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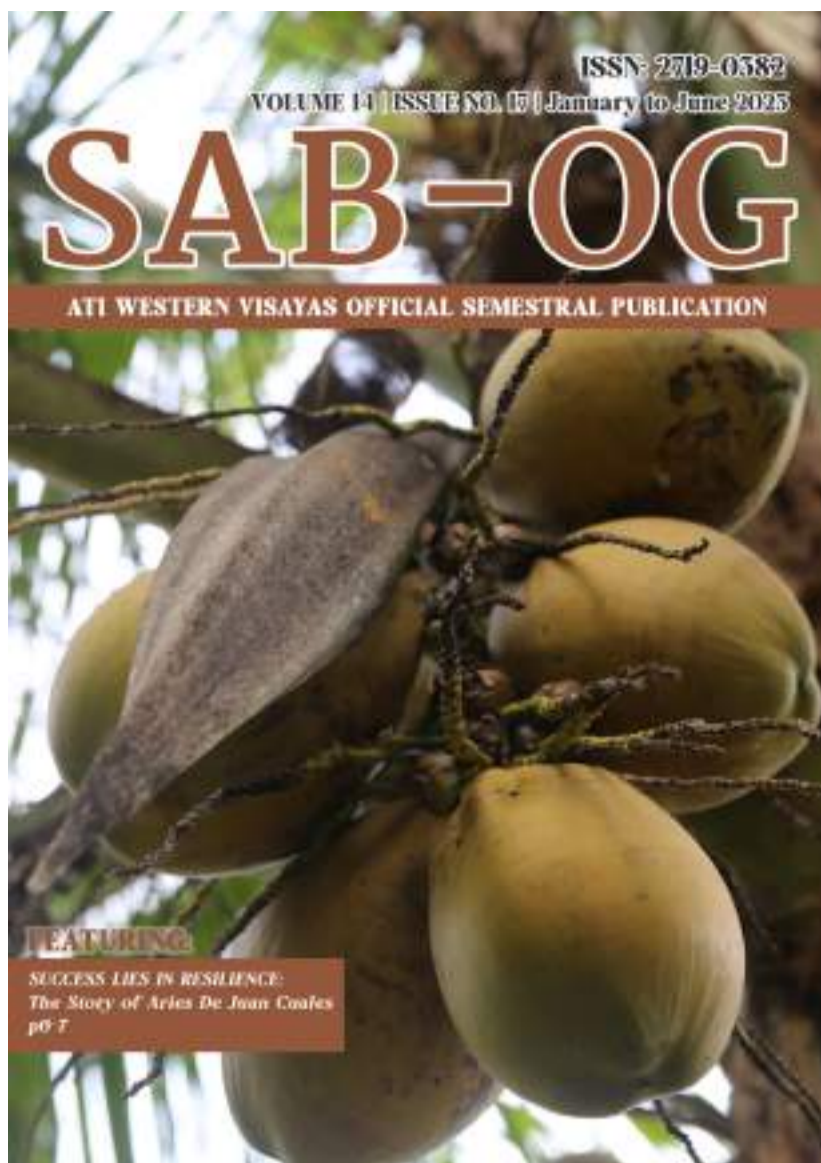
SAB-OG

ATI WESTERN VISAYAS OFFICIAL SEMESTRAL PUBLICATION



FEATURING:

*SUCCESS LIES IN RESILIENCE:
The Story of Aries De Juan Cuales
p6-7*



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About the Cover

If there is anything purposeful and resilient in all aspects, it is the existence of the coconut tree, dubbed the "tree of life." From the tree's roots to its fruit, it serves many purposes. The tree's parts make up certain wholes of the basic needs of human existence.

In the same manner as the coconut tree, the Coconut Farmers and Industry Development Program, launched this year, cuts across many aspects of the lives of our coconut farmers. The CFIDP aims to strengthen and modernize coconut farming in the Philippines, and ATI Region 6, as the capacity-builder, knowledge bank, and catalyst of the Department of Agriculture, will serve its part to make up for the whole goal of the CFIDP.

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RICE PROGRAM KICKS OFF 2023 WITH CONSULTATION AND PLANNING WORKSHOP

By: Jefflor L. Dela Cruz



The Antique group during the workshop on identifying factors/challenges that affect extension activities and their capacitation needs.

WESTERN VISAYAS- ATI Region 6 conducted three batches of Rice Program Consultation and Planning Workshop last January 12-13, 19-20, and 24-25, 2023, respectively. The activity was attended by a total of ninety Provincial and Municipal Rice Program Coordinators, Report Officers, and Municipal Agriculturists regionwide.

The Department of Agriculture - Regional Field Office 6, ATI Region 6, and the Provincial Local Government Units presented the accomplishments for FY 2022 and targets for FY 2023. Good practices were also highlighted during discussions. Furthermore, updates about the rice commodity of Western Visayas were presented.

"I am happy that Rice Program Coordinators are still active and attending this kind of activity. We must strengthen our partnership and get capacitated and updated with regards to new technologies because this program is one of the prime commodities and our clients need us. We must give them the best training that's why we are here to craft our plans for FY 2023 and level off some issues and concerns that had transpired during the implementation of this program," said Mary Ann A. Ramos, ATI Region 6 Officer-in-Charge.

A workshop on identifying factors and challenges that affected extension activities was conducted, and inputs were collected from both extension service recipient and provider. Recommendations to cope up with the identified issues were listed.

The activity also served as the venue for participants to learn from each other's ideas through sharing of experiences and good practices and approaches.

"As an Agricultural Technologist, it is indeed a challenge for us that we lack resources like funding for us to carry out extension services and educate farmers. This workshop is a big help for us to create a baseline data for our future endeavors in agriculture sector especially in the rice industry. We are very much grateful to ATI for this activity because we were able to level off issues that needs immediate action," expressed by Andrea Faith Evalle, Agricultural Technologist of LGU-Igbaras, Iloilo during the Closing Program.

The activity intends to analyze, assess, plan and level off issues and concerns of the Rice Program in Western Visayas.

ATI REGION 6 RECOGNIZES BEST BUSINESS PLANS, GRANTS FINANCIAL SUPPORT

By: Jefflor L. Dela Cruz



Rodel R. Leyson (far left), Rice Focal Person, awards the grant to Lykeon Salmoro (2nd from the left), Agricultural Technologist of Dingle, Iloilo and Proponent of Alegria Bamboo Crafts Project, together with Integrated Farmers Association officers as recipients of the said project.

WESTERN VISAYAS - ATI Region 6 recognized eight project proposals as Best Business Plans by granting a one hundred-thousand-peso grant this 2023. Five of the proposals

FOUR ADDITIONAL FITS CENTERS ESTABLISH IN WESTERN VISAYAS

By: Catheryn M. Villorente



Information Services Section Chief Nicolasita Gallego discusses the TGP implementation guidelines during the FITS launching in Sipalay City.

Western Visayas - The Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) - Region 6 through its Information and Services Section (ISS) established four (4) additional Farmers Information and Technology Services (FITS) Centers in Western Visayas. The newly-launched FITS centers were located in Carles and Leganes in Iloilo and in Pontevedra and Sipalay City, Negros Occidental.

These FITS centers will serve as a learning hub in the local community where farmers, fishers, youth, agripreneurs, and other stakeholders can access agriculture and fisheries (A&F) knowledge and technologies. The endeavor is part of ATI's continuous efforts to bring A&F information and technologies closer to the communities through its Techno Gabay Program (TGP).

The launchings were attended by the municipal/city agriculture heads, local chief executives (LCEs), Sangguniang Panlalawigan/ Bayan Members, farmers, fishers and youth. LCEs are grateful that their city/municipalities were among the beneficiaries of the FITS center since it will help improve their agriculture and fisheries endeavors. Also, they assured that FITS centers will be utilized according to its intended purpose and that the local administration will support the TGP endeavors.

