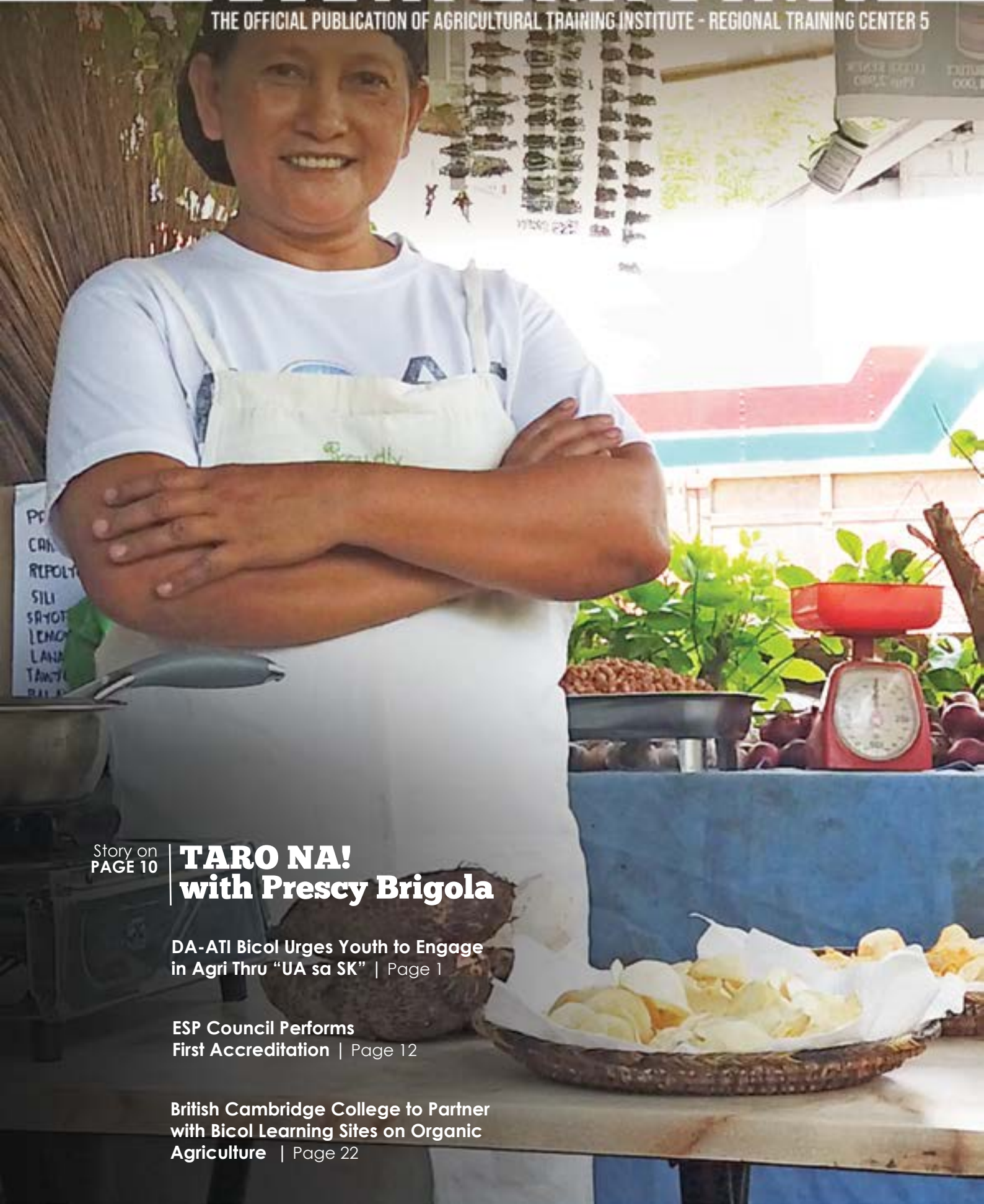




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ATING KAUGNAY

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Aside from the orientation, the participants were also taught about organic concoctions and extracts.

DA-ATI Bicol Urges Youth to Engage in Agri Thru "UA Sa SK"

PILI, Camarines Sur - Hand-in-hand with the government's pursuit to flatten the curve of COVID-19 pandemic, the agriculture sector needs to ensure continuous food production in rural and urban areas to attain food security, accessibility and price stability. In line with the Department of Agriculture's "Plant Plant Plant Program" specifically the urban agriculture expansion, DA-Agricultural Training Institute Bicol (DA-ATI Bicol) is tapping the

youth, through the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK), for this campaign. Just recently, DA-ATI Bicol launched the UA sa SK Competition or Urban Agriculture sa Sangguniang Kabataan. Its objective is to entice the youth to engage in agriculture and for them to become future agripreneurs. Awards and non-monetary prizes to support their urban garden projects were given to winning barangays.

The first batch of UA sa SK orientation was attended by SK representatives from nine

barangays in Pili municipality, namely Binanuaanan, La Purisima, Anayan, Sagurong, Tagbong, Palestina, Caroyroy-an, San Agustin, and Binobong. Likewise present was a representative of the Municipal Agriculture Office. To try their hands in agriculture, they underwent the actual preparation of organic concoctions and extracts.

DA-ATI Bicol Center Director Elsa A. Parot gave her message to the youth, "Ang mga kabataan has the bigger enthusiasm na kailangan natin sa panahon ngayon. You are the potential influencers of your barangay. Kayo and kabataan. Kayo ang kapalit namin sa susunod na henerasyon. Enjoy learning and you will enjoy agriculture."

The orientation took place at Isarog Hall, ATI Compound, San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur last July 15, 2020. **Ma. Louiza**



Modified Training Approaches Initiated via Sarabay Channel

GAINZA, Camarines Sur – During the dual graduation ceremony for the Distance Training and Blended Training on Stingless Beekeeping, the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute Bicol (DA-ATI Bicol) Center Director Elsa Parot summed up how the agency has adopted and adjusted to the world-wide crisis.

“Ngayong may pandemic, ang ATI hindi tumigil. Ito pong pandemya ay nagbigay ng oportunidad na lalong makilala ng magsasaka natin ang kahalagahan ng mga bubuyog at oportunidad sa ATI para magsagawa ng on-line at modified face-to-face trainings.”

“With this pandemic, ATI did not stop. This pandemic gave opportunity for our farmers to learn more about bees and for ATI to conduct online and modified face-to-face training.”

The Distance Training and Blended Training on Stingless Beekeeping simultaneously happened two hours daily for four days on June 29 to July 2, 2020. The Blended Training held in the fifth class municipality of Gainza combined information technology-mediated instruction and physically present interaction.

Conducted collaboratively with the Municipal Agriculture Office, the face-to-face training produced 21 attendees



The Blended Training on Stingless Beekeeping produced 16 graduates who successfully completed the course requirements. Each graduate received a stingless bee colony from ATI as their starter kit.

out of which 16 successfully completed the course requirements. After the training, each graduate received a stingless bee colony from ATI as their starter kit.

The Blended Training complied with the health protocols imposed by the Institute on learning situations: physical distancing, wearing of protective face masks, hand sanitation, spacious venue, up to 20 attendees and five-hour interaction at most.

The Municipal Agriculture Office headed by Engr. Alex Togño, Municipal Agriculturist, facilitated the venue and participant identification. *“Nagpapasalamat po kami sa pagpili sa aming munisipyo para maging pilot ng programang ito. Alam ko po na makatutulong ito sa aming mamayan bilang dagdag na livelihood sa likod ng kanilang bahay. (We are thankful that our municipality was selected for this pilot program. I know this will help our constituents with the additional livelihood in their backyard.)”*

“Sa tagal kong naging magsasaka, ngayon ko lang na-encounter at ganito pala ang aking matututunan (In the long time that I’ve been farming, this is the first time I encountered this and I learned so much),” observed Romeo Adan of Gainza during the graduation ceremony.

“Napaka-interesting, napapanahon at challenging (Very interesting, timely and challenging),” Cristita Chica, Municipal Planning and Development Coordinator of Gainza, described the Blended Training.

