their best RICs and 4-H members to showcase their famous adobo with a twist and rice-based dessert of the Filipinos.

"The ingenuity of coming up with this activity ay tunay na nakakabilib ngunit higit pa rito yung pakikiisa po ng bawat probinsya ay tunay na nakakagalak na makita. Kami ay nagpapasalamat sa inyong pagtugon sa aming panawagan. Ito ang unang gawain namin na face to face, kung kaya kami ay nagpapasalamat sa inyong kooperasyon," said Mr. Aeron

Bermudez, Information Officer III, during his welcome remarks.

Mr. Bernardo Valdez, Provincial Agriculturist of Nueva Ecija, expressed his thrill and he wished to taste and see the best adobo and native delicacies in the Philippines through the contest. "Unang-una po ay isang napakagandang aktibidades itong ginagawa natin ngayon. Itong contest natin sana ay maging avenue pa rin sa bawat isa para mas makita at makilala pa yung mga lutuuing Pilipino hindi lang sa adobo," he said.

Mr. Bernardo Valdez, Provincial Agriculturist of Nueva Ecija, Ms. Elsa F. Victoria, OIC-Center Director, and Ms. Josefina T. Serrano, Administrative Officer IV served as the judges and experienced the taste of different adobo versions and rice-based desserts of each province. This cooking contest celebration unveiled the talent of each group in innovating our traditional way of cooking.

The Province of Bataan was awarded as the Grand Champion and Best in Adobo. Zambales placed first runner-up while Nueva Ecija won second runner-up.

Meanwhile, Pampanga was awarded Best in Rice-based dessert and Best in Cooking Attire. The provinces of Tarlac, Aurora, and Pampanga also won consolation prizes.

Ms. Elsa F. Victoria, OIC-Center Director, thanked the participants for joining the activity and urged them to recognize the native food or delicacies passed to us by our ancestors. "Sana hindi kayo magsawa na tumangkilik sa mga programa ng ating departamento hindi lamang ng ATI kung 'di ang kabuuan ng kagawaran ng pagsasaka dahil napakaraming programa ang nakalaan sa inyo dahil naniniwala ang ating kagawaran na kinakailangang bumata ang mga taong kikilos at isa kayo sa mga kailangan namin para ikalat ang magandang balita ng agrikultura," she quipped.

The Department of Agriculture (DA), together with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), leads the said celebration of FFM based on Presidential Proclamation No. 469 Series of 2018 declaring the month of April as "Buwan ng Kalutong Pilipino". (ASambat)

## Two young CL farmers to undergo internship in Taiwan

Two (2) young Central Luzon farmers passed the national examination and interview for the Filipino Young Farmer Internship Program (FYFIP) in Taiwan in partnership with Manila Economic and Cultural Office (MECO) and Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in the Philippines (TECO).

Mr. Elmer Cuervo of Baler, Aurora; and Ms. Dianne De Jesus from Pulilan, Bulacan are among the 48 young Filipino farmers who will undergo the said internship program in Taiwan this year.

Mr. Cuervo shared that he was exposed to farming at a young age since he usually accompanies his father in the farm since it is their family's main source of income. He disclosed that the earnings from his farm work greatly helps his family especially for his sibling's school fees.

*"Sa ngayon po, ako po ay abala sa pagtatanim at pag-aalaga ng mga gulay katulad ng talong, pechay, mustasa, at sitaw. Ako rin po ay nag-aalaga ng mga hayop katulad ng baka, kalabaw, at baboy. Katuwang ko po ang aking mga kapatid na babae sa aking pagsasaka. Ang kita ko po sa aking pagsasaka ay nakakatulong sa aming pamilya at sa*



Mr. Elmer Cuervo showcases his pig production area during the evaluation for the said internship in Taiwan.

*pag-aaral ng aking mga kapatid,"* said Mr. Cuervo.

On the other hand, Ms. Dianne De Jesus applied for the internship to learn the best agricultural practices and technologies in Taiwan which she can share with the other farmers in her community.

The Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Training Institute (DA-ATI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with MECO-TECO in December

2020 enhancing the existing friendly relations between the agriculture and fishery authorities.

The MOU provides for an 11-month subsidized internship program in Taiwan for qualified young Filipino farmers. The training module will include modern agricultural and fisheries techniques, marketing strategies, cooperative management, enhancement of competencies, discipline and work values, among others. (DMLapuz)

## ATI-CL holds IQA for the 1<sup>st</sup> semester this year

The Agricultural Training Institute-Central Luzon (ATI-CL) held the Internal Quality Audit (IQA) for the 1st semester this 2022 on April 12-13, 2022 in compliance to the standards of ISO 9001:2015.

Following the audit plan, the Office of the Center Director/Management, Human Resource Management/ Training, Information Services Section (ISS), Career Development and Management Services Section (CDMSS), Purchasing/Property and Supply Management, and Partnership

and Accreditation Services Section (PASS) were evaluated based on the quality objectives together with the implementation and maintenance from the ISO 9001:2015 requirement.