Likewise, ATI-ISS chief Nicolasita Gallego presented the TGP guidelines particularly the duties and responsibilities of the personnel assigned in the FITS Center. She also highlighted that the FITS Center will be a learning hub in the community where farmers can access information and technologies in agriculture and fisheries and enroll in free online courses through the e-Learning program. She also encouraged the farmer and fisher leaders to establish a FITS Kiosks in their barangay for easy-access of information and knowledge in agriculture and fisheries in their locality.

Currently, there were a total of 74 operational FITS Centers across the region that serves the farmers and fishers with up-to-date information and technologies in agriculture and fisheries.

The launchings of the new FITS Centers were conducted last January 23-24; 26-27, 2023 in the provinces of Iloilo and Negros Occidental.

were outputs of the Training on Farm Business Management held last September 5-9, 2022, and the other three are products of the Workshop on Business Plan Preparation held last October 17-21, 2022.

The recipients include Jerry Y. Ituriaga of Aklan Mushroom Society and his project "Oyster Mushroom Production and Processing"; Salvacion C. Antaran of Aklan Mushroom Society and her project, "Expansion Project for Oyster Mushroom Production and Processing"; Alvin A. Barrios, Jr. of Barrios Fruits and Vegetables Integrated Farm and his project, "Farm Facility Improvements and Expansion of Production Area"; Edgar Rebaño, Learning Site Cooperator of La Felicidad Granja, and his project "Establishment of African Hiito Hatchery and Rearing Pond"; Lalain B. Ambion from Bubbles Integrated Farm with her project, "CucuManci Juice Processing"; Dia Mae N. Corneja of Department of Agriculture - Regional Field Office VI with her project, "Production of Insulin Plant Juice"; Lykeon L. Salmoro of LGU-Dingle, Iloilo and her project, "Alegria Bamboo Crafts"; and Roline D. Tamayo from LGU-Zarraga, Iloilo and his project, "TUPALIFIA as a Farm Service Provider".

The grants were awarded on multiple occasions from January 9-24, 2023.

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ATI REGION 6 CELEBRATES 36 YEARS OF INNOVATION, TRANSFORMATION AND EMPOWERMENT

By: Sheena Angelique D. Zante



ATI Region 6, headed by Officer-in-Charge Mary Ann Ramos, lead the ceremonial toast and slicing of cake together with the Institute's partners and stakeholders.

BANGA, Aklan - ATI Region 6 marked its 36 years through several activities and festivities last January 31, 2023, with the theme, "ATI Leads: Innovate, Transform, Empower. Embracing Extension Modernization for a Progressive and Sustainable Agriculture and Fisheries". ATI staff, honored guests, partners, stakeholders, and attendees decked the ATI Training Hall in modern Filipiniana fashion, signaling a contemporary and innovative age for extension services.

During the opening program, ATI OIC-Director IV Remelyn R. Recoter emphasized that despite challenges and adversities in the agriculture sector, ATI continued to thrive and has now become the knowledge bank, capacity builder and catalyst of change.

She remarked: "A lot needs to be done as we enter the depths of digitalization. This year's theme echoes our shared aspirations to help our farmers and fisherfolks achieve the life they deserve by providing them with more development opportunities.

Meanwhile, ATI Region 6 Officer-in-Charge Mary Ann A. Ramos, during her Welcome Remarks, pledged that the Institute will continue to come up with innovative ways of empowering its partners in extension to help farmers and fishers learn and improve their knowledge and skills.

As part of the celebration, ATI Region 6 gave recognition to commendable performances and awarded projects to recipients such as the Learning Sites for Agriculture (LSA) and exemplary performance of EASY Agri Scholars (Batch 1) and EdGE Scholars.

The ATI and its partners also marked its Pledge of Commitment to the modernization of Agriculture and Fisheries Extension towards Masaganang Agrikultura, Maunlad na Ekonomiya.

The Oathtaking of LSA Regional Officers also took place during the ceremony.

Products and services were also showcased during the LSA Product Exhibit at the Training Hall entrance, where guests witnessed a variety of crops and technologies provided for by participating Learning Sites.

The ceremony concluded with the commemorative toast and slicing of cake.

To capped off the celebration, a teambuilding activity was held where ATI Region 6 staff engaged in various exercises to build a strong company culture.

The Agricultural Training Institute was established in 1987 through the Executive Order No. 116, s.1987 and the network of Training Centers was formed in 1989.

ATI REGION 6 LAUNCHES FIRST TRAINING ON KLIMAGRIKULTURA

By: Catheryn M. Villorente



Participants from the first batch of KlimAgrikultura are concentrating during their workshop on Climate Crop Calendar (CC).

BANGA, Aklan - Given the mandate of the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) role as the capacity builder, knowledge bank, and catalyst of the Department of Agriculture (DA), in collaboration with PAGASA, conducted its first batch of Training on KlimAgrikultura and Climate Workshop last February 6-10, 2023 at the 4-H Club Hub, ATI-RTC VI, ASU Compound, Banga, Aklan.

KlimAgrikultura is a new program of the DA-Agricultural Training Institute in partnership with DOST-PAGASA that aims to help agricultural extension workers and smallholder farmers improve climate-sensitive decisions to become more resilient to the effect of climate change. Also, it seeks to provide guidance and expertise to the extension workers on effectively utilizing weather and climate information.

"The training gave me knowledge about climate and how the data can be used as an advantage to enhance the productivity of our farmers," expressed Ms. Marel B. Inserto, Municipal Rice Coordinator of LGU-Malay, Aklan.

"As an AEW, we must properly deliver what we have acquired from this training to our clientele. The workshop from this training is a learning opportunity for the farmers to be more resilient," she added.

The Municipal Rice Coordinator, Rice Report Officer, and representatives from the Province of Aklan and Capiz participated in the five-day training.

The participants conveyed their learnings through their microteaching session and re-entry plans.

TRAINING ON KLIMAGRIKULTURA PROMOTES CLIMATE RESILIENCY IN WESTERN VISAYAS

By: Kit O. Apolinario



Rice Coordinators participate in the workshop to address the risks and hazards of El Nino on rice crops.

TALISAY CITY, Negros Occidental - ATI Region 6's new training program, KlimAgrikultura and Climate Workshop, accommodated its second batch of trainees last February 13-17, 2023, at Nature's Village Resort. The said training supports the United Nation's (UN) Sustainable Development Goal 13, which promotes Climate Action to combat climate change and its impacts.

KlimAgrikultura aims to create a pool of AEWs who can effectively provide guidance and expertise to utilize weather and climate information in their farming activities. Sixteen participants composed of Agricultural Extension Workers (AEW's) from different municipal Local Government Units and three from the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist attended the climate workshop.

In the five-day course of lectures and workshops, participants learned about Hydrometeorological Hazards, Crop Climate Calendar, Weather and Seasonal Climate Forecasting, observed Climate Trends and projected Climate Change, Climate Resilient Technologies, as well as discuss Verbal Decision Analysis (VDA) and Rapid Climate Decision Analysis (RCDA). At the end of the training the participants conducted the microteaching session as part of their assessment.

"When I heard about the KlimAgrikultura training, I was hoping to know how to help farmers adapt to changing climate and weather in our province. I have learned about the climate trends in the country. As an AEW from the province, I am now thinking about helping our farmers change cropping patterns according to their local needs,

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INSPIRE BENEFICIARIES SKILLED UP THROUGH SWINE PRODUCTION AND MANAGEMENT TRAINING

By: Jonh Flor Emmanuel V. Salmorin



The group photo of INSPIRE beneficiaries with ATI National Director Remelyn R. Recoter, ATI Region 6's OIC Mary Ann A. Ramos, and the Training Management Team.