Meanwhile, the Distance Training on Stingless Beekeeping recorded 160 registered participants and more than 3,000 views on ATI Bicol’s YouTube Sarabay Channel. The online platform served as the virtual training hall of ATI, with a sign language interpreter on board for differently-abled participants.

The Resource Persons answered questions aired live during the training as well as answered queries posted via

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Going beyond the pilot phase, the ODL on duck raising and duck egg processing is expanding possibilities of the new modality.

Week-Long ODL Generates Simultaneous Blended Trainings

PILI, Camarines Sur - The Department of Agriculture - Agricultural Training Institute-Bicol (DA-ATI Bicol) pursues its mandate as the training and extension arm of the Department of Agriculture under the “New Normal.” More than online seminars, the Center is conducting full-length training courses online.

The Online Distance Learning (ODL) on Duck Raising and Duck Egg Processing gathered together 105 registered online participants who complied with the documentary requirements. These include registration forms, responses to daily learning assessment, and evaluation forms. The participants are therefore eligible to receive certificates of training or certificates of participation.

At the same time, the ODL serves the needs of farmers who do not have access to the internet. Farmers are gathered in ATI-certified Learning Sites for Agriculture (LSA) where they watch the daily sessions, participate in hands-on sessions, and ask their questions to training facilitators.

The blended face-to-face and IT-mediated learning mode of the ODL takes place in four separate locations in Camarines Sur: the Carmel Agri-Learning Farm in Pili, the Shell Training Farm in Bombon,

the Sonrisa Farm in Magarao, and the Min-Oro Eco Farm in San Jose. Here, 20 participants per site share their insights and raise questions to the resource persons LIVE via the YouTube #Sarabay Channel of ATI Bicol.

The uploaded ODL courses and can be viewed on YouTube by anyone interested to learn the production and processing technologies. Here, anyone can share their insights and ask questions LIVE or ex-post – that is, after the event.

Ms. Maria Teresa Bracia, the Provincial Livestock Coordinator of the Camarines Sur Office of the Provincial Agriculturist, together with Chef Roy Resurreccion of the Universidad de Sta. Isabel served as Resource Persons.

Though online, the Resource Persons share the technical information through participative discussions and process demonstrations -- much like in face-to-face training.

The ODL on Duck Raising and Duck Egg Processing is the latest in a series of ODL courses conducted by ATI Bicol. ODL courses combine social media broadcasts with face-to-face interaction for a selected group of trainees.

Primalou B. Imperial

DA-ATI Bicol Holds Midyear & Management Review

“Lahat tayo, we were groping in darkness, COVID-19 gave us darkness. Noong ECQ, dumilim ang mundo. Sa kabila ng kadilimang dinanas natin, you let your light shine.”

PILI, Camarines Sur - With these words, Center Director Elsa Ani Parot expressed her thanks and encouragement to the ATI Bicol personnel at the conclusion of the FY 2020 Midyear Review and Planning Workshop held July 28, 2020 at Isarog Hall, ATI Compound, San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur.

She likened the light one receives and gives to life-giving sunlight. “Seeds force itself to open because it needs sunlight to live and give life,” Director Parot emphasized.

Central to the discussions of the Midyear Review, ATI Bicol personnel assessed the refocused services of the Center which were drawn up to address the pandemic-related restrictions that started in March.

Point persons and team leaders presented the physical accomplishments of the regular and banner programs vis-à-vis the original Work and Financial Plan targets and the refocused targets.

The ATI Bicol #Sarabay Channel, which is the Center’s social media-based platform for sharing information and activities, was also evaluated in terms of the number of posts, followers, people reached, as well as engagements which include clicks, reactions, comments, and shares.

Discussions likewise focused on the accomplishments of the administration and finance unit, as well as the development of the Center-Based Learning Site for Agriculture (LSA) to serve walk-in clients. All ATI Bicol personnel shall be involved in creating, building, and maintaining the various components which showcase different commodities.

The Midyear Review immediately followed the Fifth Management Review on July 27th. Process owners presented their respective accomplishments in terms of the Center’s Quality Objectives, as well as their updated Risk Assessment Plans following ISO 9001:2015 standards. **Primalou B. Imperial**

First Modified School-On-Air Produces 304 Graduates in Camarines Norte



The SOA graduates from the Municipality of Daet pose for a picture with their Certificate of training together with their Municipal SOA Coordinator, Ms. Angielica Frialde (left, front row).

DAET, Camarines Norte – COVID-19 has changed the way people live. They now wear face masks and follow social distancing protocols. The pandemic also changed the way people learn. It greatly restricted school activities as well as seminars, training, and other large gatherings.

Nonetheless, it does not stop the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute Regional Training Center V (ATI Bicol) from providing the necessary knowledge and skills to its clientele.

To overcome this major obstacle, ATI Bicol is tweaking its training and extension methodologies.

In partnership with the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist of Camarines Norte, DA-ATI Bicol recently launched the modified ATIng Kaugnay School-On-the-Air (SOA) Radio Magazine Program on Hybrid Rice Production.

The two-month modified SOA ran from July 6 to August 26, 2020 instead of the usual four months. It was aired every Monday and Wednesday from 11:00 am to 12:00 noon over Cool Radio in Daet and Radyo Natin in Paracale and Sta. Elena.

Aside from airing on radio, the SOA

was also streamed over Facebook and YouTube through DA-ATI Bicol #Sarabay Channel.

Mr. Michael D. Villezar, Information Officer II of DA-ATI Bicol, hosted the program.

All municipalities under the Province of Camarines Norte participated with the program with the help of the Provincial Agriculturist of Camarines Norte, Engr. Almirante Abad, and the Provincial SOA Coordinator Ms. Dulce Doriman, together with the 12 Municipal SOA Coordinators.

The graduation ceremony was held virtually through YouTube Channel because of the restrictions on large gatherings. All 304 graduates were presented with their Certificate of Training.

DA-ATI Bicol Center Director Elsa Parot led the confirmation of new graduates. With her were Primalou Imperial, Chief of Information Services Section, and Engr. Kristine Olila, the Rice Point person.

In his opening message, Engr. Abad, lauded both the graduates and DA-ATI. *"Salamat po sa inyong lahat na kayo ay nag participate dito. Maraming salamat din po sa Agricultural training*

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Province-wide SOA on Corn Impacts Local Communities

PILI, Camarines Sur – Amid the Fall Armyworm (FAW) infestation, the Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Training Institute in Bicol (DA-ATI Bicol) conducted the Modified School-on-Air (SOA) on Corn Production in Camarines Sur.

The 16 SOA Corn episodes started on September 7, 2020. Resource persons tackled various topics – including good agricultural practices (GAP), FAW control measures, and processing – during one-hour episodes that aired twice a week on DWNX FM and AM radio stations until December 9, 2020. Owing to the series of typhoons that battered the Bicol Region in October to November, and the resulting destruction of power and communication lines, the 15th episode and graduation ceremony aired on December 1st and December 9, 2020.

For enrollees who prefer to use the social media, the episodes were shown on the ATI Bicol #Sarabay Channel on YouTube. This proved to be advantageous for farmers and SOA Coordinators, who could download the episodes and watch these at their convenient location and schedule.

The SOA Coordinators in various cities and municipalities of Camarines Sur organized groups of corn farmers who registered as SOA participants. In areas where the enrollees have access to either the radio stations or the social media, they either listened or watched individually or in small groups.

A total of 300 enrollees registered as SOA participants. They received starter kits and information materials after completing the SOA. The SOA coordinators conducted city or municipal-level graduation rites for their SOA participants, graced by key local government officials and extension workers.

Serving as Project Officer, Mr. Michael Villezar organized the SOA Coordinators who served as the Institute's liaison officers in the corn cluster communities in Camarines Sur. **Primalou B. Imperial**

First School-On-Air on RCEF 'Harvests' 500 Graduates



The school-on-air students from the municipality of Ragay attend their virtual graduation.

