

# Bubalus



Quarterly Newsletter of the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center

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**'Karbaw Magasin' is Binhi Awards' Best Agri-related Government Publication**

By Ma. Cecilia Irang-Mariano

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**DA-PCC at CLSU Center Director bags CSC's Pagasa Award**

By Mikee Antonio

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## FEATURES

### Young couple scores big firsts with 'Big Momma'

By Mikee Antonio

Young couple Allen Paul Santos, 23, and Mikee Anne Castañeda, 23, of San Francisco, Tarlac City, each had to live a life of hard work and perseverance until they met each other and decided to embark on their newfound adventure.

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### DA-PCC plays vital role in meeting 100% milk demand for gov't feeding program

By Ma. Cecilia Irang-Mariano

The DA-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) and its assisted cooperatives commit to further expanding their efforts to achieve the DA's goal of completely self-sourcing milk for the National Milk Feeding Program.

Pursuant to RA 11037 or the Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act, the DA-PCC tapped its assisted co-ops to supply the demands for the milk feeding program led by the Department of Education and the Department of

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# Editor's Word



In this edition of our Bubalus Newsletter, we once again delve into the remarkable journey of the carabao industry, which is stewarded by DA-PCC. We celebrate the tireless efforts of diverse stakeholders, ranging from government agencies to local farmers and young entrepreneurs, all contributing to its success.

First and foremost, I want to personally express my gratitude and congratulations to our regional knowledge managers. Their significant contributions to our newsletter have proven to be invaluable. We have observed a substantial increase in the number of articles they have provided, and their insights have significantly enriched our content, providing our readers with a deeper understanding of our industry.

Throughout these articles, a recurring theme emerges—community empowerment. DA-PCC's initiatives, such as helping provide 100% of milk requirements in government school feeding programs, which benefit over 4,000 school children, showcase the transformative potential of thoughtful agricultural programs within local communities.

Innovation remains a driving force in our industry. Collaborations between DA-PCC and KOICA, alongside the pioneering efforts of local government units, illustrate our commitment to embracing cutting-edge practices and technologies for the betterment of the carabao industry.

Collaboration continues to be at the heart of our success. Partnerships with DepEd, DSWD, and cooperative conduits reflect our collective dedication to empowering farmers and uplifting communities.

We take pride in celebrating the accomplishments of carabao farmers, cooperatives, and young carapreneurs. These success stories underscore the industry's growth and potential, highlighting the dedication and innovative spirit that drive transformative change.

Furthermore, we are thrilled to announce that Karbaw Magasin, another DA-PCC publication, has recently received the prestigious Binhi Award. This accolade adds to the honor achieved by Bubalus Newsletter, which was also recognized in 2018. This recognition underscores our unwavering commitment to excellence in agricultural publications and serves as further motivation to continue delivering informative and engaging content.

As we reflect on the growing contributions of DA-PCC's regional knowledge managers in knowledge circulation, we witness a vibrant and dynamic carabao industry, continually evolving and forward-looking. We eagerly anticipate more developments, partnerships, and success stories, confident that together, we can continue to showcase the carabao as a symbol of resilience and progress.

Thank you for being a part of this incredible experience, and we invite you to explore the vibrant landscape of our carabao industry within the pages of this newsletter.

*Eric P. Palacpac*  
Dr. Eric P. Palacpac

## About the cover

Allen Paul Santos and Mikee Anne Castañeda's journey is a compelling testament to transforming setbacks into stepping stones. Their unwavering perseverance helped them conquer adversities, navigate changing circumstances, and attain success in carapreneurship, highlighting the importance of persistence and resilience in achieving one's goals.



Photo by Mikee Antonio

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# 9th NCC to showcase transformation, progress in carapreneurship

By **Ma. Cecilia Irang-Mariano**

The DA-Philippine Carabao Center is set to hold its 9th National Carabao Conference (NCC) in Cebu City on October 16-17, highlighting synergistic efforts among program partners to support the country's carabao and dairy industries.

