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Cover Story 8-11

Marilou M. Escalona

**Licensed nurse
turns agripreneur**



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On our cover features
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KAUGMARAN
(n) Cebuano-Bisaya term
for development





by doris isabel j. racho

TAGBILARAN CITY – In its quest to glamorize agriculture, making it appealing among teenagers while addressing depression and digital addiction, the Agricultural Training Institute – Region VII (ATI-7) recently concluded its blended program (face-to-face and virtual) on AgriTeens on July 12, 2021 live via ATI-7 FB Page and Iyaah Eco Farm, this city.

AgriTeens with the theme “Braving Mental Hygiene in a Digital Environment” was participated by 50 teenagers from Tagbilaran City, Loon, Albuquerque, Sikatuna, Valencia, Talibon and Bien Unido. 20 teenagers attended the face-to-face while the remaining 30 joined thru the virtual platform.

Topics include Mental Hygiene, Digital Addiction and Containerized Gardening. Speakers were Priscilla Fernando & Enrique Felisario of Rainbow Playroom a Psychological Services Center based in Cebu City for the first two topics, while Pablita Cabarles - a Gulayan Sa Paaralan Program (GPP) Implementor of Manga National High School and a Regional Awardee for GPP Implementer 2021 discussed the topic on containerized gardening with landscaping.

Meanwhile, Iyaah Eco Farm, an ATI-7 Certified Learning Site for Agriculture served as the venue for the face-to-face, where participants had the chance to do hands-on activities from soil preparation to planting, making use of the resources in the farm and garden kits provided by ATI-7. A farm tour was also done for them to appreciate farming or venture into agribusiness.

Concurrently, the virtual platform served as an opportunity to avail the services of the Farmers Information Technology Services (FITS) center as participants gathered to watch the AgriTeens. ATI-7 has been giving support to FITS Centers in the entire region by providing them with ICT equipment like laptops, modems and other support services. FITS centers serve as a one stop service facility that provides fast access to agricultural information and farming technologies.

When asked about the insights and learning from the activity, Clint Arojado a student/4Her from Doctor Cecilio Putong National High School said: **“A lot of learnings I got and wanted to share it to everyone. AgriTeens offers a lot of amazing information. Depression is very rampant in today’s generation, and if it can’t be treated and handled well it can lead to suicidal intentions.”**

“Thank you ATI- 7 for initiating this project. We need more teens to become Agripreneurs to change the current average age of farmers from 57 y.o. to younger age. Let us support our local farmers. Produce local and buy local enough or even more to support the needs of Boholanos” said Leonardo Cirujales, one of the parent of the AgriTeen participant.

With the knowledge learnt from the event, attendees are expected to establish a containerized garden in their homes. Doris Isabel J. Racho served as host/project officer assisted by May Joy Luzon.



PERSON WITH DISABILITIES UNDERGO URBAN GARDENING TRAINING

CEBU - Twenty persons with disabilities (PWDs) from the municipality of Tabogon this province undergo a three-day training dubbed as Grow your own food: A Training on Urban Gardening last July 6-8, 2021 through its Project Officer, Training Specialist II, Mr. Jorge F. Trinidad.

This activity was held in support to the Plant, Plant, Plant Program or Ahon Lahat, Pagkaing Sapat (ALPAS) Laban sa COVID-19 of the Department of Agriculture. It also looked into the inclusion of people with disability, ensuring they have given fair access to this type of support.

The participants learned the benefits of urban gardening; advantages of vegetable home gardening; develop their skills in establishment, care and maintenance of various crops; formulate fertile soil mixture from available sources; utilize biodegradable materials at home for fertilizer and how to perform gardening activities along with family members.

People who have shared their expertise include Nimfa P. Davis, and Zema C. Languido, both from DA-RFO 7. The training was facilitated by Jorge F. Trinidad and Arnel Navarro from ATI-RTC 7, in collaboration with LGU Tabogon, Cebu.

Participants were provided with a starter kit which contained a tumbler, sprinkler, garden tools, plastic pots, and vermicast. These starter kits were sent to the house of the participants prior to the training so they can use the kit right away. According to Phillip Rondina, **“all the inputs I have learned from this training were very informative and interesting. For farmer-PWD, who is one of the most vulnerable sectors in society, this training is well appreciated.”**

REGULAR *activities*

by maryjane flor patulilic and merrian piquero soliva, phd

NEW BREED OF AEWs TRAINED ON EXTENSION DELIVERY SYSTEMS

CENTRAL VISAYAS – The Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center 7 held a three-day Training on Extension Delivery Systems for Newly-Hired Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) last August 25-27, 2021.