CAMARINES SUR – Five hundred (500) registered rice farmers from the province of Camarines Sur successfully completed the training course on ATIng Kaugnay School on-the-Air (SOA) Program on the Production of High-Quality Inbred Rice and Seeds and Farm mechanization under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) Program.

The SOA Program is one of ATI's distance learning modality to promote the complete package of rice farming technologies. It is a series of radio programs which present the subject matter systematically

and progressively.

The two-month modified SOA under RCEF ran from August 4 – September 24, 2020, instead of four months. It was aired every Tuesday and Thursday from 5:30-6:30 in the afternoon over DWNX 91.1 MHz FM and DWNX 16.11 kHz AM. Also, this was streamed via YouTube and Facebook Live thru ATI Bicol #SarabayChannel.

The training's main objective is to promote the updated technologies on the production of high-quality inbred rice and seeds and farm mechanization in the region.

Participants of SOA were from the 25 municipalities and two cities in Camarines Sur namely: Baa, Balatan, Bato, Bombon, Buh, Bula, Cabusao, Canaman, Del Gallego, Gainza, Lagonoy, Libmanan, Lupi, Magarao, Minalabac, Nabua, Ocampo, Pamplona, Pili, Ragay, Sagñay, San Fernando, San Jose, Sipocot, Tinambac, Iriga City and Naga City.

Virtual Graduation Ceremony was streamed via ATI Bicol YouTube Live and Radio Broadcast last September 29, 2020. **Krishell E. Balisoro**

RCEF Info Caravan Boasts First-Ever 4-Province Simulcast Radio Broadcast, YouTube Stream

PILI, Camarines Sur – In response to the prohibition on mass gathering in light of Covid-19 pandemic, the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute has redesigned the conduct of the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) Information Caravan to be attuned to the new normal.

Instead of the usual face-to-

face encounter involving the rice farmers and extension workers, and the RCEF team hopping from one province to another, the information caravan was simulcasted in four provinces via radio broadcast and the social media platform of ATI Bicol, the #Sarabay Channel on YouTube.

The activity, called 'RCEF Information Caravan On Air,'

aims to educate rice farmers about the features and benefits of the Republic Act 11203 otherwise known as the Rice Tarrification Law. The law seeks to ensure affordable rice prices for consumers and at the same time raise the income of rice farmers.

DA-ATI Bicol Assistant Center Director Vivien V. Carable and Engr. Kristine O. Olila, the rice focal person are spear-

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DA- ATI Bicol Intensifies Urban Agriculture Through Seminar on Vermicomposting

TINAMBAC, Camarines Sur - The Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute Bicol (DA-ATI Bicol) aims to ensure food security in the country despite the Covid-19 pandemic. In this light, the agency conducted a Seminar on Vermicomposting.

Vermicompost is a nutrient-rich soil enhancer or soil conditioner made from agricultural wastes with the help of earthworms.

Fifteen (15) farmers in Tinambac, Camarines Sur attended the one-day training. The seminar provided information on the basic principles of vermicomposting and how the participants can make their own vermicompost. It served as a step towards establishing more vermicomposting facilities in the municipality.

The training happened using the face-to-face modality while observing health protocols such as physical distancing as well as wearing of face mask, face shield, and gloves. The agency distributed 10 kilos of African Night Crawlers to the participants as post-training support.

The seminar on vermicomposting took place at Barangay Camagong in Tinambac on September 10, 2020, with Mr. Hermie Opreco, Technical staff of DA-ATI Bicol, serving as Resource Person. **John Kenneth M. Gelario**

Growing Young Farmers: The Camarines Norte Way



DAET, Camarines Norte – The provinces in the Bicol Region have well-rooted track records on instilling the agriculture mindset among young people, including but not limited to members of the 4H Club.

In Camarines Norte, the Covid-19 pandemic proved the local implementers' resilience and tenacity. It gave them opportunities to devise and modify their approaches to suit the needs of the times.

Ms. Celeste Salvanera, Provincial Coordinator of the Farm Youth Development Program, confirmed that the pandemic limited the movement of agricultural extension workers (AEWs) in carrying out extension projects.

“Di po kami nakapag-re-org. Di ko po maobliga mga bata dahil sa Covid-19. May mga existing po akong 4H Clubs na active at may mga IGP/ livelihood. Kaya ako po ay bumisita sa lugar. May

mga assisted project po kami sa CamNorte, beneficiary organizations po ng tig-10k financial assistance. Pinapalago nila at mino-monitor ko po.”

Seven 4H Clubs are recipients of IGP projects funded by the province. Mam Ces helps the 4H Clubs solicit assistance from other agencies, the Barangay Council, as well as the Municipal and Provincial Local Government Units.

Existing projects include swine dispersal, organic chicken production, rug-making, free-range chicken production, and vegetable growing. As Mam Ces explained, “Mahirap mag-organize ng club kapag walang starter kit kaya tinututukan ko po. Yan po ang tinuturo ko sa clubs ngayon, maging independent po sila. Magkaroon ng sariling income. In six months, may pagbabago.

Many 4H members in the province pursued farming. Two

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‘UA Sa SK’ Contest Winners Bared

PILI, Camarines Sur - They have proven they are not just into TikTok and Mobile Legends.

The youth representing the 10 Sangguniang Kabataan from the Pili, Camarines Sur vied with one another in the first-ever local competition on urban agriculture dubbed as ‘Urban Agriculture sa Sanggunian Kabataan’ or UA Sa SK.

The competition showcased the talents and skills of the youth in growing and nurturing vegetables and fruit-bearing plants. They established a communal garden or a network of container gardens in their respective barangays. They documented their best practices from the start of the

contest in July until late October coinciding with the Town Fiesta.

The pioneering activity of the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute Bicol intends to promote agriculture to the youth and to complement the Plant, Plant, Plant program of the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Robert Santos of DA-ATI Bicol, Ms. Marilene Dimaculangan of DA-Bicol, and Engr. Rommel Nacario of the Local Government of Pili served as judges for the event.

After a thorough evaluation by the judges, SK La Purisima was declared as the winner. SK Del Rosario and SK Sa-

gorong come second and third, respectively. SK Curry and SK Binanuaanan rounded up the top- five places.

Other winners are SKs from Caroyroyan, Pawili, Anayan, San Jose, and Binobong.

The grand prize will receive Php50,000 worth of extension project. The second and third placers will receive Php30,000 and Php20,000 worth of extension projects, respectively.

All the top ten finalists received garden tools composed of hoe, rake, shovel, sprinkler, trowels, and hand rakes. They also received vegetable seeds. **Isagani C. Valenzuela, Jr.**



SK Chairman Jonas De la Rama of Brgy. La Purisima (right) explains how they implemented “UA sa SK” community garden to a contest judge. His team was eventually declared the winner.



Regional Training of Trainers on Strengthening the Capability of the Agricultural Extension System for Agricultural Biotechnology



DA-ATI, BCP Spearhead Regional Biotechnology Training

PILI, Camarines Sur – The Department of Agriculture - Agricultural Training Institute (DA-ATI) in partnership with the Biotechnology Coalition of the Philippines (BCP) spearheaded the Regional Training of Trainers (TOT) on Strengthening the Capability of the Agricultural Extension System for Agricultural Biotechnology on September 4, 2020 via Zoom and Facebook Live.

The half-day virtual training aimed to understand the essentials of agricultural biotechnology. It explained how products of modern biotechnology are regulated to address concerns and issues. The training emphasized that biotechnology and organic agriculture slow down climate change.

Dr. Saturnina C. Halos, President and Chair of Board of Directors of the BCP, together with Ms. Merle B. Palacpac, one of the pioneers in developing the Philippine Regula-

tory System for Biotechnology, served as resource speakers.

Dr. Halos discussed the Scope of Agricultural Biotechnology, Tools & Techniques, Common Agricultural Biotechnology Products, Climate Change, Cause & Impacts to Food Production, OA Impact on Climate Change, as well as Co-existence of OA and Genetically Modified Crops in the Philippines.

On the other hand, Ms. Palacpac explained the Regulatory System for Transgenic Crops, Food/Feed Safety, Environmental Health & Socio Economic, Ethical Assessment, Views on Safety, Ethics and Morality of Genetic Engineering.