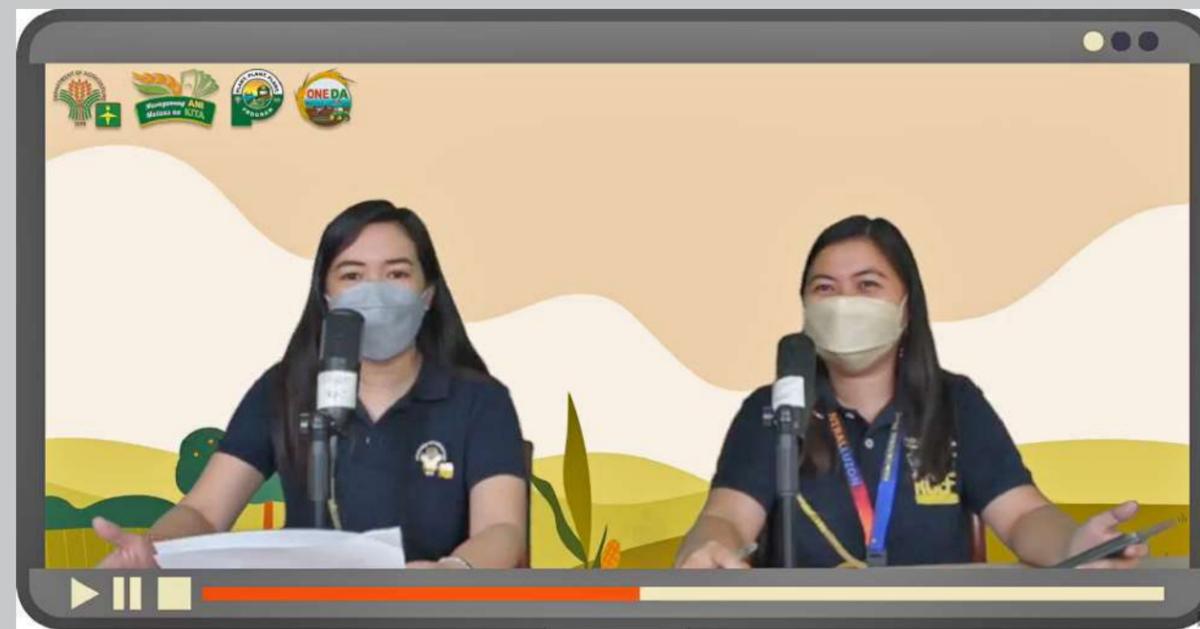
Dr. Dianne M. Lapuz, IQA Lead Auditor, together with Mr. Marciano Santos and Ms. Josefina Serrano as part of the IQA team, spearheaded the said activity.

"I hope that the results given by the IQA Team will help us in giving

excellent extension services to our clients," said Ms. Elsa F. Victoria, OIC-Center Director.

In addition, Dr. Jayvee G. Carillo, OIC-Asst. Center Director, encouraged all ATI staff to take all the comments of the auditors wholeheartedly and comply to the recommendations given by the auditors.

Another internal audit will be implemented in ATI-CL in the next semester this year. (DMLapuz)



Ms. Eula Dee A. Lañada, Project Officer, and Ms. Mariel B. Baldoz, Agriculturist I, served as hosts during the conduct of AGRITALK 2022: Zeamaizing Ways on Corn Production held on May 24-26, 2022 via Facebook live.

## AgriTalk on Corn Prod'n Tech reaches more than 350 CL pax

The AgriTalk 2022: Zeamaizing Ways on Corn Production, a webinar series on the latest corn production technologies spearheaded by the Agricultural Training Institute-Central Luzon (ATI-CL), reached more than 350 participants including farmers, fishers, youth, women, among others, on May 24-26, 2022 aired via ATI-Central Luzon's Facebook Page.

The 3-day webinar series aimed to: (1) Explain the latest agricultural technologies on yellow and white corn production; (2) Identify various ways in surveillance and management of fall armyworm; and (3) Discuss strategies on corn farm biomass conservation and utilization with emphasis on corn silage and corn-livestock integration.

Mr. Christopher Ryan Banaag, Agriculturist II of City Agriculture Office, Palayan City, discussed the technologies on yellow and white production on the first day. In addition, Mr. Evergilio Aquino, Science Research Specialist II of DA-RCPMC

III, shared tips on how to manage Fall Armyworm on the second day. Further, Mr. Roger Austria, Learning Site for Agriculture Cooperator, explained how to make corn silage and discussed strategies on corn-livestock integration on the third day.

Ms. Lerma Yase, one of the participants, quipped that the program is a big help to farmers especially those who are venturing into corn.

*"Thanks po sa lahat ng bumuo ng programa malaking tulong ito sa mga farmers na nagnanais magtanim ng mais dahil sa very informative na pagtuturo,"* Yase said.

Ms. Rosalie P. Marquez also agreed that the program is a huge help to the corn farmers in terms of additional knowledge.