BANGA, Aklan - In support of the Integrated National Swine Production Initiatives for Recovery and Expansion Program (INSPIRE) launched by the Department of Agriculture, ATI Region 6 conducted Training on Swine Production and Management on February 23-24, 2023. Twenty-two participants representing the six implementing associations of the INSPIRE Project participated in the activity.

In her message, ATI National Director Engr. Remelyn R. Recoter urged the beneficiaries to "lead the repopulation of swine and modernize the production system as ASF poses a grave threat in the region." She reminded us to strengthen border controls to mitigate the spread of the virus.

Mary Ann A. Ramos, OIC-ATI Region 6, assured the associations that the institution will always extend technical

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ATI REGION 6 TRAINS NEW COCONUT EXPERTS IN WESTERN VISAYAS

By: Catheryn M. Villorente



AEW participants of the CSTC perform coconut seedling selection and planting during the field practicum at St. Rafael Farm in Libas, Banga, Aklan.

BANGA, Aklan - To develop a core of regional facilitators who will assist in implementing the different training activities under the Coconut Farmers and Industry Development Program (CFIDP), the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) - Region 6 conducted a two-week training on coconut.

Dubbed the Coconut Specialist Training Course (CSTC), the training has developed the participants' knowledge and skills on the various steps, processes, and theories related to the coconut value chain.

Activities during the training include preparatory activities in coconut production, coconut plantation management, harvesting and post-harvesting, economics, and good agricultural practices. Topics about communication in extension, transformational leadership and social preparation, and clustering and community were also included to help the participants become effective agricultural extension workers.

Participants also underwent field practicum to apply the coconut theories during the discussion. They will serve as resource persons and co-facilitator of ATI in all of its CFIDP- activities; hence, they experienced the microteaching activity to help enhance their presentation and facilitation skills

During the closing program, ATI National Director Remelyn Recoter graced the event and highlighted the potential of the coconut industry in the region, with Boracay and Iloilo as the potential market for its products and by-products.

Also present at the event was PCA Region 6 Regional Manager Dr. Neil Melencion, who commended the ATI for the comprehensive training program that provides the trainees with the knowledge and skills on the various production management and technologies on coconut.

"This training will help you in helping the coconut farmers. Our coconut farmers are the poorest among the farmers in the Philippines, for they are reliant on copra alone. It's a great challenge to improve the situation of the coconut farmers. With your training here, you will be our partners in helping them improve their economic conditions," remarked Melencion during his inspirational message.

Likewise, ATI Region 6 Officer-in-Charge Mary Ann A. Ramos highlighted the importance of having a coconut focal person in every province and municipality of the region, given the scope of the CFIDP program and the span of its implementation.

"This program will run up to 50 years. So, this is just the start of your journey in helping our coconut farmers," Ramos said. She further reminded the graduates their new role in helping the ATI roll out its farmer-level trainings

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SOA-SRA KICKS OFF WITH INCEPTION MEETINGS

By: Catheryn M. Villorente



DA-RFO 6 Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Section Chief and Regional SOA-SRA Host, Mr. James Earl Ogatis speaks to the SOA coordinators of Guimaras and Iloilo during the inception meeting in Iloilo City.

Western Visayas - The Agricultural Training Institute - Regional Training Center 6 in partnership with the Department of Agriculture - Regional Field Office 6 and various Local Government Units in the provinces of Aklan, Capiz, Guimaras, Iloilo, and Negros Occidental convened for a series of coordination meeting in preparation for the School-on-the-Air on Smart Rice Agriculture (SOA-SRA) set to air on March 2023.

The SOA-SRA aims to facilitate the massive and sustained education of smallholder farmers and smart rice agriculture through radio. Likewise, the program intends to link smallholder farmers with knowledge, technology, and other rice industry providers, heighten awareness and mobilize strong support and involvement of the rural populace in agriculture programs.

During the meeting the assigned agencies presented the implementation guidelines of the SOA-SRA. Aside from these, they shared the roles of the different agencies involved and the municipalities' facilitators. They targeted 2,900 rice farmers as SOA-SRA enrollees in the five provinces of Western Visayas.

Moreover, ATI Region 6 distributed enrollment forms and documentary templates to the facilitators to begin participants' enrollment in their areas.

They were 58 SOA-SRA coordinators that attended the inception meetings from February 6-9, 2023, in the provinces of Aklan, Capiz, Iloilo, and Negros Occidental.

MARCH

SOA-SRA RETURNS FOR SEASON 3, LAUNCHES PALAYARALAN FOR WESTERN VISAYAS

By: Sheena Angelique D. Zante



The PalayAralan sa Radyo is back through a solid partnership with the Department of Agriculture, its attached agencies, and the Local Government Units.

BAROTAC NUEVO, Iloilo - The School-on-the-Air on Smart Rice Agriculture (SOA-SRA) launched its third season last March 14, 2023, at the INA Farmers Learning Site and Agri-Farm. ATI Region 6, with

partner agencies from the Department of Agriculture and local government units, renewed their Pledge of Commitment during the event.

Attendees include Department of Agriculture - Western Visayas OIC-Chief of RAFID and SOA-SRA Anchor James Earl Ogatis on behalf of Regional Executive Director Jose Albert Barrogo; Nicolasilita Gallego, SOA-SRA Project Officer and Regional Coordinator from ATI Region 6, DA Philmech consultant Dr. Rodolfo Estigoy; Rene Valdez on behalf of Leo Sta. Ines of DA Philrice Negros; April Grace Padilla of PIA Region 6; and representatives from the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist of Capiz, Iloilo, Guimaras, and Negros Occidental.

Mary Ann Ramos, ATI Region 6 Officer-in-Charge, welcomed everyone and emphasized that adapting to change and technologies became challenging in learning and development. However, the media, specifically the crucial reach of radio, paved the way for the success of distance learning.

Partner agencies gave their messages of support during the launching program.

"DA Western Visayas believes in the impact of SOA-SRA. We are happy this program continues to empower our rice farmers through radio. The sustained efforts of our Agricultural Extension Workers involved are commendable. Their dedication to playing the canned episodes for the benefit of farmers is what keeps us going. DA Western Visayas Management extend their support to this undertaking," emphasized Ogatis during his message.

An updated Western Visayas Rice Situationer was presented by Regional Rice Report Officer Reynold Dequino, wherein data shows that as of 2022, Western Visayas is overall rice sufficient at 133.78. In the country, Region 6 ranked third in rice production and second in area harvested as of 2022. However, Region 6 is not in the top ten regions with the most yields. A factor attributed to this result includes the ratio of farmer per agricultural extension worker as 252:1. Due to this ratio, information dissemination is hampered.

"Our partnership must strengthen so we can provide ample information to farmers, especially those in far-flung areas," rationalized Dequino.

Partnerships of involved agencies proved effective as per the observation of Dr. Estigo of Philmech, emphasizing that the SOA is a 'potent way of educating the farmers' and that the collaboration of agencies in the implementation of SOA-SRA is truly 'admirable'. "Together, we can do better," he concludes.

ATI Region 6, with all partner agencies, renewed their pledge to support the program and abide by the roles and responsibilities assigned to their respective organization at the end of the ceremony.

"It is an honor for us [at ATI] to be with you again in this new Season of SOA-SRA. We thank all the partner agencies, organizations, and groups behind the implementation of SOA-SRA, especially our Local Government Units. All of this would not be possible without your active support," expressed ATI Director Remelyn R. Recoter in her pre-recorded message.