Mr. Christian Tosoc and Mr. Alexander Vargas of ATI Bicol facilitated the online delivery of the TOT.

To conclude the training, Engr. Renato Dela Cruz, Chief of the Partnerships and Accreditation

Division at ATI-Central Office, gave his closing remarks.

“Kami po ay umaasa na after this training, you would be able to disseminate the information to our farmers. Malaking role po ang gagampanan ninyo upang mapalaganap ang biotechnology sa Pilipinas as a means to attain food security, sustainable agriculture and climate change adaptation and mitigation.”

This TOT served the information needs of Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) from the provinces of Camarines Sur, Catanduanes and Masbate. **Christian T.R. Tosoc**

DA-ATI Bicol Pioneers Online RCM Training

PILI, Camarines Sur- The adage 'If there's a will, there's a way' proves true once again. Amid strict health protocol imposed in the region to contain the Covid-19 spread, which restricts inter-provincial travel, the Training of Trainers (TOT) for Rice Crop Manager (RCM) Advisory Services finally pushed through.

Originally slated to be held last April until pre-empted by the Luzon-wide lockdown, the 4-day activity finally materialized on Sept 14-17, 2020. The TOT streamed via Zoom. This time, the training went online. And it was the first for RCM nationwide.

More than 30 Agriculture Extension Workers from the 16 municipalities and a city with Farmers Information and Technology Services (FITS) Centers joined the training. All six provinces in the region were represented.

The Department of Agriculture- Agricultural Training Institute (DA-ATI) Bicol gave a free GPS device for each participating FITS center. The trainees learned new knowledge on various features of the RCM Advisory Service or RAS. These include User Registration, Farmer and Field Registration (FFR), measuring of farm lot using a Global Position System (GPS) device, and uploading of a GPX file.

Other than the GPS technicalities, the attendees also gained skills on using the RCM ID Maker, the RCM questionnaire, the RCM Messenger, the RCM Statistics, and the RCM Contact Us interphase.

As training output, each



The participant measures farm using a geotagging device and interviews a farmer as part of their training on Rice Crop Manager

participant registered a farm, measured this farm using a GPS device or geotagging, and provided an RCM-generated fertilizer recommendation.

RCM is a web-based platform that provides a farmer with a personalized crop management recommendation after the farmer answers a series of questions.

The RCM Advisory Service consolidates data from RCM with complementary decision-making tools and services into one integrated advisory and information service for rice-based farming in the Philippines.

DA-ATI conducted the training collaboratively with the Department of Agriculture's Regional Field Office (DA-RFO) in Bicol.

In his message, DA Regional Executive Director Rodel Tornilla urged the participants to make the most of the training. *“Naway ang mga kaalaman na makukuha ninyo sa pag-sasanay na ito ay inyong maibahagi sa inyong mga bayan at makamtam natin ang food security sa ating bansa sa gitna ng mga hamon na ating hinanarap ngayong panahon.”*

On the other hand, DA-ATI Bicol Center Director Elsa Parot expressed her appreciation to the TOT attendees for their active participation. *“Ang mga kaalaman at ang device na natanggap ninyo sa training na ito ay makakatulong sa ating mga magsaka na magkaroon ng Masaganang Ani at Mataas na Kita.”* **Isagani C. Valenzuela, Jr.**

One Province, One Barangay Project Launched



DA-ATI Bicol Center Director Elsa Parot signs the Pledge of Commitment on the One Province, One Barangay Project in Barangay Tanag, Libmanan, Camarines Sur.

PILI, Camarines Sur - The Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute Bicol joined the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and 20 other agencies during the launch of the 'One Province, One Barangay' Project in Libmanan, Camarines Sur.

The Project titled “Enhancing and Sustaining the Productivity and Livelihood of the Community in Barangay Tanag” took off on August 14, 2020 under the stewardship of TESDA Regional Office V and TESDA Camarines Sur Provincial Office.

Present during the launch were ATI Center Director Elsa Parot and Assistant Center Director Vivien Carable.

In addition to various national government agencies, the Camarines Sur Poverty Reduction, Livelihood and Employment Cluster (PRLEC) Focal Person Mr. Roberto De Las Llagas, as well as Libmanan Mayor Bernard Brioso and Tanag Barangay Captain Marites Mulleda officiated in the event.

One Barangay, One Province Project will rehabilitate the Barangay Hall, construct housing units and provide starter supplies and materials for chicken and hog raising. It will also operationalize a small solar-powered irrigation system for the community's organic farming activities, as well as promote the adoption of modern farming and processing technologies through training and interventions from the member-agencies.

Director Parot pledged the conduct of Training on Organic Vegetable Production and Processing and other technical assistance.

The One Province, One Barangay Project aims to reduce poverty incidence and achieve sustainable livelihood by developing self-reliant, resilient, and sustainable communities through harmonized and culturally responsive development programs. The united effort of government agencies addresses poverty issues. **Vivien V. Carable**

TARO na!

Ang Taro (*Colocasia esculenta*) ay kilala sa Bicol Region bilang Gabi or Natong. Ang tubers ng upland taro ay pino-proseso para maging gluten-free tropical flour, ice cream, chips, at iba pa.

Sa mga lugar na may kamahalan o kaya'y kulang ang supply ng taro tubers, ang taro chips ay nagmumula sa Gabing San Fernando (*Xanthosoma sagittifolium*), kilala rin sa tawag na elephant ear, American Taro, o kaya'y bungkukan sa Bicol.

Si **Ms. Prescy Brigola** ay isa sa mga agri-pre-neurs ng Baao, Camarines Sur na nag-venture sa taro processing. Balakid sa kanyang kabuhayan ang kaku-langan sa supply ng taro root at sapat na kapital.

Q: Paano mo natutunan ang paggawa ng taro chips?

A: Una, sa mga kwentong kwentong lang tapos itrinay ko sa sarili ko na gumawa ng chips na to para sabi ko dagdag hanapbuhay saamin. Una, ang gamit ko, kutsilyo lang. Pagbabalat, pag-slice, kutsilyo lang.

Q: Ano pong innovations ang nagawa mo?

A: Simula nung naglako ako sa mga tindahan, dumami ang mga customer ko. Tapos nag-isip na ko nung madaling paraan kung paano ko mapaganda yung slice niya para pantay-pantay hindi katulad nung kutsilyong dahan-dahan para hindi ka mahiwa. Ngayon, gumagamit na ko ng peeler lang pero kahit papano mas madali na.

Sa ngayon, mas nakilala ako ng Baao Organic, nakajoin na ko sa Baao Organic, nakilala na ko ng DTI. Yun, mas lalong dumami yung customer.

Itong ginagawa naming chips, ito yung panglagay sa sinigang, yung gabi na kulay puti. Kasi yung gabing pula, matigas yun. Pag naprito na siya, matigas. Hindi katulad nung puti, tama lang ang pagka-crispy niya na kahit pustiso kayang ngayin.

Q: Ano-ano ang mga ginagawa niyong flavors ng taro chips?

A: Dati plain lang yung ginagawa kong chips ng taro, ngayon may iba-iba na akong flavor. Pag nagrequest sila ng salty, yun gagawa ako ng salty, gagawa ako ng cheese flavor, spicy flavor at garlic flavor.

Q: Saan po nanggagaling ang raw materials?

A: Kadalasan sa palengke kasi wala naman kaming taniman. Minsan lang ako makakuha direct sa farm. Tapos yung mga materyales na sangkap, sa grocery.

Q: Anong problema ang naencounter mo sa raw materials?

A: Pag ganitong hindi peak season, mahirap. Minsan may order na, wala akong mabiling gabi, wala akong mahanap na raw materials. Kadalasan marami niyan pag summer kasama ng mga kamote, ganun. Ngayon meron din pero minsan wala ka talagang makita na gabi. Pahirapan tapos mahal.



Q: Ano pong masasabi mo sa demand ng taro chips?