*"Salamat at nadagdagan ang aming kaalaman sa pagsasaka at pagmamaisan. Malaking tulong*

*din ito sa mga magsasaka at mangingisda,"* she shared.

Another participant, Ms. Claire Ann Sta. Cruz, divulged her learnings on the fall army worm management topic.

*"Natutunan ko na ang fall armyworm feeds in large numbers on the leaves, nag-sstart siya sa pinaka egg then ang life cycle is magiging larva na nakaka-damage sa rice, and corn planted. Also, the larva of the fall armyworm damages the leaf of the plant na pinagsisimulan ng pagkasira ng tanim kaya systemic ang pinaka-advice na gawin para makita o makuha yung mga fall armyworm na nasa loob ng plants,"* the participant said.

The activity is the 1<sup>st</sup> batch of AgriTalk conducted this year; the 2nd batch is scheduled in September 2022 which will feature high value crops.

Started in 2020, AgriTalk is a webinar series which focuses on the latest agricultural technologies. (EDLañada)



Aurora AEWs experienced tissue culture of lakatan in a tissue culture laboratory in Aurora State College of Technology, Baler, Aurora.

## Aurora AEWs uncover key to Lakatan Micropropagation

The Agricultural Training Institute-Central Luzon (ATI-CL) implemented the Training of Trainers on Banana (Lakatan) Micropropagation and Nursery Management among 25 agricultural extension workers of Aurora on June 13-17, 2022 in Pacific Waves Inn, Baler, Aurora.

planting materials and in handling nursery management operations particularly banana tissue culture plantlets. One of its goals is also to improve their knowledge and attitude to be able to combine technical information and experiences to be effective in transferring the technology to their clients.

RFO III) discussed the situation of banana industry in Central Luzon. She also showed the current data on the production per province as well as the status of supply and demand of the lakatan variety. She presented the value chain of the commodity and stressed the problems of the industry that needs to be addressed.

*continued on page 12...*

The activity aimed to develop the skills of AEWs in mass production of Lakatan

Ms. Glarissa Balbares of Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office III (DA-

## CL FITS Staff undergo poster dev't, photography training

The Agricultural Training Institute-Central Luzon (ATI-CL), in partnership with Central Luzon Agriculture, Aquatic and Resources Research and Development Consortium (CLAARRDEC), conducted a Training-Workshop on Poster Development and Basic Photography among Farmers Information and Technology Services (FITS) staff across all provinces in Central Luzon on June 28-29, 2022 in ATI-CL Satellite Office, Palayan City, Nueva Ecija.

Mr. Jayson Berto, Senior Science Research Specialist of PhilRice, served as the expert for the basic photography topic. Each participant presented their outputs for the photography activity for the expert's critiquing.

Meanwhile, Mr. Jomar Garabilles of Central Luzon State University served as the expert for the poster development topic as part of the training workshop. The participants also created their posters bearing in

mind their learnings from the lecture and their outputs were critiqued by Mr. Garabilles.

The 2-day activity served as a stepping stone for the FITS staff to deliver their services as part of the Techno Gabay Program.

This is only the first of many collaborations between the CLAARRDEC & ATI-CL this year. (EDLañada)

## ATI-CL promotes rabbit farming as sustainable livelihood through webinar

The Agricultural Training Institute of Central Luzon (ATI-CL) promoted rabbit farming through the implementation of webinar addressing the crisis in the meat market on April 8, 2022 via Facebook Live.

Mr. Artemio C. Veneracion Jr., President of the Association of Rabbit Meat Producers, Inc. (ARaMP, Inc.) as well as Learning Site for Agriculture (LSA) Cooperator, served as the speaker for the activity.

Veneracion shared the history of rabbit farming in the Philippines among the participants. "Dinala ang rabbit meat sa Pilipinas for meat production, pero sa paglipas ng panahon mas naging common siya for pet. Right now, we are trying to recover evidences on rabbit farming," he said.

He also presented the possible dishes and products for rabbits.

During the final part of the discussion, he addressed the concern on the lack of slaughterhouses and standard



market for the rabbit. "Madami kasing pumapasok sa rabbit farming na iisa lang ang focus nila or hindi muna nila inaalam yung market. Akala nila easy money," he added. He emphasized that rabbit farming could be a good avenue for a business, thus researching the market is ideal before investing.

Since the African Swine Fever (ASF) outbreak in the Philippines, the Department of Agriculture (DA) has been actively campaigning and promoting for the consumption of rabbit meat as an alternative source of protein for Filipinos aside from pork, beef and chicken. (JCGuevarra)

## Bulacan AEWs take part in How to Grow a City: Urban Agriculture Training

Bulacan Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) participated in a Training on Urban Agriculture dubbed as How to Grow a City spearheaded by the Agricultural Training Institute-Central Luzon (ATI-CL) on May 25-27, 2022 at Duran Farm, San Ildefonso, Bulacan.