Dubbed 'PalayAralan sa Radyo: Makagabag-o nga Pagpanguma sa Kahanginan', SOA-SRA targets to air over 30 episodes this season, a deviation from the prescribed 28 episodes of the SOA-SRA Module, to maximize information and knowledge dissemination for the benefit of all listeners.

The program will air on partner radio stations across Aklan, Capiz, Iloilo, Negros Occidental, and Guimaras starting in April 2023.

Success Lies in Resilience

The Story of Aries De Juan Cuales

By: Catheryn M. Villorente



Being a seafarer, Aries was used to experiencing rough seas, and sometimes even raging waves. In his line of work, the challenge of sailing through the rough and vast ocean is unavoidable.

But before he encountered the rough seas in his work, he already experienced a bumpy road in life in his childhood.

At eight years old, he lost his beloved mother to breast cancer. Being one of the nine children, his parents had, it was a real challenge for a widowed father to raise the nine children all at once. His aunt, Gloria Cuales farmer, took care of Aries under her care. With her support, Aries was able to continue his schooling.

Like was hard for a boy, being away from his immediate family and being responsible for himself. But Aries managed to finish his elementary grade while helping his aunt with the daily household chores.

He also managed to continue his studies to high school, still with the help of his aunt. During this time, he worked as a school watcher at Wadefort School in



Aries, now in his 30's is the epitome of resilience as he managed to developed ADC farm into a profitable farming enterprise despite the challenges.

he noticed the unattended 2.5 hectares of land owned by his aunt. It was only planted with some bearing coconut and fruit trees. It was then that he decided to try his luck in agriculture. Using his Php 300,000.00 savings from his sailing career, together with his family Aries, tried poultry production. He bought and raised chickens and ducks. He even tried to practice organic farming which lead him to the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI).

He also visited the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) office in Kalibo and expressed his interest in coconut farming. The first time that he taught about coconut farming was during his seafarer days. He observed that in countries like India and Sri Lanka, coconut peat, a by-product of coconut is being exported to the Arabian countries. From then on, he realized the potential of coconut as a profitable business enterprise.

He was told by the PCA to plant coconut trees and was assured of the support of the agency in his future endeavors. He bought coconut seedlings from the nearby barangay of Feliciano and started planting about 400 coconut trees out of his own money. He intercropped it with cacao that he got from the office of the provincial agriculturist.



Coconut fibers are used as pots for planting young coconut trees.



As a hands-on entrepreneur, Aries carefully examines every product that he is selling in his farm.

Then, in 2017, he was able to secure a commercial space at the local market where he put up a coconut grating business together with his wife, Aiza. Due to the business registration process, Aries also established a strong business relationship with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) which eventually helped him in his coconut enterprises.

Aside from this, with the help of PCA, he also started the production and processing of coconut husk. Through a Memorandum of Agreement, he was able to lend machinery from a coconut organization located in Madalag that he used in the processing of coconut husk that he collected from their farm. He also bought husks from the nearby barangays of Balete and Batan.

However, not long after the operation, Aries encountered a setback. The production facility was burned accidentally. Fire trucks had difficulty reaching the area because there is no access road going to the site. Overnight, he had lost about Php 800,000.00 in farm revenue due to the accident, mostly machinery and inputs used in production and processing.

Another disappointment beset him when he applied for accreditation as one of the Learning Sites for Agriculture (LSA). He is into organic farming as of this



A standing coconut tree where coconut sap was being harvest for vinegar production.

Kalibo, so that he could support his financial needs. After he finishes high school, he took up 3-month training in culinary arts at Verde Grande College, an Institution accredited by Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) that offers vocational education and training programs.

After which, he landed a job as an assistant cook at formerly Saylo Cuisine in the same town. He has worked there for two (2) years.

In 2012, Aries started his sailing career at Likas Ship Agency Inc. He works here for four (4) years until 2016 as a chef cook.

In 2014, he reconnected with his childhood friend Aiza Cuatres De Jose and they started dating. They got married in 2016.

After marriage, Aires decided to stay close to his family and beside his wife. He returns to his hometown in Barangay Bangbang Calizo, Balete. There,



time and had established a good relationship with the ATI but was denied due to accessibility issues.

Despite the setbacks, Aries did not even think to give up on farming and his coconut enterprise. Using some amount provided by the DTI as fire assistance and his money, he immediately managed to repair some of the machinery and relocated the production area along the highway. In just a few weeks, production and processing activities were up and running again. Two years after the fire, another challenge besets Aries, this time, a natural calamity. When typhoon Ursula ravaged the province of Aklan in 2019, many of the coconut trees that he planted along with the bearing ones were uprooted. The same with the fruit trees and other crops planted in the area.

He was saddened and disappointed but never discouraged. He continued restoring the damages caused by the typhoon and advancing his farming and coconut enterprises.



Another bunch of Aries' outputs from coconut fibers and shells that are available at his farm.

Aside from the accessories and handicrafts, he is also still into husk production and processed it into ropes, mats, and poles. By-products of coconut shells were processed into charcoal briquettes. He also tried

medium enterprises, and the agriculture sector.

Just this year, he was finally accredited as one of ATIs learning sites for agriculture and as a farm school of TESDA.

Today, he is also one of the dependable resource persons being tapped by the ATI, DTI, PCA, and TESDA in their training activities.

Aries has still a lot of aspirations in his life and for his agricultural endeavors. He dreamed of expanding his coconut business enterprises and developing himself into a notable and noble agripreneur worthy of emulation within the community.

When asked why he was able to continue despite the adversities faced in his life, Aries just humbly said: "Because when you stop, nothing's going to happen."



Aries showcase some of the products made from coconut fiber and shell being sold at the farm.

Meanwhile, as their coconut grating business continues to operate, coconut shells had also accumulated. Seeing the piled-up coconut shells, he felt the urge to do something about it. That is when he thought of making it into something with value. Then, he decided to make coconut shell accessories and handicrafts.

At first, he made some bracelets, out of coconut shells. Then in 2020, he underwent training on coconut accessories and handicraft making with DTI. This new business venture has gained him more profits compared to his other farming enterprise. Thus, to focus on his booming coconut enterprises, Aries decided to stop his poultry business in 2021.

Today, his coconut accessories and handicrafts already gained popularity in the province of Aklan. His clients include some business establishments in Boracay Island and Ostrich Farm in Kalibo. His products are also being displayed at the town's DTI Negosyo Center.

virgin coconut oil, and coconut sugar processing, but find the accessories and handicrafts more profitable and practical. Using only half part of a coconut shell, he earns more than a hundred pesos.

Their coconut grating business is still an income-generating one. Daily, they earn an average of Php1,000.00 from this enterprise.

Aside from his successful coconut enterprises, Aries managed to build connections with the various government agencies that recognize his craft and contribution to the coconut industry, small and



ADC farm also sell charcoal briquettes to utilized coconut shells that cannot be used to make handicrafts.



In 2023, ADC Farm formally became one of ATIs accredited learning sites for agriculture.



Coconut rope serves as shade at the farm's entrance.



Coconut rug is also one of the diverse products that ADC farm has developed from coconut wastes.

Like a sturdy coconut tree, Aries's resilience has helped him endure and go on in life despite the unpleasant experiences he has been through.

Indeed, resilience, perseverance, and hard work are the ingredients to a successful farming venture and a rewarding life.

NEWS

FIRST TRAINING OF TRAINERS ON PARTICIPATORY GUARANTEE SYSTEM (PGS) IN WESTERN VISAYAS ORGANIZED

By: Norbell Z. Villalor



Participants conduct a mock inspection as a peer review of the farm of Alvin Barrios, Jr. in Malinao, Aklan.

BANGA, Aklan - ATI Region 6's Organic Agriculture Program accommodated its first batch of trainees last March 6-15, 2023, during the Training of Trainers on the Installation of Operations Manual for Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) Core Group and AEWs (OA Focal) at ATI Training Hall.