A: Karamihan naman sa kanila nasasarapan. Marami ang mamimili ng taro chips lalo na sa Naga City. Nakakalabas na nga kaming, Legazpi City, Albay. Ang pinakamababa nilang order sa akin ay 300 packs. Sa Naga naman yung mga naglalako, kumukuha sila sa akin, yan mga 100 packs. Mabili ang taro chips kasi masarap siya.

CBSUA Chairs the First-Ever Bicol ESP Advisory Council

PILI, Camarines Sur – “After accrediting ESPs (Extension Service Providers) in Camarines Sur, we will intensify accreditation in other provinces because we want to have and implement strong extension services in the agriculture sector,” revealed Pres. Alberto Naperi of Central Bicol State University of Agriculture (CBSUA), who was newly-elected to chair the Regional ESP Accreditation Advisory Council for the next three years.

The first-ever Regional ESP Accreditation Advisory Council took place recently at the Department of Agriculture- Agricultural Training Institute Bicol compound at Pili, Camarines Sur.

“As the first chairperson of the Regional Council of ESP, which has been organized by ATI Bicol, we will abide by the implementing guidelines and we will pursue further and intensify the accreditation of ESPs in Camarines Sur and other provinces. We have three applicants and we

have scheduled a visit for them to be accredited,” President Naperi added.

Meanwhile, Mayor Tom Bongalonta who is also part of the Regional ESP Accreditation Advisory Council, expressed his appreciation. “It’s the first time for me to attend but I was inspired because we shall be able to help in the development of agriculture in the Bicol Region. I encourage other mayors to help the farmers in their respective communities or barangay so we can more easily provide the technical knowhow that our farmers need in the barangays.”

Together with ATI, the Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Extension Network (AFEN), State Universities and Colleges, Local Government Units, and the Private Sector are represented in the Regional Advisory Council.

An ESP carries out training and other complementary extension

services for target clientele along the value chain. It may be a rural-based organization (RBO), non-government organization (NGO), cooperative, people’s organization, or multinational company.

A private ESP (P-ESP) serves as partners in the provision of extension services to farmers/fishers and their organizations. To do so, the P-ESP has to be accredited by ATI as endorsed by the Regional Advisory Council.

The Regional Advisory Council provides policy guidelines and directions. It endorses the approval of applications to the National Council Executive Officer through the National Secretariat for issuance of an accreditation certificate. The ESP accreditation certificate is valid for three years. This is in compliance with the Department of Agriculture’s Administrative Order No. 01 Series of 2018 issued on February 2, 2018. **Primalou B. Imperial**

ESP Council Performs First Accreditation

MAGARAO, Camarines Sur - With the three pillars of extension represented, the newly organized Regional Extension Service Provider Accreditation and Advisory Council conducted its very first validation of an ESP applicant, the Sonrisa Farm, on July 22, 2020.

Located at Brgy. Carangcang in Magarao, Sonrisa Farm is an accredited Learning Site for Agriculture (LSA) of the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute (DA-ATI) Bicol. It is also a learning center accredited with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), the Department of Education (DepEd), the Department of Tourism (DOT), and other institutions.

In her message, DA-ATI Bicol Assistant Director Vivien Carable lauded the participation of the pillars of extension – namely, the national and local government, the state universities and colleges, as well as the private sector – in the conduct of the first-ever field validation. She emphasized the importance of this, as the ESP is the pinnacle of empowering stakeholders in



CBSUA President Dr. Alberto Naperi (right) who chairs the ESP council and Mr. Rommel Nacario (center) of LGU-Pili inspect some documents while Sonrisa Manager Lani Botor (left) looks on.

co-delivering training and extension services.

The president of the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture (CBSUA), Dr. Alberto Naperi, who chairs the ESP council, spearheaded the validation process. The council members include Ms. Ellen Villareal of DA Regional Field Office, Mr. Rommel Nacario of LGU Pili, and Messrs. Jimmy Cordero and Ted Caro of the Regional Agriculture and Fishery Council (RAFC).

Ms. Lani Botor, manager of Sonrisa Farm, warmly welcomed the del-

egates, which also include DA-ATI Bicol officials and staff. She accompanied the party which inspected the facilities of the sprawling 3.5 hectare-farm. Key features of the farm include the livestock areas, rice plantation, vegetable production area, function hall, and dormitories. She also presented to them the farm’s Competency-based Learning Materials, Trainers’ profiles, among others.

After the successful validation, the council favorably endorsed Sonrisa’s application. **Isagani C. Valenzuela, Jr.**

Masbate Spearheads LSA Meeting on Wheels



The mobile meeting visited farms in various municipalities for the participants to share from one another’s learning experiences.

MASBATE City – Once more, Masbate is blazing the trail. The provincial local government unit’ (LGU) through the Provincial Agriculture Office organized a mobile seminar attended by the Learning Sites for Agriculture (LSA) cooperators and organic farming practitioners.

Dubbed “Meeting on Wheels for Masbate Learning Sites for Organic Agriculture Operators and Practitioners Para sa Kabuhayang Abot-Kamay,” the activity took place on September 24-25, 2020 covering seven sites in two days. The Provincial Agriculture Office organized the event through the Provincial Coordinator for Organic Agriculture, Ms. Luisa Almonte. The Department of Agriculture (DA) in Pili, Camarines Sur co-sponsored the event.

The two-day mobile seminar tackled the concepts of entrepreneurship as well as sharing of best practices, methods and other useful information about the industry.

The participants comprise LSA

cooperators, Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) as well as organic agriculture practitioners in the province. They strictly followed the safety and health protocols during the farm tours and lectures. The discussions’ premise states that the most important requirement for farming is experience that go hand-in-hand with the right information.

The sites visited include Uma Koinonia in Sitio Pawa, Masbate City, where the LSA cooperator, Mr. Jose Gozum, discussed Farm Tourism. Mr. Gozum is the Chairperson of the organic agriculture practitioners in the province.

Mr. Florante Bulalague, farm owner of Gamay na Uma in Banahaw, Dimasalang shared how the farm became an LSA accredited with the DA-Agricultural Training Institute (DA-ATI) in Bicol.

At the Canaan Training and Natura Farming Institute (CATNAFI) in Domorog, Cataingan, Ms. Almonte presided over the organizational and business meeting. Mr. Rafael Job Talisic,

proprietor of Drizzle Farm Educational Center for School-children and Kids in Domorog, Cataingan joined the group.

At Denny’s Garden in Bañadero, Mobo, Mr. Niel Anthony Aban, proprietor, discussed how other young farmers can become a scholar, based on his experiences as a farm youth scholar who trained in Japan.

Mr. Frederick Ramos, proprietor of RASTI Assessment Center in Umabay Exterior, Mobo, talked on the essentials of competence.

DA-ATI accredited eight LSAs in Masbate: Uma Koinonia in Masbate City, CJ Farms in Milagros, Annelyn’s Farm in Balud, Rapsing Integrated LSA in Mandaon, RASTI Assessment Center in Mobo, Denny’s Farm in Mobo, Gamay na Uma in Dimasalang, and CATNAFI in Cataingan.

The activity further emphasized the island province’s farm tourism initiatives. **Primalou B. Imperial**



Baluzo Farm evolved into an SPA, proving itself capable of doing frontline extension services. During this time of pandemic, the SPA serves as community-based channel of training and extension services of ATI.

Baluzo Farm Steps up from LSA to SPA

DAET, Camarines Norte – Baluzo farm which is located in Daet, Camarines Norte has successfully upgraded into a School for Practical Agriculture (SPA). Since 2017, the farm has been a Learning Site for Agriculture (LSA) accredited with the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute (DA-ATI) in Bicol. This year, Baluzo Farm acquired SPA certification from of DA-ATI after passing the standard SPA requirements.

On July 20, 2020, the newly certified SPA received a 4-in-1 multi-purpose shredder from DA-ATI Bicol as part of SPA establishment grant support.

As SPA, the approved project proposal of Baluzo Farm is acquiring a multi-purpose shredder to help produce more shredded inputs needed

in organic input formulation. Likewise, it will greatly help in the conduct of training and showcasing organic agriculture in the farm.