Ms. Krizzell Galang, Project officer, discussed the importance of urban agriculture in achieving food security especially during the pandemic. She

also discussed the creation of Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Banner program under the Department of Agriculture and its mandates. She further defined urban and peri-urban areas and the different set up in an urban community.

Mr. Christopher Ryan Banaag, Agriculturist II of the City Agriculture Office of Palayan City, shared his experience in encouraging youth and families in agriculture. He also

discussed community organization and mobilization. Furthermore, he discussed about the cultural practices of suitable vegetables for urban agriculture, different urban garden techniques such as container garden, vertical garden, edible landscaping and hydroponics.

Moreover, Ms. Galang discussed about integrated community urban *continued on page 13...*

# Reaping the Benefits of RICE CROP MANAGER ADVISORY SERVICE: THE CASE OF BOTOLAN, ZAMBALES

By: Eula Dee A. Lañada



Rice farming has been one of the main sources of income in the Philippines. In 2018, the country ranked eight in world rice production (FAOSTAT, 2020). As a staple food in every Filipino table, rice is deemed as an integral part of our daily lives.

Numerous technologies as well as applications on rice production have since popped up to help the farmers increase their yield as well as income. One of these applications is the Rice Crop Manager Advisory Service or RCMAS.

With more than 40 years of farming experience, Leonardo Valenzuela, 67, shared that the RCMAS has helped the farmers in his community in Botolan, Zambales to increase their yield.

*“Salamat sa RCMAS at tumaas ang aming ani. Nagabayan po kami sa maunlad naming pagsasaka,”* Valenzuela further added. Even at his age, he is still open to new technologies especially when the farmers can greatly benefit from it.

RCMAS is a digital agriculture service that provides farmers with information geared toward increasing productivity and profitability of rice farming through targeted integrated nutrient and crop management.

Valenzuela also served as barangay captain for 23 years and said that he has also shared

the technologies he learned from the training activities attended to his fellow farmers within the community.

He also initiated dialogues and small talks within their area and invited farmers to teach them farming technologies especially RCMAS.

An agricultural technologist in Botolan, Christian Lyndon Vivero, also shared that RCMAS helped the farmers in terms of applying the right kind of fertilizer during a certain stage of the rice crop.

*“Nakakatulong po ang RCMAS dahil nagagamit ng mga magsasaka ang tamang uri ng abono sa tamang yugto ng palay so hindi po ang sila nanghuhula kung anong gagamitin,”* said Christian.

Especially in his area, Christian observed that the farmers saved a lot of money in buying the right fertilizers needed for their crop.

*“Malaking tulong po talaga ang RCMAS lalo na doon sa area ko kasi kinumpara po ang harvest, hindi naman nagkakarayo pero sa gastos malayo ang pagitan nila. Nakakatipid po kapag susundin ang rekomendasyon ng RCMAS,”* the agricultural technologist said.

Christian vouched that RCMAS helped the farmers in the area. As they found out the benefits of the application, the farmers in Botolan continuously use

and rely on RCMAS in terms of fertilizer application for their rice field.

*“Natutuwa ang mga farmers kaya patuloy nilang ginagamit ang RCMAS at nakakatipid po sila at tumataas po ang ani nila sa paggamit ng RCMAS,”* Christian added.

Another farmer from Botolan, Jose Blanco, 63, has been farming for 35 years. *“Nang dahil po sa RCMAS, umunlad ang pagpapalay ng aking mga kabarangay,”* expressed the rice farmer.

During his stint as a barangay councilor, Blanco shared the RCMAS application and its use to his fellow farmers and other members of the community. He even shared the app to his nephews and nieces to encourage them to venture into farming.

The core of RCMAS which is the Rice Crop Manager (RCM) was developed and disseminated in 2013 for the use of agricultural extension in the Philippines. Through the RCM, a one-page printout of field-specific crop and nutrient management recommendation for the farmers' rice fields is generated to help them manage their fertilizer application in the next cropping season. With its continuous development, the RCMAS was developed in 2015 considering the farmers practices as well as the inputs of extension workers, researchers, experts, and farmers.

According to the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), RCMAS has soft launched its optimized version dubbed as RCMAS 4.0 on July 16, 2022. It combines the following services: 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.

The Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research, in collaboration with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice), funded the research and development part of RCMAS. Consequently, the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Offices (DA-RFOs), Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) and its regional training centers and the local government units are in-charge of the nationwide training dissemination and deployment of the said application.

When asked if he would recommend RCMAS to others especially those new in the field of agriculture, Valenzuela replied with a resounding “yes.” After all, with the help of rice farming and eventually RCMAS, he was able to raise his five kids and he quipped that he owes his children's education to this livelihood.

## Cabangan youth venture into IDOFS

The Agricultural Training Institute-Central Luzon (ATI-CL) implemented the training course on Integrated Diversified Organic Farming System (IDOFS) among the youth or 4-H Club Members of Cabangan, Zambales which ran from April 26 until April 28, 2022.