NCC is an annual conference that serves as an ideal platform to share and disseminate valuable information about technologies, skills, ideas, and best practices in carabao farming.

With the theme “Pagbabagong Mukha at Sigla: Maalab na Pagkakalabawan sa Bagong Pilipinas!”, the conference aims to underscore agriculture's vital role in the nation's thriving economy and the collective efforts to ensure food security and improve farmers' and fisherfolk's quality of life.

“The conference acts as a hub for sharing knowledge and networking among those who are committed to advancing the carabao and dairy sectors. NCC provides a valuable platform that offers insights and awareness about diverse topics within the carabao program,” Dr. Lilian Villamor, 9th NCC

overall chairperson, said. The conference will highlight inspiring stories of metamorphosis among carabao value chain players evolving from subsistence to prosperity and how such transformations were made possible through the collaborative efforts of all program partners.

Key discussions at the conference encompass a wide range of topics including Kwentong Maalab na Pagkakalabawan: A Progress Briefer on the Carabao Development Program (CDP), Launching of the Dairy Herd Buildup of Genetically Improved Buffaloes Project, Pagbabagong Mukha sa Kanayunan: Championing Community Empowerment through Carapreneurship, Pagbabagong Mukha sa Kooperatiba: Cooperative Development and Sustainability, Pagbabagong Sigla Tungo sa Makabuluhang Pamamahala: Fostering Progressive Partnerships through the CBIN/CCDP Cooperative Conduits, and Maalab na Pagkakalabawan: The Role of Cooperatives and Partners in Scaling Up the Carabao Industry.

Industry experts will also discuss important matters such as the

Cooperative Resiliency Management Program, the Dairy Hub Concept, and the future directions of the National Milk Feeding Program.

One of the conference's significant highlights will be the recognition of outstanding carabao farmers who have demonstrated remarkable dedication and excellence in the field of carabao farming. Moreover, cooperatives' dairy products and innovations of various industry participants will be showcased during the event's technology and products exhibit.

This year's confab will be organized jointly for the first time by the DA-PCC and the National Dairy Box Business Group, in partnership with the Lamac Multi-Purpose Cooperative—one of the conduit co-ops under the Carabao-based Business Improvement Network or ALAB Karbawan project of DA-PCC.

More than 500 participants consisting of dairy farmers, local government officials, industry partners, representatives from government agencies, and private organizations are expected to attend the two-day conference. **📍**

# 4K schoolchildren benefit from milk feeding program

By **Marijoan Nefulda**

A total of 4,142 schoolchildren benefitted from supplementary milk feeding programs conducted by the Provincial Government of Ilocos Norte (PGIN), City Government of Batac (CGB), and the Department of Social Welfare and Development Regional Office I (DSWD-RO1).

Said milk feeding programs are implemented pursuant to Republic Act 11037 or the “Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act”. Its aim is to address malnutrition in school children by augmenting their food intake for them to meet their daily food and nutrient requirements, restore their normal nutritional status and help boost their immune system.

The PGIN, under the leadership of Gov. Matthew M. Manotoc, will initiate a milk feeding program for 450 schoolchildren in the province beginning on July 17. This program will continue for a duration of 120 days. The feeding program, now in its fourth year, is an annual event launched during the province's nutrition month celebration.

Likewise, the CGB, headed by Mayor Albert D. Chua, launched its milk feeding supplementation on July 18. A total of 127 beneficiaries will participate in this program, which will run for 90 days. This marks the 5th consecutive year that the city government has conducted this initiative in partnership with DA-PCC.

Both the PGIN and CGB have provided 200-ml sterilized toned milk to their beneficiaries.

The DSWD-RFO will also implement its 3rd cycle of milk feeding for 3,565 schoolchildren in Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur. Selected beneficiaries will receive sterilized milk for 120 days.