Mr. Eduardo Baluzo, farm owner and manager, expressed his gratitude. "It's such a blessing, after we were recognized as School for Practical Agriculture. The continuous support of ATI Bicol, OPAg (Office of the Provincial Agriculturist) Camarines Norte, and MAO (Municipal Agriculture Office) Daet encourages us to strive more in what we are doing. You taught us to go out of the box and try new things especially in this time of pandemic."

Aside from the shredder, the farm will receive financial support for training activity in the farming community of Brgy. P4 Pamorangan, Daet, Cama-

rines Norte.

The LSA and SPA are frontline extension providers particularly during this time of pandemic, collaborating with ATI so as to continuously fulfill its mandate as training arm of the Department of Agriculture.

The SPA status is the third step upwards in the ladderized extension approach of ATI. In the SPA, the Farm Trainer will serve as resource person who shares agriculture and fishery technologies. In addition to the demo farm and processing facilities, the farm shall have functional facilities for live-in training and extension activities. These include at least a modest lodging facility, toilet and bath, as well as classroom with training equipment. **Alexander O. Vargas**

DA-ATI Bicol, New LSA Conduct Training on Black Soldier Fly

NAGA CITY, Camarines Sur - Have you heard of a Black Soldier Fly?

Don't you know it's the next big thing in environmental protection and, more importantly, income generation?

The Black Soldier Fly (*Hermetia illucens*) is a wasp-like fly. Its larvae can be used to decompose all kinds of biodegradable matter such as fruits and vegetable wastes, human excrements, and animal manure. They can also serve as feeds to fishes, chickens, and pigs. Thus, the culturing of its larvae is like hitting two birds with one stone.

Because of this potential, the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute Bicol (DA-ATI Bicol) held the Training on Kitchen Waste Composting with Black Soldier Flies for selected farmers in Carolina, Naga City last September 30, 2020. This was done in collaboration with North Carolina Natural Farm, the new Learning Site for Agriculture partner of DA-ATI.

Each of the trainees were provided with free alcohol, face mask, and face shield. They also observed physical distancing. Their number was also limited to 15.

In her message, DA-ATI Bicol Center Director Elsa A. Parot acknowledged that the technology can generate



Mr. Randy Dagooc, the owner of North Carolina Natural Farm, demonstrates how to create a larvae bin

additional income for them. However, she cautioned that this must be done with the utmost care because it might harm the environment if not managed well.

Engr. Elsa Delatado discussed the background and life cycle of the Black Soldier Fly, its larvae's culture and management. On the other hand, Mr. Randy Dagooc, the owner of North Carolina Natural Farm, demonstrated how to create a larvae bin. Some participants had a hands-on activity in improvising a larvae bin.

The participants were appreciative of the training.

Michele Salud: "Ang seminar na ito ay kapaki-pakinabang para sa aming lahat. Natutunan naman mag-cultivate ng Black Soldier Fly para sa aming mga basura na tinatapon lang namin nang walang pakinabang. At pwede kaming kumita kahit nasa loob lang ng aming mga bahay."

Crystaline Eglas: "Well-explained ang topic. Dahil dito, ako at ang aking mga kasama ay maraming natutunan. At meron din kami pwedeng pagkakitaan."

Gina Jerusalem: "Nagpapasalamat kami sa aming speaker sa malinaw nyang pagtuturo. Salamat din sa ATI at sa Dagooc Family na binahagihan kami ng kaalaman sa training na ito."

Mr. Edgardo Nacario and Mr. Alexander Vargas of DA-ATI Bicol led the distribution of larvae bins as starting kits.

Mr. Dagooc said that he will oversee the implementation of the BSF project. He will also buy their cultured larvae as these are in-demand for livestock and fish growers and aquarium enthusiasts. **Isagani C. Valenzuela, Jr.**

DA-ATI Bicol Initiates Barangay-Based Training on Corn Processing

MAGARAO, Camarines Sur

The high price of corn lures farmers to venture in massive production. Both yellow and white corn are equally viable in livestock feed production and human consumption, giving farmers more options to earn higher incomes.

However, despite this development, corn farmers can barely afford a decent living. To alleviate the plight of these farmers and keep them out of poverty, they must maximize their profit using corn waste products as raw materials. The corn plant is an excellent source of fibrous materials that can be made into handicrafts such as bags, slippers, wall decors, artificial flowers, and others.

In addition, other parts of the plant can also be made into organic fertilizers and compost. Native foods and

delicacies made from corn is another good source of livelihood for farmers. Aside from being delicious, various health benefits can also be obtained from it.

With this as premise, the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute in Bicol conducted two Barangay-Based Training on Corn Processing and Utilization in Barangay Carangcang, Magarao, Camarines Sur on November 9-11 and 24-26, 2020.

Corn farmers and rural women from nearby barangays and Naga City completed the face-to-face trainings. The participants strictly followed health protocols such as social distancing, hand sanitizing, and the wearing of masks and face shields.

Unexpectedly, the first batch

of the training culminated as Typhoon Ulysses struck the Bicol Region. Despite this, all the participants completed the required hands-on and lectures even as strong winds and heavy rain started raging outside the venue. During the Closing Program, with Center Director Elsa Parot present, they affirmed their interest in the activity so that they would have "something productive to do even during typhoons."

Ms. Honey Leah O. Cantoria, Ma. Teresa Arabaca, Eden Casihan, Wilbina Bamedo of DA-Regional Field Office Bicol, and Mr. Edgardo C. Nacario of DA-ATI-Bicol served as resource persons. They discussed mycotoxin prevention and control, making the rice/corn blend, cooking techniques of native corn products, and making handicrafts from corn.

During the discussions, the participants asked questions and even shared their experiences. They were very participative and eager to learn from the resource persons.

At the end of the trainings, the participants thankfully received their starter kits consisting of apron, hairnet, measuring cups, measuring spoon, chopping board, knife, corn grits, corn starch, and sweet corn seeds.

The two batches of training took place at the newly proclaimed Extension Service Provider of ATI Bicol, Sonrisa Farm. **Valourie D. Banes**

DA-ATI to Boost Corn Production Thru Salt Training



Trainees in Sagrada, Iriga City learn to make and use the A-frame, a simple but effective tool used in contour farming and sloping agricultural land technology or SALT.

PILI, Camarines Sur -- Corn farming is a profitable source of income. This is possible with the introduction of innovative corn production technologies in recent years. Corn is also a nutritious alternative to rice as food for Filipino families.

In many parts of the country, corn is grown on sloping lands, which are prone to landslides and soil erosion. Corn farmers in sloping areas face land degradation problems. Thus, they need more capital to produce good harvests.

Amid this backdrop, the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute in Region V (DA-ATI Bicol) teamed up with the City Agriculture Office of Iriga City to conduct the Training on Sloping Agricultural Land Technology (SALT) on Corn-Based Farming System.

Its first batch took place on August 11-13 in Barangay

Sagrada, Iriga City in the province of Camarines Sur. This was attended by 20 farmers. In view of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the number of participants in face to face training is limited to only 20.

The training implementers made sure the trainers and participants strictly followed health protocols such as wearing of face mask, frequent hand washing, and physical distancing.

The training aims to expand the knowledge and skills of farmers in order to continuously produce corn and vegetables in upland areas.

Two more batches of the training were held on September 9-11 and September 16-18, 2020 at ATI-accredited learning sites located in corn-producing areas. **Ma. Louiza SB. Tena**

Agri Mentor Me Online Launched in Bicol

PILI, Camarines Sur – In partnership with Go Negosyo, the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute- Bicol launched the Kapatid Agri Mentor Me Program Online (KAMMP Online) on August 24, 2020 via the Zoom Video Communications platform with 50 mentees.

KAMMP aims to nurture and sustain agri-business in the country through mentorship. Industry practitioners share their experience-based learnings to address their mentees' concerns.

With the CoVid-19 pandemic, KAMMP is more relevant and necessary. Delivered in virtual or digitalized form, KAMMP Online assists their mentees to help them survive and thrive despite the setbacks faced by agri-enterprises.