Mr. Joey Alvior, Ms. Mayme Ong, and Mr. Alexander D. Reyes from the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist served as the resource persons for the said training.

Mr. Alvior taught the participants on how to prepare and use natural concoctions and vermiculture. The participants prepared different natural concoctions like Fermented Fruit Juice, Fermented Plant Juice, and Fish Amino Acid as part of their outputs for the training. Meanwhile, Mr. Alexander D. Reyes, together with the participants, prepared Fermented Oriental Herbal

Nutrient (OHN), herbal medicines, and feeds for the free-range chicken. He also discussed the basics of goat production.

*“Ang pag-aalaga ng kambing ay isang magandang negosyo na may malaking kita. Ang pag-aalaga ng mga kambing ay maaring pasukin ng isang pamilya dahil kahit maging ang mga bata ay pwedeng makatulong sa pag-aalaga ng mga ito,”* Reyes said.

Ms. Mercedes A. Capilo, Municipal Agriculturist, expressed her gratitude to ATI-CL and encouraged the participants to apply the knowledge and skills that they have learned and acquired during the three-day training.

*“Nawa ay hindi masayang ang mga natutunan ninyo sa ating mga speakers. Hiling ko rin na sana ang mga matatanggap ninyong mga*

*extension support ay maging kapaki-pakinabang sa inyo at maging sa inyong komunidad. Nakakatuwa na maraming mga bata ang nais matuto ng agrikultura at sana kayo ay mas lalo pang magsipag para sa ikakaunlad ng inyong 4-H club,”* she added.

*“Sana kayong mga miyembro ng 4-H Club ay mas marami pa kayong mga kabataan ang mahikayat na sumali sa inyong club. Maging modelo kayo sa mga kapwa niyo kabataan at magsilbing inspirasyon sa kanila. Magamit nawa sa mabuti ang mga natutunan ninyo dito at maging maunlad ang inyong samahan,”* Dr. Dianne Lapuz, 4-H Club Focal Person, quipped.

The participants will be monitored after six (6) months for the progress of their granted extension support. (DMLapuz/EDLañada)

## Central Luzon farmer-youth tandems finish DAC4RCEF

The Agricultural Training Institute in Central Luzon (ATI-CL) conferred 20 farmer-youth tandems as graduates of the five-day in-depth Regional Training of Trainers on Digital Agriculture Course for Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (DAC4RCEF), held at ATI-CL, Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, on April 18 – 22, 2022.

The graduates have successfully finished two ladderized courses, the DAC4RCEF101 and DAC4RCEF102.

The DAC4RCEF101 focused on Basic-Agri ICT Applications, Internet Safety Basics, Agri Helplines, and Introduction to Social Media Marketing. On the hand, the DAC4RCEF102 highlighted Advanced-Agri Applications, Advanced Social Media Marketing Plan, e-Commerce Platforms, and Online Payment Transactions.

The said courses are set to be re-run by the graduates in their respective communities through Farmers' Field School (FFS) to help local farmers in adapting various digital-agriculture technologies.



Ms. Shirley Ocampo of JBO Farm, one of the participants of the training, discussed different Agri Apps on Rice during the microteaching activity.

*“I’ve learned that developing a social media marketing plan is important. I can use this to boost and create more engagement and following on our social media accounts. This might also help us to invite more people to visit our farm,”* said Marilou S. Facun, one of the participants.

The participants who excelled in several activities received awards such as Best Social Media Marketing Plan, Best Dream Board, Best Canva Poster, and Best Presenter for their exemplary contributions to the training.

Further, Mr. Aeron P. Bermudez – Chief of Information Services Section, Ms. Eula Dee A. Lañada – Information Officer II, Mr. Kent Edward S. Ballesteros – Media Production Specialist II, Mr. John Led G. Joaquin – RCEF Technical Staff, and Jayson S. Baldoz – RCEF Technical Staff, served as the subject matter experts in both courses.

The said training is anchored with RCEF Rice Extension Services Program and it is expected to be rolled out under FFS. (JLGJoaquin)



Aurora AEWs pose with their certificates as proof for finishing the course on EDS last April in ATI-RTC III, Palayan, City, Nueva Ecija.

## Aurora AEWs join 2<sup>nd</sup> batch of ext’n delivery system training

The agricultural extension workers (AEWs) of Aurora joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> batch of Extension Delivery System (Phase I) Training this year spearheaded by the Agricultural Training Institute-Central Luzon (ATI-CL) on April 22, 2022 via Google Meet and face-to-face session in ATI Palayan City, Nueva Ecija.

Dubbed as Internalizing the World of Agricultural Extension (EDS for AEWs), the training comprised of two-day online discussion on the basics of Agricultural Extension and Communication via Google Meet. The remaining three days delved on face-to-face sessions for the evaluation of participants on their microteaching activity.

Dr. Arthur D. Dayrit, Director III of the DA-RFO III, shared the DA One

Agenda for the participants to have a clearer picture of the strategies of the Department to attain “Masaganang Ani at Mataas na Kita” which the AEWs play a vital role.