The blended training was participated in by 29 AEWs: 20 from Bohol and 9 from Siquijor. Those from Bohol were gathered in Sunset Villa, Taloto District, Tagbilaran City, Bohol while participants from Siquijor joined the training through Google Meet.

The general objective of the training was to enhance the skills of the newly-hired AEWs on extension delivery services. During the three-day course, participants learned about extension delivery services; approaches, strategies and extension methodologies; and communication and presentation skills.

On the last day of the training, a microteaching activity was done. The microteaching aims to prepare the AEWs to learn some teaching skills and techniques on how to better communicate and teach technical know-how that would be understandable for the level of the farmers.

“This training is another avenue for my development as an extension worker. I am thankful for this training as this will help me and my municipality in doing extension works with the farmers,” said Jerome Castino – one of the training participants.

Lhea Glory Mae B. Araña, Ma. Pamela R. Macaambac, Ma. Gracia Soliva-Pungay, Doris Isabel Jumalon Racho, and Merrian Piquero Soliva, PhD of ATI-RTC 7 shared their expertise on the topics discussed as resource persons while Ma. Gracia Soliva-Pungay, acted as the Project Officer with Angelie Menede as member of the training management team.



ATI-7 NOW CERTIFIED CPD PROVIDER



TAGBILARAN CITY – Eight (8) agriculture related trainings of the Agricultural Training

Institute- Region VII (ATI-7) are now accredited with the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Agriculturist of the Professional Regulations Commission (PRC), making the institution a certified Service Provider by PRC Bohol from July to September 2021.

It can be known that CPD is a measure that will continuously improve the competence of the professionals in accordance with the International Standard of Practice thereby ensuring their contribution in uplifting the general welfare, economic growth and development of the nation.

ATI being the training arm of the Department of Agriculture has been offering free agriculture trainings to Agriculture Extension Workers (AEWs) to capacitate them in the field of agriculture.

While most AEWs are licensed agriculturist they are bound to renew their license every 3 years, and in doing so, requires them to earn CPD units which can be gained from the accredited trainings they have attended.

“Being able to provide training programs that are CPD accredited is a great opportunity for our professional (Agriculturist) to earn required CPD units for PRC license renewal. And the most amazing part is ATI 7 is giving it to us for FREE,” said Reynadez L. Curayag-Agriculturist I of ATI-7 at the same time Project Officer who is the first one to apply her training to be accredited by PRC.



KAMMP-ONLINE PRODUCES 15 MENTEES

TAGBILARAN CITY – The Agricultural Training Institute in Central Visayas based in this city is conducting its second phase of Online Kapatid Mentor Me Program (KAMMP-Online) with the first being implemented in 2020 with the objective of helping micro, small and medium entrepreneurs scale up their business through coaching and mentoring by industry practitioners and business owners in coordination with Go Negosyo.

The KAMMP-Online trained 15 participants from region 7 which course started last August 2, 2021 and culminated last September 10, 2021. The nine-module topics discussed include Entrepreneurial Mind Setting and Values Formation, Business Model Canvas, Digital Marketing, Accounting Basics, Farm Operations Management, Agri Supply and Value Chain, Obligations and Contracts, Basic Coop Management / Good Business Practices, and Business Plan Development.

To become a certified KAMMP Mentee, each participant is required to prepare their business plan and present to jurors for cliniquing and somehow ready for submission for possible funding.

Among the learning insights of the participants are the following: that entrepreneurship is 24/7. It is not like when you are employed that you just have to clock in and out. Going into business is not easy, you have to consider a lot of things especially your financial capacity and you have to know your market and your product well.

Life is short, make the best of your time. Skills are essential to success, these are tools that help you and guide you in your decision making, as well as how you can work your way to successfully implementing your project.

Above all, that there are a lot of organizations and government offices that can help you develop your products as well as help you develop your skills even further. Mentorship is really essential. One only needs to work and study even harder to be able to move forward successfully.

Agriculturist I, Reynadez L. Curayag is the Project Officer with May Joy P. Luzon as the technical support staff.

TRAINING OF TRAINERS ON PARTICIPATORY GUARANTEE SYSTEM (PGS) HELD IN CEBU

CEBU CITY – Despite the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Agricultural Training Institute in Central Visayas conducted a Training of Trainers on Participatory Guarantee System at Diamond Suites and Residences this city last July 26 to August 6, 2021 with Training Specialist III, Ma. Gracia Soliva-Pungay, as the Project Officer with Arnel Navarro as the technical support staff.