Ms. Justine Rose Cano and Ms. Charlene Freeman are facilitating the KAMMP Online in the Bicol Region. It gathered together mentees who are agripreneurs or potential agripreneurs.

The mentors and mentees shall go through all nine mentorship modules in a period of five weeks, twice a week at 1:00 to 5:00 in the afternoon.

The modules focus on these topics: Entrepreneurial Mindset and Values Formation, Business Model Canvas, Marketing and the Digitalization of the Agri Marketplace, Accounting Basics, Farm Operations Management, Agri Supply and Value Chain, Obligations and Contracts, Good Business Practices and Business Ethics, and Business Plan Development.

Go Negosyo is the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship's (PCE) advocacy, initiated by Joey Concepcion. It encourages Filipinos to make the most of their resources and abilities by utilizing and transforming these into viable enterprises. **Prima-lou B. Imperial**



A participant shows her star-designed corn-based product.

Trainers Trained on Inbred Rice under RCEF



The RCEF Team of DA-ATI Bicol led by Assistant Center Director Vivien V. Carable during the Zoom-channelled TOT on the Production of High-Quality Inbred Rice Seeds and Farm Mechanization.

PILI, Camarines Sur – Amid the challenges of COVID-19 in the Bicol Region, the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center V (DA-ATI Bicol) launched the Training of Trainers (TOT) on the Production of High-Quality Inbred Rice & Seeds and Farm Mechanization under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) last Tuesday, September 8, 2020 via Zoom Platform and Facebook Live.

“This is one way to appreciate what the pandemic has given us. Hindi lang siya puro problema. We were able to discover our creativity, resiliency, and resourcefulness.”

With these words, DA-ATI Bicol Center Director Elsa A. Parot

acknowledged the important roles of the Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs), TESDA Representatives and Learning Sites Cooperators in the training.

The TOT aimed to demonstrate training management skills and knowledge in facilitating the RCEF Farmer Field School on Production of High-Quality Inbred Rice, Seed Certification, and Farm Mechanization.

It used the Blended Learning modality which is a systematic mix of face-to-face training with online learning. The face-to-face component delivered simultaneous and nonsimultaneous activities such as microteaching from different locations.

The training required face-to-face or hands-on activities for the topics with practical and skills components, including rice machinery and equipment operations, agro-ecosystem analysis, and seed testing

procedures. Hands-on activities were held at these locations: Salvador and Emeteria Farm located at Barangay. Cagmanaba, Ocampo, Camarines Sur; Palayamanayon ni Tiyo Edgar Farm located at Polangui, Albay; Rapsing Intyegrated Agricultural Learning Site Farm located Barangay Cabitam, Mandaon, Masbate; and Sorsogon City.

The attendees consisted of 64 participants from the provinces of Camarines Sur, Albay, Sorsogon and Masbate.

The TOT is a partnership project with the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPAg) Camarines Sur headed by Ms. Luzena N. Bermeo, Albay Provincial Agricultural Office (APAO Albay) headed by Ms. Cheryll O. Rebeta, OPAg Sorsogon headed by Mr. Nestor A. Nava, and OPAg Masbate headed by Engr. Jonel P. Ortez. **Krishell E. Balisoro**

DA-ATI Bicol, Partner Agencies Report 2020 RCEF Extension Performance



DA-ATI Bicol Assistant Center Director Vivien Carable, who is also the center's RCEF Coordinator reads her message during the opening of the RCEF-RSEP Harmonization Meeting.

PILI, Camarines Sur – Despite the Covid-19 pandemic still on the horizon and the successive typhoons that hit the region, the rice sector's performance in Bicol did not turn out bad after all.

This was the gist of the discussion as the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) Rice Extension Service Program (RESP) component members met to assess its performance in 2020 and harmonize the RCEF RESP plans for 2021 during its biannual harmonization meeting held at ATI Compound, San Agustin, Pili, Camarines last November 24, 2020.

Under Republic Act 11203 or Rice Tariffication Law, the government allots P1 billion every year for the RESP component to enhance rice farmers' capacities to become competitive in rice production.

The RESP 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, with the following projects: Design and Delivery of Training Programs, Enterprise Development Assistance and Communication

Support Services; Development of Farm Schools; and the Implementation of a Training Scholarship Scheme.

The Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute (DA-ATI) serves as the lead implementing agency. Other partner agencies are the Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PhilMech), Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice), and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

During the year-end meeting that was also participated by Landbank and accredited farm schools, DA-ATI reported that it has served more than 2,000 rice farmers through the training, school-on-the-air, information caravan, and delivered more than 7,000 information, education, and communication (IEC) materials. It also established and supported eight RCEF Learning Sites.

Next year, DA-ATI Bicol plans to roll out more training for agriculture technicians (Production of High-Quality Inbred Rice and Seeds and Farm Mechanization), seed growers (Inbred Rice Seeds Production, Certification, and

Quality Control), and farmers (Agripreneurship).

It shall also conduct certification and support to new rice-based Learning Sites and enhancement of rice-based Learning Sites. It will also continue its School-On-the-Air program and information caravans.

TESDA, PhilMech and PhilRice reported their accomplished activities. Landbank also shared its RCEF-related projects.

The farm schools namely Palayamanon ni Tiyo Edgar of Albay, Salvador Emeteria Farm of Camarines Sur, Ocbian Nature Farm of Sorsogon, and Rapsing Integrated Agricultural Learning Site of Masbate, also joined to share their best practices. They also served as ATI's Learning Sites.

DA-ATI Assistant Director Vivien Carable, who is also the Center's RCEF Coordinator presided over the event. "Your presence here has furthered our resolve to have a common and unified direction to achieve food security through a competitive rice sector," she emphasized. **Isagani C. Valenzuela, Jr.**

Modified Training Approaches Initiated via Sarabay Channel

from page 2

Facebook and YouTube after the airing.

"I've been wanting to attend this kind of training but time didn't allow me with my busy schedule. I'm very grateful that while I'm in quarantine mode, ATI Bicol is generous enough to sponsor this timely training. The knowledge I learned through this distance training is more than substantial," said Ma. Luisa Tango, one of the Distance Training participants.

The combined graduation ceremony featured the awarding of certificates first to the Blended Training graduates, then to 51 registered participants

who completed the Distance Training requirements.

With the Distance and Blended Training modes, DA-ATI Bicol reached out to various clients in partnership with the Local Government Unit, State University and Private Sector.

Serving as Resource Persons were Dr. Maria Dulce Mostoles, Prof. Lilia Pasiona and Prof. Julie Casaul of the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture, as well as Chef Roy Resurrection, a food industry practitioner. **Primalou B. Imperial**

Growing Young Farmers. The Camarines

from page 6

4H Club members joined the Young Filipino Farm Leaders' Training Program in Japan (YFFLTPJ). Mam Ces said in 2019 the Province of Camarines Norte had the highest number of 4H Young Farmer nominees sent to Japan.

Former 4H leaders Reilan Lee-boy Gonzales Quibril and Flor Olivar now operate their own Learning Sites, the Glorious Land EcoFarm in Labo, Camarines Norte and Florenses Farm in San Vicente, Camarines Norte. **Primalou B. Imperial**

RCEF Info Caravan Boasts First-Ever 4-Province Simulcast...

from page 5

heading the agency's RCEF program implementation in the region.

The Info Caravan radio broadcast can be viewed publicly via YouTube. However, it is broadcasted on radio in four priority provinces of Bicol -- Camarines Sur, Albay, Sorsogon, and Catanduanes. The one-hour daily program is aired for eight days, Tuesday to Friday from July 7th to July 17th.

During the opening episode, DA-ATI Bicol Center Director Elsa A. Parot thanked the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office (DA-RFO) headed by Dir. Rodel P. Tornilla, as well as the Provincial Agriculturists, namely Engr. Jonel

First Modified School-On-Air Produces 304 Graduates...

from page 4

Institute sa pamumuno ni Maam Elsa Parot, napakabait po na director ng ATI na hindi po pinaghindaan ang ating mga requests."