Meanwhile, Mr. Arnold B. Novicio, Provincial Agriculturist of Aurora, together with ATI Central Luzon CDMSS staff, served as the panelists for the said microteaching activity. The participants were rated on how they conduct themselves and how they deliver extension services on various topics, like technology, program, and services.

As Mr. Novicio puts it, “It is basically confidence in the extension delivery that will make you and effective AEW. Make your own presentation so will can deliver the topic with your eyes close.” Mr. Novicio emphasized that confidence

is acquired if you master your topic and you handle the situation and clients well. In retrospect, these are basically the essence of the EDS Phase I training.

After this training, EDS Phase II (Community Organizing and PRA) and Phase III (Problem Identification, Project Identification and Proposal Preparation, Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation) shall follow.

All municipalities of Aurora except Dinalungan were represented by the 21 AEWs who graduated from the said training.

The training is also a CPD Program where credit points for the Professional Regulatory Commission are given to the successful graduates. (MTSVillanueva)

## Zambales FITS staff finish RCMAS training course

The Farmers Information and Technology Services (FITS) staff of Zambales finished the Training Course on Rice Crop Manager Advisory Services (RCMAS) spearheaded by Agricultural Training Institute-Central Luzon (ATI-CL) on May 17-20, 2022 in Iba, Zambales.

The four-day activity aimed to update the participants on the RCMAS and RCM user registration as well as discuss the procedure of registering farmer and measuring farm lots using GPS and uploading of GPX file using RCM Farmer and Farm Lot Registration.

In addition, the training demonstrated the procedure of using RCM farmer identification card (ID) maker and discussed the basic principles of Site-Specific Nutrient Management and RCM. Further, the use and benefits of RCM messenger service, RCMAS Statistics and 'contact us' feature were also explained.



Zambales AEWs and farmer-leaders gather during the RCM recommendation generation activity.

Mr. Bryan Cruz, Science Research Assistant, and Ms. Amelita Londonio, Agriculturist II, from the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office III (DA-RFO III) served as resource persons and facilitators during the said training.

Part of the training was a hands-on activity in Brgy. Binuclotan, Botolan, Zambales with 20 farmers interviewed using the RCMAS application. The participants were able to do the actual farm and farm

lot registration using GPX and get RCM recommendation.

Mr. John Lerry Medina and Ms. Raquel Sagun from DA-RFO III also served as facilitators during the hands-on activity.

In partnership with Office of the Provincial Agriculturist-Zambales, the activity got accredited by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) that provides CPD points among the 20 participants. (MBBaldoz)

### Aurora AEWs uncover key.. from page 5...

In addition, Dr. Agnes Perey of Tarlac Agricultural University (TAU) discussed the topics on different methods of propagation banana with emphasis on tissue culture method. She gave an introduction to the physiology of banana plant as it was critical to be familiar with its parts and functions to be successful in the micropropagation of the crop. She further discussed the tissue culture facilities needed, the laboratory layout and sections, the equipment, the culture media, its different kinds, composition and their purposes; and its preparation. She also gave a detailed discussion on the tissue culture protocol of lakatan banana and demonstrated the procedures in the laboratory and nursery.

Meanwhile, Mr. Roel Rubion of DA Regulatory Division discussed the tissue culture and nursery accreditation and its importance. He

provided the step by step procedure and requirements for application.

To hasten their skills, the participants had a hands-on activity on tissue culture of lakatan banana in the tissue culture laboratory of Aurora State College of Technology (ASCOT) where they experienced preparation of culture media, gathering of explants, and transferring in the laboratory. They also experienced how to transfer plantlets from the culture bottles to the nursery for hardening and acclimatization. In addition, they observed the practices in managing and maintaining the plantlets in the nursery. To further learn how to distinguish suitable parent stocks, they visited a nearby banana plantation where Dr. Perey pointed out the characteristics of good parent stocks to look for.

Dr. Eusebio Angara, Vice President for Research and Training of ASCOT, graced the third day of the training

and expressed his full support in the endeavor of the local government of Aurora to establish tissue culture laboratories and expand the production of lakatan.

One of the participants, Ms. Nelita Abordo shared her insights of the training. *"Baunin natin ang masayang tawanan at kanyawan pagbalik sa ating tanggapan. Ang mga natutunan ay ating ibahagi at pagplanuhan upang ang limang araw ay mas maging makabuluhan. Sa una ay hungkag ang kaalaman, ngayo'y magtatapos nang may sapat na kasanayan,"* she said.

The activity was made possible through the assistance of the Provincial Agriculture Office of Aurora headed by Provincial Agriculturist, Mr. Arnold Novicio, and the invaluable support of the ASCOT. The participants also earned 24 CPD points from attending the training. (KDGalang)



Nueva Ecija farmer-participants showcase their certificates after graduating from the PGS training on June 13-24, 2022, in ATI-RTC III, Palayan City.