Collectively, these feeding programs valued at PHP10M not only address the malnutrition problem but also benefit the dairy value chain players, especially the milk producers. This program will create higher demand for locally produced milk, providing them with an additional source of income and ensuring sustainable livelihoods. **📍**



# DA-PCC, KOICA explore drone-based precision agriculture for dairy buffalo prod’n

By Mikee Antonio

Officials from the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) visited the DA-PCC at CLSU’s National Bull Farm (NBF) in Digdig Joson, Carranglan, Nueva Ecija on August 24 for capacity building on drone utilization for forage production in the Philippines.

DA-PCC OIC Executive Director Dr. Caro B. Salces and KOICA Director of the International Development Cooperation Center (IDCC) Jaeyun Chang led the team. They inspected the facility and collected necessary data for operating the drone.


According to Dr. Salces, the project

aims to contribute to the development of drone-based precision farming techniques, which will effectively improve forage production for productive dairy buffaloes.

The collected data will be used to assess, evaluate, and estimate the herbage productivity of the area and identify plant nutrient deficiencies in the National Bull Farm.

The project’s goal is to advance precision technologies for livestock production encompassing planting, seeding, crop maintenance, crop monitoring, and health evaluation and management.

Ultimately, as per the implementation team, this technological advancement will facilitate monitoring and yield estimation of forage through remote sensing technologies, further supporting the development of feed input production through utilization of drones in the livestock industry.

DA-PCC’s NBF is home to a vast resource of forage species, legumes and grasses. The farm covers an expansive 520 hectares, making it an ideal testing area for the project’s objectives. 

## ‘Eskwelahan sa Kahanginan’ airs in Cebu

By Leinefe Aton

A radio program focused on dairy buffalo production is scheduled to broadcast from the Cebu Technological University’s (CTU) Tuburan campus following the signing of a tripartite Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on August 29.

This MOA, involving the DA-PCC at Ubay Stock Farm (DA-PCC at USF), CTU, and the First Consolidated Cooperative Along Tañon Seaboard (FCCT), outlines the launch of "Eskwelahan sa Kahanginan (School-On-Air)-A Radio Broadcast on Dairy Buffalo Production," aimed at addressing challenges faced by farmers in Tuburan, Cebu, and neighboring areas, including the lack of quality forage, breeding knowledge, and dairy production expertise.

Engr. Naomi Bajao, the Project Leader Proponent of CTU-Tuburan, explained that this radio program is part of the university’s community extension projects. It will primarily benefit the FCCT with technical support provided by the DA-PCC at USF.

Gaudioso Calibugan, the Senior Agriculturist of DA-PCC at USF, emphasized the importance of this partnership in spreading awareness about carabao dairying. Recognizing the significance of

collaboration, Magdaleno Bargamento, the CEO of FCCT, stressed the need for various individuals and professions to support farmers, whether through financial assistance, technology, or expertise.

Carla Y. Abaquita, the campus director of CTU-Tuburan, expressed her delight at the program’s launch, emphasizing the importance of sharing education and technology with farmers, which is an important extension program of the university.

The campus operates its FM radio station called "Bulawanong Tinubdan" or BT at 98.1 MHz, affiliated with the Philippine Broadcasting Service (PBS), serving as an avenue for information dissemination and technology transfer.


In January 2021, the university launched the CTU & BT Radio Extension and Technology Transfer (BEATT) program, serving as its information and technology dissemination arm.

According to Prof. Devonna Celedonio, chairperson of the university’s extension services, the initiative aims to bridge the gap between developed technologies and their actual application in the field. Engr. Bajao, the main host of CTU

BEATT radio show, mentioned that the "Eskwelahan sa Kahanginan" will air every Tuesday from 5:00-6:00 PM, consisting of 16 episodes starting on September 5, 2023. Attendance will be taken, and quizzes will be given during the broadcasts.

Dr. Maria Dinah Loculan, Center Director of DA-PCC at USF, challenged the town to develop a unique product from the carabao’s milk, leveraging the university’s research and development efforts.