Eleven (11) trainers successfully completed the 10-day training of trainers which objective is to capacitate PGS Groups on the establishment and operations consistent with the organic agriculture standards and corresponding technical regulations.

The trainers are expected to explain the salient provisions including the implementing rules and regulations of the Organic Agriculture Act as amended by RA 11511 on Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS); Discuss the Organic Agriculture Standards and the National List of Permitted Substances for Organic Agriculture; Examine the general requirements and procedures for accreditation of PGS group; Demonstrate the conduct of peer review and certification protocols, and Apply the applicable current Philippine National Standards (PNS) for organic agriculture.



The output of the trainers' includes draft of the Manual of Operation of each group and re-entry plans accomplished by the participants will be monitored 6 months after the conduct of training.

The pool of trainers for the 10-day TOT are Joemelyn A. Sumagang, Training Specialist II; Andrew M. Macaambac, Development Management Officer I and Ma. Gracia Soliva-Pungay, Training Specialist III and OA Focal Person of ATI-7 together with Mae Montecillo, Science Research Specialist II and OA Focal Person of DA-RFO 7 and Helen B. Keniston and Emmanuel Odtohan, OA Focal Person of DA-Provincial Agriculture Technology Coordinating Office.

3 BATCHES OF COMPOSTING FACILITIES FOR BIODEGRADABLE WASTES OPERATION CONDUCTED

CENTRAL VISAYAS – The Agricultural Training Institute in this region in partnership with the Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM) conducted the Capacity Enhancement on the Operations of Composting Facilities for Biodegradable Wastes (CFBW) training.

The three batches reaped 59 agricultural extension workers, waste operators and farmer-beneficiaries from the local government units of Bohol, Cebu and Negros Oriental attended the training last August 10-12, 2021 at Bohol Sunset Villa, Tagbilaran City; Golden Prince, Cebu City last September 8-10, 2021 and

objective is to enhance the capacity of beneficiaries on the full utilization and effective operation of the composting facilities for biodegradable wastes. During the three-day training, participants learned about the principles and processes of composting and its importance for solid waste management in their respective communities, the protocol of CFBW, and the application operation of in-vessel composting facilities, including the appropriate maintenance.

The pool of trainers include Leolito

Plaza Maria Luisa Suites and Inn, Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental on September 21-23, 2021 respectively.

D. Siase, Engr. Troy Paolo R. Espiel and Jose Ariel G. Almeda from DA – BSWM, Central Office; and Joemelyn A. Sumagang of ATI-RTC 7 with Ma. Gracia Soliva-Pungay, Training Specialist III as the Project Officer while Jeffrey O. Awas served as member of the training management team.



ORGANIC AGRICULTURE *activities*
by maryjane flor patulilic and merrian piquero soliva, phd



CAPACITATING FARMERS ON CORN/CASSAVA PRODUCTION AND FEED FORMULATION

BOHOL – Twenty farmers underwent a three-day Training on Corn and Cassava Production cum Customized Feed Formulation last September 14-16, 2021 at Pacheco's Inn, Poblacion, Ubay, this province.

The participants were capacitated by enhancing their knowledge and skills on Corn and Cassava production and at the same time equipping them to formulate their own feeds for a sustainable agricultural development.

Moreso, the participants also learned the difference between corn and cassava in terms of production, management, prevention, farming system, actual

feed formulation using various ingredients composition and proportion/customized feed ration; and formulated a doable re-entry plan.

The project officer of the training is Mr. Jeffrey O. Awas, Technical Support Staff and at the same time ATI-7 Corn Focal Person while Municipal Agriculturist, Marianito M. Doydora; Corn/Cassava Technician, Amelia H. Cutamora; Crispina A. Caballero, Agricultural Technologist of the Municipal Agriculturist Office, Local Government Unit of Ubay, Bohol so with Nilo A. Budiongan, AT of the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist and Roland V. Villegas, Regional Supervisor, DepEd VII, Cebu City.

INCREASING CASSAVA YIELD THRU FARMER EXTENSION SUPPORT

SIQUIJOR – There has been a significant decline in the cassava production in the country, and it has been the aim of the Department of Agriculture to increase the production of quality corn and cassava for human consumption, feeds, and industrial

uses as well as empower corn and cassava farmers. Hence, there is a need to capacitate the farmers.