In the 10-day course of lectures and workshops, participants learned about the Organic Agriculture Act, its amendments, the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), Organic Agriculture Standards and the National List of Permitted Substances for Organic Agriculture, Establishment and Operation of Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) Groups as Organic Certifying Bodies, Peer Review, and Certification Protocols. At the end of the training, the participants established the Operations Manual and Internal Standard that serve as PGS certifying body.

Seventeen participants from six Organic Practitioners Associations and Agricultural Extension Workers from the three provinces, namely Aklan, Capiz, and Antique, attended. The said training supports the quality assurance initiatives that follow the production-to-consumption approach in providing guarantees on the integrity and quality of the organic products.

This activity aims to have a unified understanding of the provision of PGS and capacitate the AEWs (OA Focal) and organized farmers on the establishment and operations of PGS groups consistent with the organic agriculture standards and corresponding technical regulations.

ATI REGION 6 STAFF TUNES UP THROUGH GAD MAINSTREAMING AND HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRAINING

By: Kit O. Apolinario



The ATI Region 6 staff are all smiles after engaging with topics on holistic individual and group growth through Gender and Development.

BANGA, Aklan - Agricultural Training Institute - Regional Training Center VI Staff celebrated Women's Month by engaging in Gender and Development and Health and Wellness Training for three days last March 20-22, 2023, at the ATI Training Hall. Twenty-five participants from the different units and sections joined the round table.

The training program, which was broadcasted live on Facebook, aimed to enhance the awareness of the ATI personnel on GAD programs, as well as mental and physical health towards a healthy lifestyle and wellness and good organizational dynamics. During the 3-day course of lectures and workshops, the participants learned updates on GAD Mainstreaming and how to improve their mental and physical health to serve the public better.

"Health is wealth - is an understatement," emphasized Dr. Mechelle A. Palma, Resource Person. "Once we truly understand the essence of health, we can say that health is not everything, but without health, everything is nothing," she continued.

"I know everyone here is very thankful because it has been a long time since our health-related training. This training is very beneficial to everyone. We learned about the right type, amount, and frequency of food we have to take to avoid diseases. We also learned about the different types of stress and how we can manage them. Our resource persons highlighted the laws, rules, and regulations protecting women against violence for our benefit," said Janelyn Retiro, Administrative Staff and one of the participants.

The participants are eager to apply their learnings on GAD and Health and Wellness as reflected in their written Commitment Statements.

FIRST EVER FITS KIOSK IN NEGROS OCCIDENTAL LAUNCHED IN VALLADOLID

By: Catheryn M. Villorente



Information Services Section Chief Nicolasilta Gallego (3rd from left) turns over the ICT equipment to Dr. Aladino Moraca (4th from left), SUC President II of CPSU Valladolid Campus, during the university's FITS Kiosk launching. Also present at the event is Negros Occidental Governor Eugenio Jose Lacson (4th from right).

BANGA, Aklan - Given the mandate of the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) role as the capacity builder,

knowledge bank, and catalyst of the Department of Agriculture (DA), in collaboration with PAGASA, conducted its first batch of Training on KlimAgrikultura and Climate Workshop last February 6-10, 2023 at the 4-H Club Hub, ATI-RTC VI, ASU Compound, Banga, Aklan.

KlimAgrikultura is a new program of the DA-Agricultural Training Institute in partnership with DOST-PAGASA that aims to help agricultural extension workers and smallholder farmers improve climate-sensitive decisions to become more resilient to the effect of climate change. Also, it seeks to provide guidance and expertise to the extension workers on effectively utilizing weather and climate information.

"The training gave me knowledge about climate and how the data can be used as an advantage to enhance the productivity of our farmers," expressed Ms. Marel B. Inserto, Municipal Rice Coordinator of LGU-Malay, Aklan.

"As an AEW, we must properly deliver what we have acquired from this training to our clientele. The workshop

YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP GRANT ON ORGANIC FARMING SENDS OFF INTERNS FOR WESTERN VISAYAS

By: Sheena Angelique D. Zante



ATI Region 6, some scholars, and a farm partner, signed the Memorandum of Agreement during the Opening Program, marking the beginning of a partnership committed to increasing the number of organic agriculture practitioners in the region.

BANGA, Aklan - Eleven successful interns and five farm partners were gathered at the Youth Scholarship Grant on Organic Farming kick-off last March 29-30, 2023, at the 4-H Building, ATI Region 6 compound. The agency conducted the Orientation, Memorandum of Agreement Signing, and Deployment of Interns during the two-day activity.

The Regional Scholarship Selection Committee formally welcomed the Scholarship participants on March 29. A systematic rundown of activities and paperwork was accomplished to admit the interns and farm partners into the program.

Mary Ann A. Ramos, OIC-Center Director, congratulated all participants who qualified for the scholarship opportunity. "We have chosen the best. The interns are very lucky because many applicants pursued the program. The chosen Farm Partners are also promising. The interns will certainly learn a lot from them. I encourage all to make the most out of it," she stressed.

Vianney T. Ojerio, Officer-in-Charge of PAS, and Flor M. Mortalla, Organic Agriculture Focal Person, facilitated the orientation and workshop on finalizing the internship plan. At the end of the session, the body participated in an Open Forum, and specific agreements were acknowledged, especially between the farm partners and their designated interns.

The formal send-off of the interns followed on March 30. "Patience is the key," said Mortalla during her Closing remarks. "Give your best and do not settle for less," she advised the interns.

The interns will be deployed to the farm partners' Learning Sites for nine months and will implement their Business Plans then after for 12 months.

The youth interns hail from the provinces of Aklan, Antique, Iloilo, and Negros Occidental. Meanwhile, farm partners are from Aklan, Iloilo, and Negros Occidental. The group is Western Visayas' pioneer batch of scholars and farm partners.



from this training is a learning opportunity for the farmers to be more resilient," she added.

The Municipal Rice Coordinator, Rice Report Officer, and representatives from the Province of Aklan and Capiz participated in the five-day training.

The participants conveyed their learnings through their microteaching session and re-entry plans.

ATI REGION 6 OPENS OPPORTUNITIES TO ADDITIONAL RCEF TRAINERS

By: Jefflor L. Dela Cruz



Participants get down to demonstrate the advantages of the Double Mulching Technique.

BANGA, AKLAN- Twenty-nine trainees participated in the Training of Trainers on the Production of High-quality Inbred Rice and Seeds and Farm Mechanization last March 6-17, 2023, at ATI Training Hall.

Different Learning Sites for Agriculture and Farm Schools from Aklan and Capiz endorsed the participating trainers. Some police officers have also participated as conceptualized through a Memorandum of Agreement between TESDA and the Philippine National Police (PNP). The government will eventually tap these police officers to implement skills training for indigenous people, former rebels, and other community members.

The experts from ATI and partner agencies discussed social and technical topics during the first ten days of the activity. Topics include Transformational Leadership, Basics of Financial Literacy, Facilitation, Presentation, and Communication Skills, Training Management, PalayCheck System and its Key Checks, Machinery Operation and Safety, Financial Analysis, Agro-Ecosystem Analysis (AESA), Minus One Element Technique (MOET), Double-mulching Technique (DMT), and Policies and Guidelines on Seed Certification. The participants also participated in the microteaching activity and actual driving/operation of different farm machineries like the four-wheel tractor with rotavator, walk-behind transplanter, and combined harvester. To assess their readiness and to practice the knowledge and skills they have acquired in training, they were required to present a 10-minute presentation during their microteaching activity in preparation for their actual implementation in their respective communities.