Mardonio Benting, the chairperson of FCCT, expressed gratitude for the opportunity and support and wished for the project’s success. The local government unit (LGU) of Tuburan, represented by Engr. Rowena Bernia, the municipal registrar, pledged full support, aligning with their goal of achieving food sustainability.

In addition to the MOA signing, FCCT and DA-PCC at USF provided a 32" television and 20 radio receiver sets to CTU-Tuburan. Following the program’s launch, a live on-air interview hosted by Engr. Bajao and April Jean Edillon was conducted with key figures, further highlighting the importance of this initiative. 

## DA-PCC plays vital role...

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Social Welfare and Development.

For the 2024 implementation, 50% of the milk requirements for the feeding program will be provided by the DA-PCC’s assisted cooperatives while the remaining half is set to be supplied by the assisted co-ops of the National Dairy Authority (NDA). This concerted effort aligns with the DA’s overarching objective of providing 100% of the requirements for the milk feeding program.

DA Undersecretary and Chairperson of committees related to livestock Deogracias Victor Savellano underscored the need to overcome the lingering 13% dependency on commercially outsourced milk, as evidenced by prior implementations.

DA-PCC OIC Executive Director Dr. Caro Salces attributed this challenge to logistical hurdles in far-flung areas. The reliance on traditional delivery methods has often resulted in delays and inadequate supply, leaving many children without the nutrition they require for healthy growth and development.


Recognizing the need for an innovative solution to ensure consistent supply of milk, the DA-PCC, in partnership with its assisted co-ops, has turned to retort facilities to bridge the gap in its delivery capabilities. Retort technology involves using airtight packaging and heat processing to sterilize and preserve milk, extending its shelf life significantly without compromising its nutritional value. This method not only ensures the safety and quality of the milk but also allows for bulk transportation to regions where frequent deliveries are impractical.

“We now have existing retort facilities in Isabela, Science City of Muñoz, Batangas, and Sorsogon managed by our partners in the industry. We also have plans to establish similar facilities in Bohol and Zamboanga del Sur to cater to the Visayas and Mindanao areas,” Dr. Salces remarked.

Furthermore, DA-PCC is poised to establish milk laboratories within its 12 regional centers nationwide, offering cooperative members access to milk quality testing services. These

initiatives are made possible through a locally funded project spearheaded by Senator Cynthia Villar, chairperson of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food, and Agrarian Reform.

Beyond infrastructure developments, the DA-PCC is set to employ a series of strategic measures. These include enhancing carabao smallholder farms’ productivity through the establishment of National Dairy Herd Improvement system in partnership with the Korea International Cooperation Agency, improving milk production through increased number of dairy animals and sufficient feeding, establishing dairy herd buildup through the new coop conduit scheme, and carrying out massive artificial insemination activities, among others.

Since its inception in 2019, the milk feeding program has already proven its worth, benefiting over 4.2 million undernourished children and concurrently boosting the income of 53 DA-PCC-assisted cooperatives, collectively garnering a total revenue of PHP2 billion. 





# LGU Bacnotan teams up with DA-PCC for silage production training

By **Jan Rose Maon**

The Local Government Unit of Bacnotan, led by Mayor Divine C. Fontanilla, partnered with DA-PCC at Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University (DA-PCC at DMMMSU) to conduct a training on silage production for the town's buffalo raisers on August 24 in Bitalag, Bacnotan, La Union.

The primary goal of this activity was to introduce silage commercialization as an additional income-generating venture for buffalo farmers and to provide them with the knowledge and skills necessary for utilizing agricultural by-products as fodder for ruminants. During the training session, several

topics were covered. These included “Forage Production and Conservation Techniques” by Vienna Kristel A. Grospe, Science Research Analyst, and “Animal Health and Common Diseases of Buffaloes” led by Dr. Mac Erwin P. Perez, center veterinarian of DA-PCC at DMMMSU. The lectures were followed by hands-on training on silage production.