On August 17-19, 2021 a Training on Post Harvest Handling and Processing of Cassava with Extension Support was conducted

in Ocean View Farm and Cottages in Maria, Siquijor. Eighteen (18) farmers and agricultural extension workers from the municipality of Enrique Villanueva, Larena, Lazi, Maria, San Juan, and Siquijor participated in the three-day training.

This training aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of participants on the postharvest handling and processing of cassava. During the three-day course, participants learned about cassava production technology: its economic importance, physiology, cultural practices, and nutritional composition; postharvest handling and storage of fresh cassava roots; and processing and packaging of cassava.

As part of the extension support, farmers received PPE and cassava lifter – a tool designed for uprooting cassava so that labor will become less exhaustive.

Jimbo Israel Casalta, Celso T. Jumawan, and Joseph Marijess Donde L. Pactor, from the Provincial Agriculture's Office-team in Siquijor shared their expertise on the topics discussed as resource persons while Jeffrey O. Awas is the Project Officer with Mary Daphny Tumala, as member of the training management team.

“The resource persons shared very informative topics regarding cassava production. This information is for the benefit of the farmers - an addition to their existing knowledge about cassava production; for better production and more income.” said Steve S. Sampaga – one of the training participants.



LICENSED NURSE TURNED FARMER- AGRIPRENEUR:

Marilou M. Escalona's

Success Story

COVER story.
by merrian piquero soliva, phd

"I am a businesswoman and also a trainer inclined into farming. My business right now is on organically produced farm products. The crops produced and the livestock raised will be placed for sale online and offline to the consumers. I am also a trainer in Organic Farming and my farm is now considered a farm school."

Farming as her passion and profession

Marilou Mejia Escalona, 54, born in Tacloban City, Leyte with parents Minda B. Mejia and Rizalito B. Mejia, Sr. both agriculturists were once connected with Bohol Agricultural College now Bohol Island State University (BISU)-Bilar Campus, Bilar, Bohol.

Malou as her family, friends and community have known her is the second of the four

siblings and married to Edgard Escalona with three (3) children: Jan Michael, Alexandra and Veronica.

She is a licensed nurse who previously worked in Los Baños Doctor's Hospital and Lourdes Hospital in Mandaluyong. Later on, worked overseas in Saudi Arabia for 9 years with the same profession. Since her husband is also working abroad, she decided to just stay home permanently to attend to her children in which she became a businesswoman and

a trainer who is inclined into farming.

Indeed Malou came from a family of teachers where teaching runs in her blood and because of her grandparents' influence, who are both agriculture graduates in Visayas State College of Agriculture (VISCA) now Visayas State University, Baybay City, Leyte and so with her parents who are both agriculturists as well, hence, farming is in her system and became her passion and profession.

Barely 11 years in farming where Malou started in 2010, she already earned awards from the Provincial Government of Bohol and the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office 7. In 2015, she snatched the top place as Provincial Winner of Suhid sa Malamposong Mag-uumang Bol-anon (Small Animal Raiser Category) and became Regional Outstanding Gawad Saka (Small Animal Raiser) in 2016.

In 2017, she was again heralded as Provincial Winner of Suhid Sa Malamposong Mag-uumang Bol-anon (Organic Farmer Category) and also awarded as District and Provincial BAHAY KUBO Faith-Hope-Charity Winner in 2019.

Egay's farm: her playground

The 4.3 hectare farm land of Egay's Farm started small. Malou and her husband Edgard acquired a small portion of the lot via installment basis at Twenty Pesos per square meter until they were able to acquire the adjoining lots in a competitive price due to the increasing market value of the place.

In 2008, Malou started everything, she requested a seminar to the Provincial Agriculturist Office of Bohol and it was the Office of the Municipal Agriculturist of Dauis, Bohol who headed it, since, the farm is situated in Barangay Bingag of this town. Then, she coordinated with Harbest Agribusiness Corporation who also later conducted commercial farming and she in





turn invested their greenhouse facility.

In 2010, Egay's farm started to plant a variety of vegetables, root crops, herbs and spices like Rosella, Blue Ternate, Lettuce, Japanese Mustard, Kangkong, Kale, Okra, Corn, Peanut, Cassava, Passion Fruit, Chilli/Peppers, Tomatoes, Pechay, Mongo, Turmeric, Insulin, Basil and Eggplant

In 2014, Egay's farm ventured her restaurant and opened its doors to visitors considering that they are situated in the tourist-island of Bohol. With garden or locally produced vegetables, herbs and spices for their salads and juices and backyard-way of raising poultry and livestock; visitors started trooping to the farm not just to eat but also toured to learn and experience farm activities.