During the Closing Program, the trainees acknowledged ATI Region 6 in honor and gratitude for the successful 12 days of training

"I commend the Agricultural Training Institute for a job well done. I have learned a lot from this training. I experienced things outside the box. It brought up my leadership side and brought out the best in everyone in every performance and activity. After this training, I will ensure that I can share the skills and knowledge I acquired in the community we serve. I salute ATI-RTC VI for opening the doors of opportunity to everyone who deserves this kind of training." PCpl Claire Colleen Nicodemus shared in her impression during the Closing Program.

This training aims to create a pool of trainers with enhanced knowledge, skills and attitude on implementing the Modified Season-Long Farmer Field School on the Production of High-Quality Inbred Rice and Seeds.

Furthermore, this will also aid trainers in developing their social and technical skills as they play a vital role in achieving higher income and lower production cost in the local industry.

ATI Region 6 will conduct the same training in April, May, June, August, and September of 2023 in Aklan, Antique, and Capiz provinces.

APRIL

ATI REGION 6 EXPANDS THE CAPABILITY OF WESTERN VISAYAS SEED INSPECTORS

By: Kit O. Apolinario



Participants conduct seed testing, particularly the practicum on moisture content determination during the fourth day of the training.

BANGA, Aklan - ATI Region 6, in partnership with the Bureau of Plant Industry-National Seed Quality Control Services (BPI-NSQCS), conducted a Training Course on Inbred Rice Seed Production and Certification for Deputized and Designated Seed Inspectors at the ATI-RTC VI Training Hall, ASU Compound, last March 27-31, 2023. Thirty-two Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) from different provinces and/or municipalities participated in the five-day intensive program.

The training course is in support of the second Key Program of the Rice Enhancement Competitiveness Fund (RCEF) identified as Rice Seed Development, Propagation, and Promotion. This key program aims to increase the adaption of certified seeds and integrated crop management through (1) Promotion and distribution of certified inbred rice seeds; (2) Mobilization and strengthening of local seed production; and (3) Support for variety development.

Among the activities done were lectures, workshops, and practicums. The topics discussed include the Rice Program Overview, Seed Reserve and Status of Rice Seed Production and Distribution; Mechanics, Policies, and Guidelines on Seed Certification for Inbred Rice Seed Production; Guidelines on the Accreditation of Seed Growers (process flow and filling-out of forms); the Role of Seed inspectors, Field Inspection and Roguing in Inbred Rice Field; Varietal Selection and Characteristics of the NSIC-approved inbred rice varieties (400-500 series) and the Top 5 Recommended Rice Varieties; Cultural Management Practices relative to the growth stages of the inbred rice plant; and, Harvest and Post-harvest Technology. The topics were delivered by the BPI-NSQCS Region VI and PhilRice-Negros Occidental.

Furthermore, the field visit (rouging practicum) was conducted at Carugdog, Lezo, Aklan, and the seed storage facility visit at Calangeang, Makato, Aklan. The seed and varietal purity practicum were done at the ATI-RTC VI Training Hall.

"In this training, I learned a lot of things including the role of seed inspectors and the policies and guidelines on seed certification. The hands-on activities helped me familiarize the various field operations that both seed growers and seed inspectors should perform to pass the certification. I also realized that becoming a seed inspector is not an easy job and that the role of seed inspectors is very important for a seed grower to pass the accreditation and certification," said Ms. Cecil B. Borres, Agriculturist II of the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist of Capiz.

As one of the major factors in the success of the RCEF-RESP goals, seed inspectors are required to be fully equipped with knowledge and skills to provide proper technical assistance to seed growers in the region.

FARM BUSINESS SCHOOL TO FURTHER ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS OF FARMERS AND LSA COOPERATORS



The market survey activity served as an exercise for trainees to identify the needs and preferences of customers and the strategies and marketing styles of retailers.

SAN MIGUEL, Iloilo -Twenty (20) LSA owners and farmers from Antique, Capiz, Iloilo, and Negros Occidental participated in the 3-day training on Farm Business School (FBS).

The training primarily aims to improve the productivity and profitability of farmers by empowering them to adapt to the changing climate. Also, it seeks to help them make sound marketing decisions, address business and marketing problems and opportunities.

During the training, the participants learned the basic concepts of farm business school and marketing. Also, part of the training is the conduct of a market survey at Pavia Public Market and benchmarking activity at Ina Farmers Learning Site and Agri-Farm in Barotac Nuevo. After which, participants were able to evaluate its results and develop a business plan.

Norlie M. Villa and Liela A. Rosbero, both Senior Agriculturists from Passi City, shared their knowledge and expertise on the different topics.

"I learned many things from this activity: Market survey for costumers, knowing their preferences and needs, the sellers and their wisdom in purchasing best-selling vegetables, and knowing your market," said Joyce M. Nagnac, Farmer Entrepreneur from Iloilo City.

Skills in farm business management are critical for LSA Cooperators and farmers. Through FBS, they can maximize the use of their resources and improve their decision-making

The training on FBS was held at Villar Sipag Farm School and Learning Site in San Jose, San Miguel, Iloilo last April 17-19, 2023.

CHED VI RECOGNIZES ATI REGION 6 AS A PARTNER IN THE PROVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

By: Sheena Angelique D. Zante



PAS Chief of ATI Region 6 Vianney T. Ojerio, along with the CHED Directorate, in celebration of CHED's 29 years and its partner agencies' contribution to the success of the Commission.

ILOILO CITY, Western Visayas - The Commission on Higher Education Region 6 recognized ATI Region 6 and other higher education institutions (HEIs) during the 2nd CHED Quality Awards last May 19, 2023, at the West Visayas State University Cultural Center, La Paz, Iloilo City. CHED VI recognized the different agencies' efforts and initiatives in instruction, research, and community extension.

Vianney T. Ojerio, Chief of the Partnerships and Accreditation Section, attended the awarding ceremony on behalf of Mary Ann A. Ramos, Center Director.

During his Opening Message, Dr. Raul C. Alvarez, Jr., CHED Regional Director, emphasized the value of having the courage to do what is suitable for the students. During his opening message, he underscored through a nautical short story the impact of having the courage to do what is right over easy, particularly in public service. "We have to go out of our comfort zones, leave our interest behind when public interest is at stake and while we meet the needs of the students," stressed Alvarez.

The ATI management acknowledged that the award is a testament to ATI's unwavering service to clients and partners, Agricultural Extensionists, farmers, and fisherfolks, as well as the continuous partnership with other institutions within the Department of Agriculture and all government agencies.

ATI Region 6 is currently offering scholarship programs for the youth in agriculture, particularly the deserving sons and daughters of farmers and fisherfolks who are taking Agriculture, Fisheries, AB Engineering, Forestry, Environmental Science, Veterinary Medicine, and other Agri-related courses. Moreover, the Institute provides opportunities to advance its clients and partners, the Agricultural Extensionists through its Masteral and PhD scholarship grants.

The ceremony mentioned above marked CHED's 29th Founding Anniversary.

3RD WAVE OF RCEF TOT ROLLS OUT IN WESTERN VISAYAS

By: Kit O. Apolinario



Participants take rest after operating the four-wheel tractor during their farm machinery demonstration session.

BANGA, Aklan - ATI Region 6 conducted the fourth Training of Trainers on the Production of High-Quality Inbred Rice and Seeds and Farm Mechanization at the ATI Training Hall, May 8-19, 2023. Twenty-eight Aklanon trainers from different Learning Site for Agriculture participated in the intensive 12-day program.