Federico R. Copuz, Sanggunian Bayan member and chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries, expressed his appreciation for the participants' and speakers' unwavering commitment despite the inclement weather.

"Maganda itong training na hatid ng PCC.... at sana dahil dito ay marami kayong matutunan, lalo na dito sa pagproduce ng pakain para sa mga alagang kalabaw," SBM Corpuz said. He also encouraged the farmers to continue their buffalo raising endeavors, assuring them of the LGU's continuous support.

Currently, LGU-Bacnotan has distributed 47 buffaloes to the community, benefitting a total of 33 buffalo raisers in the area. They have also recently registered their association with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) under the name Buffalo Raisers and Dairy Producers of Bacnotan La Union.

This training was initiated by the Municipal Agriculture Office, led by Dr. Divina Gracia G. Apigo, and facilitated by Jenesse May S. Arellano, a buffalo monitoring staff. **B**

# Dairy herd improvement project makes headway in San Agustin, Isabela

By **Steven Marx Tangonan**

The carapreneurs of San Agustin, Isabela are set to witness yet another milestone in the development of the local dairy industry. This achievement comes with the completion of one of the initiatives under the Village-based Dairy Herd Improvement Project, which took place from August 14 to 18.

This project is a joint effort between the DA-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), aiming to revolutionize dairy farming through innovation.

A highlight of these efforts is the introduction of cutting-edge techniques, particularly the innovative bolus insertion. This smart device, once administered orally to the buffalo, carries a distinctive code that can be read using an advanced RFID reader, combined with the traditional ear-tagging for easy identification. This ingenious approach ensures the traceability of the animals, which is a crucial component of the comprehensive Buffalo Breed Registry System (BBRS).

The BBRS serves as another critical cornerstone of this project. This system is built upon meticulous record-keeping, which includes maintaining individual

animal profiles and all necessary details. DA-PCC's technical experts have provided farmers with a variety of services, from ear-tagging and bolus insertion essential to ensuring an accurate and up-to-date individual animal record. This comprehensive system ensures precise tracking of the buffalo's health, genetic lineage, and productivity.

During this intensive project, carabaos were provided with animal health-

related services, including deworming, pregnancy diagnosis, and essential vitamin supplementation. The farmers were well-informed about the upcoming Monthly Milk Test Day (MTD), during which milk samples will be collected and tested to ensure optimal milk production. The MTD is scheduled for the following week, promising a significant step forward in enhancing dairy production.

This endeavor wasn't limited to on-site activities. The DA-PCC's staff collected blood, urine, and fecal samples from the carabaos. These samples will be analyzed as part of their application for the National Dairy Authority-License to Operate (NDA-LTO), showcasing the farmers' commitment to maintaining the highest standards in their operations. **B**



A staff of DA-PCC demonstrates the function of RFID scanners and bolus technology.

# DA-PCC at USM inks partnership with Bangsamoro Agri-Fishery Network for RDE activities in BARMM

By **Rodolfo Valdez, Jr.**

The DA-Philippine Carabao Center at University of Southern Mindanao (DA-PCC at USM) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the organization and operationalization of the Bangsamoro Agri-Fishery Research, Development, and Extension Network (BAFRDEN) with different agri-fishery agencies in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) on August 16 in Davao City.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Agrarian Reform- BARMM (MAFAR-BARMM), State Colleges and Universities (SUCs), and partner agencies in the Bangsamoro Region, the MOU aims to establish a network that institutionalizes strong linkage for research, development, and extension activities. Also, it seeks to promote inter-agency coordination and collaboration to address the needs of the farming and fishing communities in BARMM.