With the pandemic, Egay's farm restaurant caters walk-in clients and they are into processing bottled juices and dried products out of Rosella, Blue Ternate, Insulin, Turmeric and Passion Fruit ready for market.

Since, Malou loves teaching farmers, she applied her farm as a certified Learning Site for Agriculture (LSA) through the Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training

Center 7 (ATI-RTC7) in 2018 and she made mention that the institution played a big role in her success as a farmer because ATI is one of the many reasons that her farm is still on the run. As Malou chimed in verbatim: ***"The support and knowledge educated and molded me into a skillful farmer through their trainings. I highly appreciated the organization and their efforts to help us develop agriculturally."***

Meanwhile, Egay's farm is also an accredited farm-school of the Technical Educational School Development Authority (TESDA) which offers Organic Agriculture Production NC II and also an Assessment Center for the same course. Malou is proud to say that her farm is a certified tourism-area of the Department of Tourism (DOT).

Agriculture through and through

Malou's love for farming





grew not only because of how it became a source of sustainability to her family and her fellow farmers, but also how she found one of her purposes in life through it. It is therapeutic for her to raise livestock and do some gardening. It feels relaxing whenever she goes to the farm because the atmosphere is calm. Through the knowledge she learned and the experience she gained in her growing years as a farmer, she realized how farming creates a great impact in her daily life.



In the many years she has been in the field of farming, she proudly narrates that she developed a lot of qualities which improved her well-being as a person. Being a farmer taught her to be consistent and patient because farming is learning by doing. She also learned different techniques and strategies which keep the farm better.



Through her hard work and dedication, a lot of people put their trust on her to lead agriculture-related organizations like the Bohol Native Chicken Growers Association (BONAGCA) and Kapunungan sa Bol-anong Organikong Mag-uuma (KBOOM). Presently she's organizing another Organic Association composed of Egay's Farm Organic Agriculture Program (OAP) National Competency (NC) II graduates which they call themselves as Bohol Organic Warriors Agricultural Communities (BOWAC).



Malou's optimism shaped her well despite the uncertainties of present time because she claims that there is still a guarantee that they are still going to be able to move forward with the help of the organizations she is in and the farm is still determined to get income and increase further amount to sustain their daily needs. These and more manifested how she is into agriculture through and through.

RICE SEED INSPECTORS UNDERGO REFRESHER COURSE TO ENSURE HIGH QUALITY SEEDS



CENTRAL VISAYAS – On August 10-12, 2021, a Refresher Training Course on Inbred Rice Seed Production and Certification for Seed Inspectors was conducted in Panda Tea Garden Suites, Tagbilaran City, Bohol. It was a regionwide training which also targeted seed inspectors from other provinces such as Cebu, Negros Oriental and Siquijor. Participants from Cebu, Negros Oriental and Siquijor joined the training virtually through the Google Meet platform.

Twenty-seven (27) seed inspectors from the municipalities of Alicia, Bilar, Carmen, Catigbian, Dagohoy, Duero, Garcia Hernandez, Mabini, San Miguel, Sierra Bullones, Tagbilaran City, and Ubay in Bohol; Argao in Cebu; Bindoy (Payabon), Canlaon City, City of Bayawan (Tulong), Dumaguete City, Mabinay, Sibulan, and Zamboanguita in Negros Oriental; and Siquijor have attended the three-day training.

The training aims to provide in-depth knowledge and improve the seed inspectors' capabilities in performing their functions and providing technical services to seed growers. During the three-day course, participants were able to learn about the mechanics, policies and guidelines on seed certification for inbred rice seed production; varietal selection and characteristics of the approved National Seed Industry Council (NSIC) varieties; insect pest management, integrated nutrient management, and integrated cultural management for rice seed production; harvest and post-harvest technology for rice seed production; seed testing procedures and standards; field inspection and rouging, seed sampling, bagging and tagging.

Further, the participants were informed about the status of implementation of the Rice Program in the region. They also further their knowledge on the roles of seed inspectors.

The training was made possible through the ATI RTC 7's coordination and collaboration with the Bureau of Plant Industry - National Seed Quality Control Services (BPI-NSQCS) - Region 7. People who have shared their expertise include Jonathan O. Sumagang from ATI – RTC 7; Rico Rommel A. Varquez; Wilfreda C. Malayao, Felix Tubiano from DA- RFO 7; Rogelio Davalan from DA – Soil and Water Research and Development Station (SWRDS); Marcheta Brina from BPI – NSQCS; and Lorebien Lagapa from Office of the Provincial Agriculture in Bohol.