The training aims to create a pool of trainers with enhanced knowledge, skills and attitude on implementing the Modified Season-Long Farmer Field School on the Production of High-Quality Inbred Rice and Seeds. The activities performed were lectures, workshops, and hands-on or fieldwork. The topics discussed include, Transformational Leadership; Understanding RCEP and its implications to rice farmers; Rice Industry Situationer; the PalayCheck System; Farm Machinery Operation and Safety; Financial Analysis (Technical Requirements of Operating and Maintaining Selected Agricultural Machinery for Rice); Policies and Guidelines on Seed Certification; Introduction to ICT Services in Rice Production; Basic Financial Management; Principles of Adult Learning Hands-on/Field Works (ASEA and Farm Machinery Operation); and Microteaching.

Furthermore, the trainees performed field works like ASEA on Rice and Farm Machinery Operations at the GLS Agricultural Integrated Farm at Mataphao, New Washington, Aklan.

This training course is in direct support to the Key

DIGITAL AGRICULTURE COURSE

OPENS IN WESTERN VISAYAS

By: Liezel Margie Lou S. Bastian-Ocheda



A participant accesses the AgriDoc mobile application during the hands-on activity of the Advanced Agricultural Applications discussion.

KALIBO, Aklan - "Thank you, Lord, for giving me this opportunity. I learned so many things from this training through the intelligent resource persons. I am also thankful to the most approachable training management team. Let us all remember that this is not the end but the beginning of our digital farming journey. This is a huge break for all of us," expressed Ivy Ocquien, the farm school representative of GLS Agricultural Integrated Farm, New Washington, Aklan, during the sole implementation of the Training of Trainers on Digital Agriculture Course for RCEF on May 15-19, 2023, at the Kalibo County Inn.

Ms. Ocquien is one of the 20 participants from different TESDA-accredited farm schools in Aklan, Capiz, and Iloilo. The activity comprises two modules, composed of DAC 101 and 102, and several activities and exercises that aid the trainers in planning and facilitating the conduct of the Digital Agriculture Course in their respective farm schools. They have formulated social media content and marketing plans, and re-entry plans. Moreover, they have showcased their learnings through a demo back session. They were equipped on the topics namely: Smartphone 101, Accessing the Internet and Internet Basic Safety Tips, Basic and Advanced Agriculture ICT Tools, Basic and Advanced Social Media Marketing, Agriculture Apps on Rice, e-Commerce Platforms, and Mobile Money.

Outstanding outputs were also recognized by awarding prizes for Best Social Media Marketing Planners, Best Social Media Content, and Best Presenters.

The participants will receive their certificate of completion upon evaluating their final requirement, the recorded microteaching sessions.

The program is adopted from ATI and Smart Communication's Digital Farmers Program, an ICT-based ladderized capacity development program focusing on essential digital tools for more complex services such as e-commerce and online payments.

Components of Rice Enhancement Competitiveness Program (RCEP), which are:

- 1) rice farm mechanization;
- 2) inbred rice seed development, propagation, and promotion;
- 3) expanded rice credit assistance and;
- 4) rice extension services

"When I was endorsed to become a trainer I feel so blessed because now, I am trying to become a transformational leader, become more confident, and conquer all my fears. Upon knowing PalayCheck System, I realized I have to help our farmers because they need this, now," said Christian Lee A. Retiro from Dos Ijas Farm.

As one of the significant factors in the success of the RCEF-RESP goals, RCEF facilitators/trainers must be fully equipped with knowledge and skills to provide proper technical assistance to rice farmers.

PANAY FARMER LEADERS TRAINED ON COCONUT PRODUCTION AND MANAGEMENT

By: Catheryn M. Villorente



Participants identify the various coconut pests and diseases during a hands-on exercise facilitated by the resource person from the PCA.

BANGA, Aklan - To further develop a core of trainers and facilitators in the region who will assist in the implementation of the different training activities under the Coconut Farmers and Industry Development Program (CFIDP), the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) - Region 6 conducted the second Batch of the Coconut Specialist Training Course (CSTC).

The 2-week training was participated by twenty-two (22) coconut farmer-leaders in Panay coming from the various organizations in coconut priority areas. The training has developed the knowledge and skills of the participants in the various steps, processes, and theories related to the coconut value chain.

During the training participants were exposed to numerous preparatory activities in coconut production, plantation management, harvesting and post-harvest, economics, and good agricultural practices.

Topics on communication in extension, transformational leadership and social preparation, and cooperative organization were also included to help the participants become effective trainers and community developers.

Likewise, to apply the coconut theories and technologies discussed inside the training hall, a field practicum was employed during the 6th day of the training. During the practicum, participants were able to perform seednut and seedlings selection, nursery establishment, fertilization, lay-outting, and planting.

Moreover, by the end of the training they have undergone the microteaching activity to help enhance their presentation and facilitation skills as future trainers and facilitators of various CFIDP trainings and activities.

Participant Johnny Galve, President, of the Calaya Small Coconut Farmers Organization in Nueva Valencia, Guimaras expressed his gratefulness for his participation in the training

"I am beyond thankful that I will be returning to my organization with the knowledge and skills for the good of our coconut farmers."

During the closing program, Eraldgen Bernaldo, CFIDP Alternate Focal Person and Chief of the Career Development and Management Section highlighted the serious accountability of the CSTC graduates as the ATI's partner in the implementation of the CFIDP.

"You have now the responsibility to educate our coconut farmers, to share with them what has transpired here in this training. When you go back to your organizations, you must comply with your re-entry plans for we will monitor your implementations," stressed Bernaldo.

PCA Region 6 Regional Manager Dr. Neil Melencion also graced the closing program and thanked the ATI for capacitating the coconut farmer-leaders in Panay. He also

stressed to the graduates that when they go back to their localities, they will be the PCA's representative when it comes to the dissemination of coconut technologies to the farmers.

Moreover, ATI Region 6 Center Director Mary Ann A. Ramos is hopeful that with the training provided to them, the graduates will become ATI's dependable partner in the implementation of the various CFIDP activities in the Region.

The conduct of the CSTC Batch 2 was held on May 15-26, 2023 at ATI Training Hall, Banga, Aklan. Another batch of the same training is also set for the farmer-leaders in the province of Negros Occidental by July 2023.

FARMERS' ASSOCIATION IN GUMARAS SHIFT INTO DIGITAL FARMERS

By: Liezel Margie Lou S. Bastian-Ocheda



Christine Mae Tubera, the Training Facilitator and Resource Person, guides the participants in exploring and utilizing the various agricultural mobile applications.

SIBUNAG, Guimaras - "It has been two weeks since I got my new smartphone. This training is significant for me because I am just starting to learn to use the gadget. This training taught me how to use social media and agri apps and understand rice pests. I am delighted," uttered Rosalinda F. Tabuena, a member of M. Chavez Unified Farmers Association (MUFA) from San Lorenzo, Guimaras, that participated in the Digital Farmers Program (DFP) 101 and 102 Training as the first phase of the DFP Training of Package of Technologies last May 23-26, 2023 at Spring Bloom Agri farm.

The said association will receive a portable package of digital training resources developed to facilitate learning in digital agriculture. The package utilizes mobile technology coupled with the DFP ladderized training modules to enable farmer organizations to roll out the DFP in their respective areas, specifically in remote areas. The second phase of this training is awarding the said package that will follow.

The resource persons discussed DFP Toolkit, DFP Facilitator's Deck, and DFP User's Guide. Furthermore, they underwent hands-on activities, including posting products on Facebook Marketplace, creating online product content via the Canva application, producing social media marketing content plans, and submitting the DFP 101 and 102 rollouts through action planning.

This activity is the first conduct of the said training in the Region.

...from p3

ATI REGION 6 RECOGNIZES BEST...