“Agriculture, fisheries, and agrarian reform hold a pivotal role in the prosperity of our region. They are not just sectors of our economy, they are



DA PCC at USM research coordinator Rheo Ryan Balbuena (left) and Hannadi Guiamad-Pompong of ATI RTC-XII sign a memorandum of understanding on the operationalization of agri-fishery research, development, and extension activities in BARMM.

pillars of our society. In this context, the significance of research cannot be overstated. Research in this domain is not merely an academic pursuit. It is a beacon of progress and hope,” MAFAR-BARMM Minister Mohammad Swaib Jacob said.

DA-PCC at USM Center Director Benjamin John C. Basilio also expressed his gratitude and his commitment to sharing the available resources and technologies of PCC and to providing available mechanisms in the promotion of carabao-related services in the Bangsamoro Region.

In addition, DA-PCC at USM Research Coordinator Rheo Ryan P. Balbuena, who also attended the MOU signing, stated that the partnership will cover the collaborative undertakings such as the exchange of results of the research, development, and extension projects of the member institutions of the network.

“Since DA-PCC at USM is now part of the BAFRDEN. This engagement will open avenues of opportunity for the agency to commit and help our Bangsamoro farmers through the Carabao Development Program and livestock research,” Balbuena said. **B**

# PLGU La Union banners the carabao as instrument of ‘PROBINSIYAnihan’ in Elyu

By **Jan Rose Maon**

The Provincial Local Government of La Union and DA-PCC recently inked a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to strengthen collaboration on carabao-based dairy development in Rosario, La Union (Elyu).

The signing took place on August 25 as part of the relaunch of Dairy Box-La Union not only as a hub for carabao-based products but also for other products from the province. This move is expected to expand the offerings of Elyu to its visitors, making it a renowned tourist destination.

La Union Governor Raphaelle Veronica “Rafy” Ortega-David, in her speech, emphasized the value of bayanihan (cooperative endeavor), which she referred to as “La Union PROBINSYAnihan”, as a means to propel the province towards achieving its dreams for its people.

“Hindi po iisang tao ang may pakana nito...kaya po kami [PCC, DTI, PGLU] nandito sama-sama ngayon because this is a joint effort, this is a collaboration and ito po yung bayanihan na gusto ko nga pong mangyari sa La Union na kung saan

lahat po tayo ay tulong-tulong para maging posible po ang mga pangarap natin para sa bawa't isa”, she said.

She added that love for oneself and for one another can make all things possible for the province, “kasi kung meron po tayong pagmamahalan sa isa't isa, hindi po tayo magsasawang ibigay yung 100% po natin...para mapaganda pa po ang pamumuhay ng bawa't isa sa atin.”

The MOA signing was led by DA-PCC OIC Executive Director Dr. Caro B.



# NegOr ARBs open first dairy biz in Tanjay City

By Louie Jee Huelar


The San Julio Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Cooperative (SJARBC) now operates the first Dairy Box outlet in Tanjay City, with opening and turnover ceremonies held on July 21 in Barangay San Jose.

The opening rites were led by DA-PCC at La Carlota Stock Farm (DA-PCC at LCSF) ahead of the Tanjay City fiesta on July 24, as an effort to promote dairy carabao-based entrepreneurship and local tourism. The Dairy Box is a nationwide one-stop dairy delicatessen store established to support market development for carabao farmers engaged in dairying.

It is a market support component under the Carabao-based Business Improvement Network (CBIN) or ALAB Karbawan project, funded by the Office of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food, and Agrarian Reform, chaired by Senator Cynthia Villar.

Dairy Box-Tanjay City carries a variety of dairy products made from buffalo's milk including pasteurized milk, flavored milk, yogurt milk, "Karavron", kesong puti, Karabun with fillings, pastillas de leche, dulce de leche and dulce gatas. The SJARBC sees the opening of the

Dairy Box as a means to provide better quality of life to the Tanjayanons by promoting better incomes and nutrition.

SJARBC and DA-PCC at LCSF officials were present during the handover event led by SJARBC Chairperson Eva Montecino and General Manager George Yleana and DA-PCC at LCSF Center Director Eva Rom. Tanjay City local government officials led by Mayor José T. Orlino and Arjay C. Venus, a representative from the office of Senator Villar, also graced the event. 