The training was facilitated by Engr. Jonathan O. Sumagang, Project Officer and Charlou Ampit and Angelie B. Mencede, as members of the training team.

ATI-7 UPDATES FARMER LEADERS ON CULTURAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON RICE

NEGROS ORIENTAL – Twenty farmer-leaders from Bais City and Bayawan City in Negros Oriental were trained on Capability Enhancement Course on Nutrient, Water, Pest and Diseases Management on Rice last August 3-5, 2021. The remote training was held in Villareal, Bayawan City, this province and simulcast via Google Meet.

The objective of the training is to enhance the participant's capabilities in the science-based management of nutrient, water, and pest and diseases of rice. Hence, the three-day course enable the participants to learn about integrated nutrient management; efficient water management; and major rice pests and diseases and the different prevention and control methods.

People who have shared their expertise are from PhilRice Negros Occidental headed by Dr. Gerardo F. Estoy, Jr. Director I, together with Mr. Albert Christian S. Suñer, Ellie Zandrew S. Ganela, and Gerald E. Bello. The training was facilitated by Engr. Jonathan O. Sumagang, Ryan Joshua Villena, and Angelie B. Mencede from ATI-RTC 7. The training was made possible moreover, through the collaboration with LGU Bayawan City, Negros Oriental spearheaded by Engr. Kenneth S. Artes, the city agriculturist.

“Training was very useful, realistic and educational. I am thankful for this training. This is of great help to farmers; to lessen the reliance on chemical control, and to opt for biological and mechanical control based on their farm situation,” said Ana Teresa C. Batomalaque of Bais City – one of the training participants.

CSNMPC FARMER-YOUTH UNDERGO DFP-101

CARMEN, BOHOL – The Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center 7 (ATI-7) conducted a one-day Digital Farmers Program (DFP)-101 to ten pairs of youth and farmers of the Carmen Samahanag Nayon Multi-Purpose Cooperative (CSNMPC) at Marbezen Inn, this town last August 11, 2021.

As a background, the Digital Farmers Program (DFP) is a project between the Agricultural Training Institute (DA-ATI) and SMART Communications, Inc. which consists of a ladderized approach in teaching small-scale farmers nationwide with basic digital tools and technologies, particularly social media.



Moreover, the project aims to be a precursor to the Government's goal of advancing the local industry's adoption to more advanced forms of technology in farming that is the use of drones, analytics, precision farming, artificial intelligence (A.I.), climate and weather monitoring, Information Technology (I.T.) solutions, digital apps, e-money, blockchain, and other multi-layer platforms---that would necessitate basic knowledge of emerging technologies and deeper comprehension of its potential by its end-users.

The DFP-101 for CSNMPC members is a product of a meeting with ATI in Central Office, SMART, and PAKISAMA Visayas through their Coordinator, Mr. Hal Atienza, in late November of 2020 wherein the latter's group in Bohol is interested to undergo the Training on DFP 101 since they have a program to provide loans to their members for gadgets (smartphones and tablets). Hence, they would like their members to have training on DFP so that they will be capacitated on how to use this, especially for their farming activities.

EQUIPPING AEWs AND LFTs ON RICE PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY

SIQUIJOR – A five-day training course on the Updated Rice Production Technology was conducted in Ocean View Farm and Cottages, Olang, Maria, this province last July 26-30, 2021 with 20 agricultural extension workers (AEWs), and local farmer-technicians (LFTs) from the municipalities of Enrique Villanueva, Larena, Lazi, Maria, San Juan, and Siquijor, representatives from the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPA) and PATCO Siquijor likewise attended.

The main objective of the course is to enhance the knowledge and skills of the participants on the updated rice production technologies. Topics discussed include rice morphology and growth stages of rice; the use of rice farm machineries; and the principles and concepts of updated PalayCheck System (a rice crop management system that presents the best key technology and management practices as Key Checks).

The pool of resource speakers were Ms. Cecile A. Opada from DA-RFO 7; Aiza Ann Daligdig, Celso Jumawan, Novelyn Omandam, and Engr. Emigdio P. Coritico from the Office of the Provincial Agriculture in Siquijor; Mary Daphny Tumala from ATI RTC 7; and Lilibeth P. Caroro - a retired provincial agriculturist of Siquijor.