## CL Farmers explore Participatory Guarantee System

The Agricultural Training Institute-Central Luzon (ATI-CL) implemented the Training on Participatory Guarantee System among 27 farmers in Central Luzon on June 13-24, 2022 in ATI-RTC III, Palayan City, Nueva Ecija.

*"Para sa akin itong training na ito ang isa sa mga pinakamagandang training na aking nadaluhan. Naging makabuluhan ang mga araw na aming ginugol dito. Nawa*

*ay magtuloy-tuloy ang aming mga plano upang maging accredited ang aming grupo bilang isa sa mga PGS Group dito sa Pilipinas,"* said Atty. Carol Dumlao-Amis, a participant from Nueva Ecija.

*"This training is an eyeopener to me. I really appreciate all the topics, workshops and activities included in the activity,"* Dumlao-Amis added. The two-week training revolved around topics on Organic Agriculture

(OA) Act; OA Standards and the National List of Permitted Substances for OA; Establishment and Operation of PGS; Accreditation of PGS Groups as Organic Certifying Bodies; and Peer Review and Certification Protocols.

The said topics were delivered by the following experts: Ms. Zarah Jane Nazar of ATI-RTC III; Mr. Junie Dizon of DA-RFO III; Ms. Rosemarie *continued on page 15...*

### Bulacan AEWs take part in... from page 6...

garden, reiterated its benefits for the members of the community and enumerated the requirements for requesting support for establishment of community urban gardens. She also introduced the concept of asset-based community development.

To develop their skills in establishing urban gardens

and encouraging community participation, the participants had a practicum on establishment of UA on the third day of their training with the help of the members of the community in Brgy. Basuit, San Idefonso, Bulacan. They were divided into 3 groups and they were given an area and materials for the establishment urban garden. Hon. Edith Castro, Barangay Captain

of Basuit, Mr. Banaag and Mr. Raymart Santiago, the Prov. HVCDP coordinator, selected the best garden among the three groups.

The participants also developed their community urban garden development plan wherein the best plan will be awarded with the provision of CUG Establishment support from ATI-CL. (KDGalang)

## ATI-CL leads PAFES institutionalization workshop in CL

The Agricultural Training Institute-Central Luzon (ATI-CL) spearheaded the conduct of Institutionalization of PAFES: Stakeholders Consultation and Workshop from May to June this year in six provinces in Central Luzon.

Specifically, the team implemented the said workshops on May 24-25, 2022; May 31-June 1, 2022; June 7-10, 2022; June 16-17, 2022; June 21-24, 2022 in the provinces of Bataan, Zambales, Aurora, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija and Pampanga, respectively.

A total of 39 participants from Provincial Agriculture Office, Provincial Veterinary Office, municipality/ city agriculturists, SUCs and stakeholders from different associations and organizations participated in the activity in the province of Bataan.

In addition, 38 participants joined the Zambales leg; 37 participants in Aurora and Tarlac legs; 62 participants in Nueva Ecija leg; and 42 participants in Pampanga leg of the workshop.

The representatives from partner agencies, the DA-RFO III led by Mr. Henry Ilagan, PEO III; and BFAR III led by Ms. Romina V. Yutuc, Chief, Regional Fisheries Training and Fisherfolks Coordination Division, joined the activity as well.

Ms. Elsa F. Victoria presented the inputs on Assessment of AFE situation and the Planning Process and the Need for Assessing AFE Situation in the province of Bataan. She also facilitated the workshop on SWOT analysis and the consultation during the activity.

For the province of Zambales, Aurora, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, and Pampanga legs, Ms. Veronica Concepcion Esguerra, the Resource Person, presented the inputs and facilitated the workshop and consultation. Esguerra presented the Input Session 1: Assessment



Stakeholders from Pampanga brainstorm during the SWOT analysis in the Pampanga leg of PAFES institutionalization.

of AFE Situation and the Planning Process, facilitated the workshop and presentation of outputs of SWOT Analysis on AFE participated by the PAO and PVO on the first day of the activity.

She also assisted each group on the refinement of their outputs during the first day of the activity.

On the second day of the activity, she presented the Input Session I: The Need for Assessing AFE Situation as Facilitator and facilitated the workshop on Potentials and Needs. She also served as facilitator/moderator during the presentation, solicitation of comments and suggestions from stakeholders on SWOT Analysis outputs of PAO and PVO. The agreements and ways forward were presented at end of the 2nd day of each activity.

Prior to this series of activities, ATI-CL has already conducted an initial engagement for PAFES among the involved agencies in the said involved provinces in March this year.

During the initial engagement, the overview, scope and coverage, implementation strategies for the operationalization of PAFES, various committees to be established,

stakeholder's identification, beneficiaries, and other relevant matters were presented.

Over the years, ATI has created sustained interest in pursuing AFE reforms. In doing this, it has partnered with the Coalition for Agricultural Modernization in the Philippines, Inc. (CAMP), a private voluntary organization instrumental in catalyzing the establishment of PAFES.