# DA-PCC at DMMMSU partners with DSWD for farmers training under 'GK3K' project

By Maximo Peralta, Jr.

Soon, 30 members of the Tibay Bisig Poponto Sustainable Livelihood Program Association (TBPSLPA) will have the capability to effectively engage in carapreneurship after participating in a three-day training on Dairy Buffalo Production and Management in partnership with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) for its Gatasang Kalabaw Kontra Kagutuman at Kahirapan (GK3K) project, expected to be implemented third quarter of this year.

The training took place in barangay Poponto, Bautista, Pangasinan, on July 12 to 14.

During the training, participants were introduced to the Carabao Development Program (CDP) through lectures on breeding, calf management, hygienic milk handling, and proper animal care, identification of common diseases, and forage production and management. The training also included a learning tour at one of the carabao farms in Bantog, Asingan, Pangasinan. This

tour provided participants with exposure to the actual operations of the cooperative including milking and milk handling, as well as management of the dairy farm.

DA-PCC at DMMMSU Center Director Vilma C. Gagni said this walkthrough tour will provide the learners a better appreciation of how a dairy buffalo farm operates and equip them with the knowledge needed to manage their own farms in the future.

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# DA-PCC holds training on dairy buffalo production, management for new co-op conduit in Cagayan

By Steven Marx Tangonan

In preparation to become a cooperative conduit for the DA-PCC's Carabao-based Business Improvement Network (CBIN) project, 22 farmers from Pinoy Bagong Pag-asa Marketing Cooperative (PBPMC) participated in a training course on dairy buffalo production and management on July 3-4 at the National Swamp Buffalo Genepool and Dairy Buffalo Farm in Piat, Cagayan.

The training was conducted by the DA-PCC at Cagayan State University's (DA-PCC at CSU) carabao-based enterprise development team, led by the center's veterinarian, Dr. Aileen L. Bulusan, and CBED coordinator Romulo A. Salas. The training focused on the agency's services under the Carabao Development Program (CDP) and included lectures on animal nutrition, carabao production and management, herd health program, record keeping, and action planning.

During the presentation, Salas highlighted the importance of record keeping and action planning in dairy buffalo management. He stated, "Planning and records keeping are important when caring for the dairy

herd, as they help the farm manager efficiently formulate interventions to maintain the health and vitality of the animals."

In the culminating activity, the participants of the training course understood their role as a conduit cooperative in the successful implementation of the Carabao-based Business Improvement Network (CBIN) project, especially in disease prevention.

Mildred C. Tong, one of the training participants, expressed her gratitude for her newfound knowledge.


"Noong una, akala namin ay sapat na ang mga tradisyunal na kaugalian sa pag-aalaga ng kalabaw, tulad ng pagpapastol ng maaga at pagpapainom ng tubig na galing sa ilog. Nalaman namin na 'yung mga ginagawa pala ng aming itay, mga kapitbahay at kamag-anak na may alagang kalabaw ay hindi pala pwede dahil maaaring makapulot ng sakit at mga parasitiko ang ating mga alagang kalabaw.

Kaya't malaking tulong ang naganap na training dahil natutunan namin ang mga wastong pamamaraan upang maiiwas

namin sa sakit ang aming mga alaga." Tong shared.

Previously relying on income from renting farm machinery and marketing of farm inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides, the cooperative is now looking at expanding its business by introducing the carabao-based dairy enterprise as another income-generating opportunity and sustainable livelihood for its farmer-members.

The selection of PBPMC as a conduit co-op for DA-PCC's CBIN project, popularized as Accelerating Livelihoods and Assets Buildup or ALAB Karbawan, was initiated following a courtesy meeting with Cagayan Valley Governor Manuel N. Mamba, the provincial agriculturist, and the veterinarian in Provincial Veterinary Office, Ballesteros, Cagayan.