Selected enrollees representing various municipalities gave their learnings and impressions.

In her closing message, Ms Parot reminded the graduates "Pandemic man po o wala, ang radio po ay isa sa mga mabisang paraan upang maihatid ang kaalaman sa ating mga kapatid na magsasaka." As a token from the Institute, each graduate received a portable radio, a bolo, as well as learning materials. **Rafaela V. Bajaro**

Orteza of Masbate, Ms. Che Rebeta of Albay, Ms. Che Bermejo of Camarines Sur, and Mr. Nestor Nava of Sorsogon for their continued assistance and support to RCEF extension Services.

According to Dir. Tornilla, "Ang programa ay tugon sa pangangailangan na mag siwalat ng mga mahahalagang kaalaman at impormasyon sa ating mga magsasaka na hindi kailangan magkakarap dahil sa banta ng CoVID-19." Dir. Parot added that this info caravan is an example of the agency's "uninterrupted service even though we are now experiencing pandemic." **Ma. Louiza SB. Tena**

ISO Recertification Spotlights Risks and Readiness



Center Director Elsa A. Parot leads the successful ISO Recertification of DA-ATI Bicol.

PILI, Camarines Sur – It's official: the ATI head office in Quezon City and all 16 ATI Training Centers in various regions passed the TÜV SÜD ISO recertification audit series, the last of which took place on November 25, 2020.

"Resiliency at its best." This was how ATI Bicol Center Director Elsa Parot described the TÜV SÜD ISO Re-certification Audit in the Bicol Region, "coming out from the havoc of Quinta and with extreme apprehension on the anticipated onslaught of Super Typhoon Rolly."

The online audit of all units in the Center took place five days after Typhoon Quinta destroyed structures as well as communication and electric power lines in most of the region. Needless to say, it did not spare the ATI Bicol offices and farms. A day after the destruction, the entire ATI Bicol workforce rolled up sleeves, cleaned up the premises and re-established plants at the Center-based Learning Site.

With just a week's respite, an even stronger typhoon struck Bicol – Category 5 Super Typhoon Rolly. It may have prevented any congratulatory messages, but rising up after two strong typhoons and standing tall after a third party audit brought the lessons

home: preparedness.

The TÜV SÜD audit emphasized safety, security and sustainability. The Covid-19 pandemic and natural calamities in Bicol, sitting as it does on the Philippine typhoon belt, further emphasized the importance of proper risk assessment planning.

Barely 10 days after Super Typhoon Rolly, the equally ferocious Typhoon Ulysses battered the same provinces in the Bicol Region – Catanduanes, Albay, Camarines Sur, and Camarines Norte.

The Bicol Region survived three howlers in three weeks. Happily, in the midst of these, ATI Bicol survived the ISO Recertification Audit. Center Director Parot summed it up thus: "With two 2 minor non-conformities and 4 opportunities for improvement, the findings were really very minor and 1 minor MC has been resolved, 2 OFIs not really action items. I have to give it to the #Sarabay Team Ati Bicolandia!"

As the entire ATI head office and network of centers passed the latest organizational milestone, the personnel's commitment to excellent services beyond boundaries is renewed. Our Congratulations! **Primalou B. Imperial**

3,607 Urban Gardening Starter Kits Distributed in 8 Months

PILI, Camarines Sur – From April to December 2020, the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute Bicol visited four provinces in mainland Bicol to distribute 3,607 sets of starter kits in partnership with various local government units (LGUs).

The starter kits consisted of seeds, seedlings as well as a pack of information, education, and communication (IEC) materials on vegetable production and household gardening in partnership with the LGUs in Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, and Sorsogon.

The starter kits include planting materials of fast-growing food crops such as string beans (sitaw), okra, cucumber (pipino), bottle gourd (upo), eggplant (talong), squash (kalabasa), pechay, and Baguio beans as well as vermicast to be used as fertilizer and soil conditioner.

The move supports the Plant, Plant, Plant Program of the Department of Agriculture. The program is expected to mobilize the widespread adoption of urban and community agriculture to ensure food availability and accessibility despite the Covid-19 pandemic.

During the distribution activities, health and safety measures were painstakingly observed, particularly physical distancing, hand sanitation, and the wearing of face masks. **John Kenneth M. Gelario**

British Cambridge College to Partner with Bicol Learning Sites on Organic Agriculture

PILI, Camarines Sur -- Two Learning Sites for Agriculture (LSA) of the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute (DA-ATI) Bicol earn bragging rights for world-class services.

The LSAs are chosen by British Cambridge College to be its partners in teaching organic agriculture.

One of the farms, Denny's Garden is located in Mobo, Masbate. It is owned by Mr. Neil Anthony Aban, a young farmer who started with the 4-H Club which nurtured his love for agriculture. In 2014, he trained with Japanese farmers through the Young Filipino Farmers' Training Program in Japan (YFFTPJ). Today, Denny's Garden conducts courses on Organic Agriculture Production NC II and Rice Extension Services Program. The second LSA is the Glorious Land Eco Farm which is

located in Labo, Camarines Norte. Owned by Mr. Vincer Quibril, Glorious Land Eco Farm is Glorious Land Ecofarm showcases organic agriculture and natural farming technologies to serve as a model for community-based farms.

British Cambridge College forges a partnership with farms and instructors certified by the Philippine's Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) for its Organic Farming Course. This is intended for agriculturists, farmers, farm owners, farm-workers, agriculture consultants, agriculture students, and anyone working in farms or engaged in the farming industry.

British Cambridge College is a non-profit organization that has trained thousands of executives and students for over 20 years. Its experienced and highly qualified university

lecturers, trainers, teachers, and consultants come from the United Kingdom, USA, Singapore, Philippines, and Malaysia.

Its Continuing Professional Development (CPD) certification in the United Kingdom assures that graduates meet international requirements for company compliance CPD programs.

One of British Cambridge College's advocacy courses, the Organic Farming Course provides key concepts, farming practices, and case studies on organic farming that participants can easily take back to the field.

Participants who complete the module and pass the relevant tests will receive a CPD Certificate of Completion from the British Cambridge College.
Ma. Louiza SB. Tena

DA-ATI Bicol Partners with TGS in Community Outreach Program

PILI, Camarines Sur -- The Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center V (ATI Bicol) held this year's Community Outreach Program on December 17th in a creek-side area called Sitio Talistis Gilid in Barangay Vinagre, in the municipality of Tigoon, Camarines Sur.

The community comprises 50 low-income families whose houses were flooded, un-roofed or levelled by the series of typhoons that recently hit the Bicol Region -- Typhoon Quinta on October 26th, Super Typhoon Rolly on November 1st, and Typhoon Ulysses on November 11th.

Dubbed ATInag Pamaskong Handog #GivePlayCareShare, the activity was co-sponsored by Trans-Global Services for Professional and Entrepreneurial Development Inc. through its founder and leadership coach, Tzarina Gimena Saldana.

Through her fund drive called Maligayang NIPAsko! Coach Saldana organized the Learning for a Cause Workshop Series, the proceeds of which sponsored nipa and cocolumber for the Sitio Talistis Gilid residents.

ATI Bicol management and



personnel visited the area, interacted with the community folks, and gave farm tools, grocery items and hygiene kits to 36 households, 12 senior citizens and persons with disabilities. Meanwhile, ATI Bicol personnel donated the gifts for children.

Led by Center Director Elsa Parot, they distributed roofing materials, particularly water-proofed canvass (trapal), corrugated sheets (yero), and thatched nipa for 36 houses. "Kami siguro nagtao saindo nin diit na kaogmahan, pero

mas dakula an itinao nindo samuyang kaogmahan na kami naging instrumento para may mga taong magtabang saindo." (Perhaps we gave you some happiness, but you gave us even more joy as we became instruments so people are able to help you.) This was Center Director Parot's message to the beneficiaries of the ATI Bicol Community Outreach Program. The activity gave hope to the residents of rebuilding their homes in time for Christmas Day and New Year celebrations. **Primalou B. Imperial**