PAFES shall serve as the institutional arrangement in pursuing the full devolution of AFE services to LGUs, integrating the implementation of agriculture and fisheries programs and related support services at the provincial level. It further aims to strengthen the capability of LGUs to plan and implement multiple agriculture and fisheries programs with the province as the center for operations given the full devolution of AFE services to LGUs as mandated by EO 138.

PAFES has been piloted in the province of Bulacan in 2021. As a prelude to the Mandanas-Garcia Ruling implementation, this initiative will be replicated in the remaining six (6) provinces in Central Luzon this year. (ZJNSendrijas)

## San Clemente farmers delve into Goat Enterprise Management

The Agricultural Training Institute-Central Luzon (ATI-CL) spearheaded the Training on Goat Enterprise Management cum Financial Literacy on June 20-22, 2022 among 5 farm families or 15 farmers from San Clemente, Tarlac. This is the second leg of the Ladderized Training Course on Agro-entrepreneurship which aimed to transform farmers into agripreneurs.

The second phase of the training aimed to develop the farmer's skills on goat enterprise development and its integration in their existing rice, vegetable and backyard itik production.

Mr. Bernard Joseph G. Biag, Livestock coordinator of Anao, Tarlac, served as the resource speaker. He discussed the situation of goat industry in Central Luzon and the potentials of goat enterprise. He also discussed the different breeds of goat and their purposes, improving native breeds with the use of imported breeds, housing, feeds and feeding and health management. Furthermore,



The farm families in San Clemente receive three heads of goats each as extension support.

he stressed the importance of record keeping and enumerated the different business model in goat enterprise such as meat production and buck for hire. He emphasized the great potential of goat raising in providing income to farm families provided with an entrepreneurial mindset.

To increase the learnings of the participants, Mr. Biag guided them in preparing urea mineral molasses block (UMMB), silage production and administering vitamins, antibiotics

and deworming of goats. They also visited a goat farm to observe proper goat management practices. The farm families had a workshop in planning their family goat enterprise.

Further, each farm family received three (3) heads of goat (one female and one male) with improved genes as after training extension support on June 29, 2022. They are expected to start up their goat enterprise with the use of the extension support provided. (KDGalang)

### CL Farmers explore... from page 13...

Joseon of DA-RFO III; Dr. Irene M. Adion of DA-RFO III; and Dr. Dianne M. Lapuz of ATI-RTC III.

"Ito po ang unang pagkakataon na ako po ay dumalo sa mga pagsasanay katulad nito. Ako po ay nagpapasalamat dahil nabigyan po ako ng mga dagdag kaalaman tungkol sa Organikong Pagsasaka. Makakaasa kayo na akin po gagawin at ibabahagi sa iba ang kahalagahan ng organikong pagsasaka," said another participant, Mr. Manuel A. Gaot.

Mr. Angelico E. Ramos stated that the owner of their farm is willing to undergo conversion of their farm into organic agriculture.

"Nakausap ko po ang aking employer at nasabi ko po ang kahalagahan at magandang benepisyo ng organikong pagsasaka at nais po niyang subukan ito. Kaya maraming salamat dahil nabigyan kami ng pagkakataon na makadalo sa training na ito," he quipped.

"Maraming salamat sa inyong sipag at tiyaga sa pagdalo sa training na ito. Nawa ay huwag mawala ang alab sa inyong mga puso kung paano ninyo gagawin ang lahat ng mga plano na inyong ginawa upang makamit ang inyong mithiin na mapabilang sa mga PGS Group dito sa Pilipinas," said Dr. Dianne M. Lapuz, Project Officer of the training.

Dr. Lapuz shared that the group can rely to ATI and DA to achieve their plans. "Makakaasa kayo na kami po sa ATI at DA ay kasama ninyo sa pagkamit ng mga planong ito," she added.

During the closing ceremony, Dr. Doy Nacpil, one of the NOAB Directors, shared some updates regarding the PGS.

Also, Ms. Evelyn Santos, Focal Person of Organic Agriculture Program in Nueva Ecija, said that the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist is always open to assist the participants in attaining their PGS Group accreditation. (DMLapuz/EDLañada)



*Nang dahil po sa RCMAS, umunlad ang pagpapalay ng aking mga kabarangay*

*- Jose Blanco*



*Salamat sa RCMAS at tumaas ang aming ani. Nagabayan po kami sa maunlad naming pagsasaka.*

*- Leonardo Valenzuela*



## MISSION

Empowerment and building capacities of agriculture and fisheries stakeholders for sustainable development.

## QUALITY POLICY

The ATI, as the orchestrator of the National Extension System, ensures harmonized management of agricultural and fishery extension delivery systems in empowering the farmers and fisherfolk for food security, poverty alleviation and and social equity for sustainable development.

## VISION

Food availability and affordability for every Filipino family through excellent extension services in agriculture and fisheries.

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