The training was facilitated by Mr. Jonathan O. Sumagang, Mary Daphny Tumala, Charlou Ampit and Angelie B. Mencede from ATI-RTC 7, in collaboration with the OPA Siquijor headed by Engr. Emigdio P. Coritico, the OIC Provincial Agriculturist.

"All my learnings from this training are very useful as a rice program coordinator. All my learnings will be applied when I do rice-field monitoring," said Fritz Bon

The original schedule of the training was last April 20, 2021, but due to the rising cases of COVID-19 and through the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF's) advisory to cease gathering a crowd of 20, thus, the DFP was temporarily canceled until further notice. It was on August 11, 2021, which the activity was conducted successfully.

The pool of trainers during the activity was Merrian Piquero Soliva, PhD., Media Production Specialist II at the same time the Project Officer with Doris Isabel J. Racho, Information Officer II of ATI-7 with the support of CSNMPC Staff, Virginia Amoncio, Manager, and Jocelyn Lorete, Project Officer. Gracing the activity was Mr. Hal Atienza, PAKISAMA-Visayas Coordinator via google meet with Arlene Cabusao, Municipal Agriculturist of the Local Government Unit of Carmen, Bohol, and CSNMPC Chairman, Eufemio O. Abaniel, MPA.

REVIVING MANGO INDUSTRY IN JAGNA, BOHOL

JAGNA, BOHOL – “The farmer field school (FFS) on mango production here in Jagna, which was able to rehabilitate more than 20-year-old unproductive mango plantation, will be the stepping stone to revive the mango industry in our municipality. This will generate more job opportunities. We are very much thankful to the Agricultural Training Institute Regional Training Center (ATI RTC) in Region VII for this empowerment,” said Timoteo A. Cadorna – a member of the Jagna Mango Grower Association, and an FFS graduate.

The municipal government of Jagna, under the leadership of the municipal mayor – Joseph Rañola, through the municipal agriculture's office, submitted a letter of intent to the ATI to conduct FFS in mango production. The move is part of the greater plan in agriculture development in the municipality to revive the mango industry in their locality. Jagna has around 7,000 mango trees; if provided with attention, it can boost the local supply of mango in Bohol province.

The FFS in Mango Production was completed by 17 mango growers from the different barangays in Jagna.

These farmers are members of the Jagna Mango Growers Association. On top of these participants, there were also 10 youths who took part in the rehabilitation. The same with the participants, these youths are now equipped with knowledge and skills around mango production and rehabilitation. Emphasis during the 16-week course, which runs between April-August 2021, is about good agricultural practices.

The success of the FFS was through the strong coordination and collaboration with the Office of the Provincial Agriculture through Mary Queen Atup, DA RFO 7 through Meriam Sacamay, and Municipal Agriculture's Office (MAO) in Jagna through Amelia Virtudazo who served as resource persons. Nepthalie Cuevas and Ma. Donna Galagala from MAO in Jagna served as the FFS facilitators in the 16-week long field school with Joemelyn A. Sumagang, as Project Officer.



LAMAC MULTIPURPOSE COOPERATIVE FARMER-MEMBERS TRAINED ON GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

CEBU – Another batch of farmers who are members of the Lamac Multipurpose Cooperative in Pinamungajan, Cebu were trained on Good Agricultural Practices for Fruits and Vegetables. Members of the said coop have requested the GAP training in support to the renewal of their Philippine Good Agricultural Practices (PHILGAP) certification. The training was held in Diamond Suites and Residences, this city on July 21-23, 2021.

The training also looked into gender and development (GAD) aspects. Here, both men and women farmers were given equal opportunity to join the training. In total, 17 farmers completed the three-day training: 11 female and 6 male.

In total, 59 farmers from Cebu province were trained in GAP for fruits and vegetables this year. The first batch was held in Asturias on June 23-25, 2021 and was participated by 22 farmers while the second batch was held in Nadelmar Beach Resort, Dalaguete, Cebu on July 6-8, 2021, and was participated by 20 farmers.

The training was made possible through the cooperation and collaboration of DA RFO 7. Dr. Bienvenido D. Acabal Jr, Christine A. Torlao, Gerame O. Calapre, Meriam Bayawa Sacamay, Merlita M. Dela Cruz and Norma B. Repol from DA Regional Field Office 7, Danie Mae D. Ybañez from the Bureau of Plant Industry of Cebu Satellite Office, and Ma. Gracia Soliva-Pungay from ATI RTC 7 shared their expertise on the topics discussed as resource persons. Arnel S. Navarro and Ulysses Alesna of ATI RTC 7 served as members of the training management team with Joemelyn A. Sumagang, Project Officer.