"This is a great opportunity for our association to start an income-generating project out of what is abundant in our place, bamboo. We will do our very best to sustain this project as this is a great help for our Association, our members, our family, and for our children's future. This won't be possible without the support of our Municipal Agriculture Office, LGU-Dingle, DTI, and ATI RTC VI. We Alegria IFA are beyond blessed," expressed Hermenerico B. Miro, President of Alegria Integrated Farmers Association.

The Training on Farm Business Management is designed to educate farm owners, operators, and Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) in farming as a business. The said training was attended by twenty-four (24) Learning Site Cooperators, farm owners and managers and some Swine Multiplier Project recipients. The Training Workshop on Business Plan Preparation, on the other hand, aimed to enhance and strengthen the knowledge and skills of Agricultural Extension Workers (AEW) on business plan preparation which will enable them to train farmers and members of farmer associations in their areas to become successful agripreneurs. The workshop was attended by twenty-nine (29) AEWs from all over the region.

The training and workshop were made possible through the help of Resource Person Reden Mark F. Costales, owner of Costales Nature Farms.

The projects are under implementation as of this writing

...from p4

TRAINING ON KLIMAGRIKULTURA...

situation, and geography to reduce the damages and risks of typhoons on their crops," said Joelyn G. Librado, one of the participants.

The participants must demonstrate their learnings as they implement their re-entry plans. The program also aims to substantially contribute directly to Sustainable Development Goal 2, also known as Zero Hunger, wherein food security and improved nutrition are achieved through sustainable agriculture.

INSPIRE BENEFICIARIES SKILLED UP...

assistance and capability building to ensure the project's success.

"We thank ATI for entrusting us with the swine multiplier project. We will do our best to help not just ourselves but extend this to the community," Ms. Concepcion Carrillo, President of KCARSI, expressed her appreciation.

KCARSI, IFALGAM, IBON, ASU, NFA, and CALIPMA participated in the two-day activity.

The Integrated National Swine Production Initiatives for Recovery and Expansion (INSPIRE) is a part of the Department of Agriculture's (DA) recovery and repopulation plan for the swine industry.

ATI REGION 6 TRAINS NEW...

under the CFIDP. Lastly, she encouraged them to "develop one coconut farmer at a time."

The CSTC has produced 19 new coconut specialists in the region proficient in various production technologies in coconut that will aid the various CFIDP implementing agencies in the rollout of its programs and services for the coconut farmers.

The training was held on February 13-24, 2023, at ATI Training Hall, Banga, Aklan.



JUNE

ATI REGION 6 UNVEILS FIRST FARMERS AND FISHERFOLKS DAY

CLUSTER RICE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER WORKSHOP CONVENES VISAYAS REGIONS, PROMOTES TECH SCALING

By: Sheena Angelique D. Zante



The ceremony inaugurated the 'Maria Y. Orosa Hall', honoring the Filipina food scientist and founder of home extension in the Philippines.

BANGA, Aklan - ATI Region 6 and the community celebrated the first Farmers and Fisherfolks Day last June 1-2, 2023, highlighting the theme, 'Pagbubuklod-buklod ng Bawat Pamilyang Magsasaka at Mangingisda tungo sa Matatag na Ekonomiya'. Engr. Remelyn R. Recoter, ATI National Director, was present to welcome the honored guests during the celebration.

Several ceremonies took place as part of the festivities. On June 1, 2023, ATI Region 6 recognized two new Learning Sites for Agriculture (LSA) from Iloilo, the USWAG Nursery of the City Government of Iloilo and the AgriAqua Research and Technology (ART) Center of the Provincial Government of Iloilo. On the same day, the provinces of Iloilo and Capiz received financial grants under the Province-led AgriFishery Extension System (PAFES). Mayor Jerry Treñas of Iloilo City, Governor Arthur Defensor, Jr. of Iloilo Province, and Governor Fredenil Castro of Capiz personally received the grants and certificates.

The ceremony took off with ceremonial launchings on June 2, including the inauguration of the 4-H Hub's Maria Y. Orosa Hall. Named in honor of the Filipina food scientist, pharmaceutical chemist, and war heroine, the hall will serve as the home for capability building of Rural-Based Organizations in the region.

The celebration launched the Bugna it Mangunguma food exhibit on the second day. The Center welcomes Learning Sites for Agriculture, farmers, fisherfolks, the women in the community, and other stakeholders to showcase their products in the showroom. In the same room, the Center opened the 4-H Handumanan, a memorabilia showcase, and the newly furnished 4-H office. 'I am happy that our office was re-opened to the public as a knowledge-sharing area for RBOs, LSAs, and other ATI clientele,' expressed Aldren Fuentes, 4-H Western Visayas Regional Federation President.

A trade fair showcasing fresh farm products also run throughout the day.

Engr. Eleazar Carmen, a young farmer entrepreneur and founder of Ripples Ice Cream, gave an inspirational talk on achieving goals through hard work, determination, spirituality, and resilience.

Furthermore, launched was the Search for the 2023 Exemplary LSA Performance Award (ELSAPA) and Exemplary RBO Performance Award (ERBOPA), forwarding ATI's strategy and initiative to recognize LSAs and RBOs who have exemplary performance in the field of agriculture and community development. The awards serve as a breakthrough program of the Partnerships and Accreditation Section.

PAFES also awarded a grant for the Province of Aklan during the ceremony.

'Today is important because region six lined up a series of events to maximize the use of the 4-H Hub facility, and launched programs to help address the industry's aging population and encourage rural women and the youth to get involved in agriculture. This activity is a recognition of the stakeholders, especially the farm families' contribution to food security. Congratulations on this all-in-one activity' expressed Recoter in her message.

Mary Ann A. Ramos, ATI Region 6 Center Director, recognized ATI's partners during the activity, giving credit to their unwavering support in forwarding agricultural productivity in the region.

The Farmers and Fisherfolks Day honored the farm families and their contribution to the nation's food security.



Region VII, with facilitators from the DA and its attached agencies, throw ideas during the breakout session.

ILOILO CITY, Western Visayas - Some 200 stakeholders of the rice industry participated in the Visayas-wide Cluster Rice Technology Transfer Workshop last June 13-15, 2023 at Punta Villa Resort, Villa Arevalo, Iloilo City.

The Department of Agriculture and its attached agencies, Local Government Units, extension service providers, farmer associations and leaders, and private agricultural technology companies were the participants of the said workshop. The ATI Region 6 team served as facilitators.

Mary Ann A. Ramos, ATI Region 6 Center Director, acknowledged guests and participants of the workshop and welcomed them during the Opening Program.

Leocadio S. Sebastian, DA Undersecretary for Rice Industry Development, took part in the event through the four-point strategy of the Masagana Rice Program and the 3 Cs (Converge, cooperate, and Coordinate). He also stressed how clustering will aid farmers in maximizing resources as they engage in the rice value chain.

Plenary sessions took place during the 3-day event, covering topics on data-driven decision-making, nutrient management, and rice technologies, farm clustering and consolidation, mechanization, value chain development, and digitalization. Dubbed 'Tektok Sessions', resource persons and experts from the industry covered strategies, approaches, and best practices.

The group workshop centered on the 3 Cs followed on the second day, with a focus on the four Key Strategies of Increasing rice productivity, Making Rice Farm Clustering Work, Increasing Farmer's Participation in Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in the rice value chain, and Attaining economies of scale and more efficient operations. The three participating regions presented draft technology scaling plans.

The event also showcased farm products and technologies through the Tekno Tiangge booths.

'To our partners, please help us. Let us move and act as one in giving hope to our farmers by sharing your thoughts and recommendations on how we are going to upscale technologies in our respective regions,' encouraged DA Western Visayas Regional Executive Director Engr. Jose Albert Barrogo.

The activity aims to enhance the mobilization and scaling of smart technologies to boost domestic rice production and help modernize Philippine Rice Agriculture.



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