“I have learned the importance of good agricultural practices not just for the management of my vegetable garden but also for the health of my consumers/buyers. Nakabalo ako sa unsa ka importante ang good agricultural practices dili lang para mas ma-atiman nako akong utanonan, hasta sad ang kaayuhan sa panglawas sa mga mokaunay/mopalitay,” said Nicomedes Panaginig - one of the participants.

ANIMAL HEALTH CARE TRAINING FOR BALA CONDUCTED

TAGBILARAN CITY – Seventeen designated Barangay Animal Livestock Aide (BALA) of Bohol completed the three-day Training on Barangay Animal Health Care for BAHW/Barangay Animal Livestock Aide (BALA) last September 7-9, 2021 at Bohol Sunset Villa, Taloto District, this city.

The livestock aides were trained in order to identify and perform basic animal health care practices and problems; identify methods for early detection of livestock disease of economics/food security /public health importance; explain and demonstrate control measures to identified diseases; perform the basic veterinary and husbandry practices necessary in the barangay and install and maintain animal health records and other-relevant activities.

The pool of trainers during the training were licensed veterinarians from the Office of the Provincial Veterinarian of Bohol spearheaded by Dr. Stella Marie Lapid, Provincial Veterinarian together with her staff, Dr. Ma. Vendra B. Dongel; Dr. Christopher Jay M. Tanduyan; and Dr. Frederick P. Madriñan while Mr. Vherney C. Cabasag of ATI-7 acted as the Project Officer.



FARM FAMILY MODELLING TRAINING ON FREE-RANGE CHICKEN

BILAR, BOHOL – With the objective of capacitating farmers on chicken production as well as medication of the different diseases for a profitable chicken enterprise, the Agricultural Training Institute-Region 7 conducted a three-day training on farm family modelling on free-range chicken at Camelo Integrated Diversified Farm (CIDF), Sitio Lagiwiw, barangay Zamora this town last July 19-21, 2021. The CIDF is also a certified Learning Site for Agriculture of ATI-7.

Eighteen farmers participated the training and learned the status of chicken industry in the province; various aspects of chicken production technologies; identify different breeds of chicken; free-range chicken production practices; practice recording system for chicken production and; demonstrated on how to make Home-made incubator.

The farmers' knowledge was supplemented with two (2) cocks and 10 pullets as an after training support to start with their livelihood (chicken production).

The resource speakers of the training were Reyland P. Jabonillo, Farmer/Farm Owner, Junjabs Farm and Vherney C. Cabasag II, Agriculturist I of ATI-7 who is also the Project Officer.

LEARNING SITE *updates*

by merrian piquero soliva, phd



LEFT PHOTO shows Center Director, Dr. Carolyn May O. Daquio awarded the Learning Site for Agriculture Certificate to Taganahan Agricultural Farm with LSA Cooperator, Mr. Ursulo Taganahan.

RIGHT PHOTO shows Center Director, Dr. Carolyn May O. Daquio together with PASS Chief, Lydia B. Borbano awards the financial assistance-first tranche under Regular Program to Learning Site for Agriculture Cooperator Raymond Michael B. Roldan, owner of Vita Isola Leisure Farm located at Ubojan, Sandingan, Loon, Bohol.



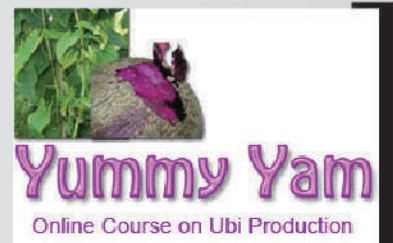
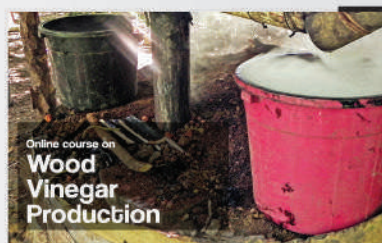
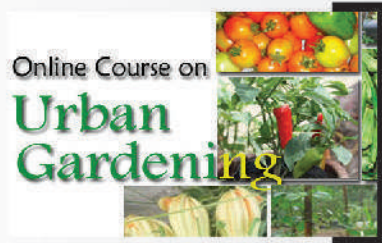
KAUGMARAN



Cover Story 8-11

Marilou M. Escalona

**Licensed nurse
turns agripreneur**



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