The CBIN project is funded by the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Food, chaired by Senator Cynthia A. Villar. 

Members of the San Julio Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Cooperative eagerly welcome the opportunities presented by the newly opened Dairy Box for both their co-op and the community.





# Farm managers, extensionists undergo TOT for intensified animal, feeding management

By **Ronaline Canute**

Farm managers and extensionists from the 11 institutional herds of the agency successfully completed the Training-of-Trainers (TOT) program with the aim of scaling up the KBGAN iHealth and KBGAN iFeed mobile applications, which are designed to improve animal health and feeding management. The training took place on July 25–27 at the DA-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) national headquarters.

In 2020, the DA-PCC, through the Knowledge Management Division (KMD), in partnership with the Grameen Foundation Philippines, started working on a three-phase project called the Extension and Advisory Services Information System. Grameen Foundation developed two mobile applications known as KBGAN

(Knowledge, Brokerage, Guidance, and Advisory Network) iHealth and KBGAN iFeed in consultation with DA-PCC’s technical experts specializing in animal health and nutrition. These apps aim to ultimately improve the extension and advisory services provided by DA-PCC, specifically in the context of improving dairy buffalo production and management by small-scale carabao farmers.

The participants were immersed in both theoretical and practical aspects. The Grameen team guided them through the navigation and basic troubleshooting of the KBGAN mobile apps. A hands-on activity on how to use these applications was conducted at the DA-PCC at Central Luzon State

University (DA-PCC at CLSU) dairy farm. “The two applications will help our farm managers and extensionists to perform the correct diagnosis and treatment for the animals. The same with iFeed, it will help us accurately compute the proper feed ration,” said Jay Donnevie Rocutan, farm manager of DA-PCC at Mariano Marcos State University (DA-PCC at MMSU).

The same training activity is expected to be conducted in Bohol province, which showed an interest in the use of mobile apps for its Barangay Livestock Aide (BALA) program. On July 18, both mobile apps were launched in Mabini, in the same province, during the 7th Bohol Dairy Festival. 📺

## Bull handlers join battle to speed up carabao production in Zambo

By **Dorie Bastatas**

Aspiring bull handlers in Zamboanga are set to join the national upgrading program for carabaos after undergoing training on bull handling at the DA-Philippine Carabao Center at Mindanao Livestock Production Center (DA-PCC at MLPC), Kalawit, Zamboanga del Norte on July 3.

One of the issues hindering the steady growth of carabao production and related businesses is the scarcity of superior breeding bulls in farming communities. The DA-PCC’s Bull Entrustment Program (BEP) addresses this issue by harnessing the potential of purebred bulls of superior quality to produce calves for small-scale farmers and farmers’ cooperatives.

During the training, the 20 aspiring bull handlers were informed about their obligations as stipulated in a contract and memorandum of agreement. They were also introduced to the Carabao Development Program with an overview of various buffalo management and production practices

in feed and nutrition, animal diseases, and record keeping. “We anticipate an increase in bull utilization following this training,” DA-PCC at MLPC Center Director Dr. Cecelio Velez said. He added that bulls are highly efficient breeders with an efficiency rate of 85%, allowing them to produce calves after a year of breeding.

Ariel Carumba, Farm Superintendent II of DA-MLPC, Noel Tantico, BEP coordinator, and Dr. Velez served as the resource speakers. Once all the criteria are met, the bulls will be entrusted to the handlers. Bulls aged two or younger, once weaned, may be awarded to the farmer so that it can start socializing.

A bull can be fully transferred to the handler after siring a minimum of 25 calves. To date, DA-PCC at MLPC has released a total of 136 bulls since it started BEP in 2001, resulting in 1,320 recorded calves. 📺

## VisMin young carapreneurs join BizTalk

By **Jeson Candole**

Select second-generation members of their parents’ carabao-based dairy enterprise participated in a two-day Business Talk (BizTalk) organized by the DA-PCC’s Business Development

and Commercialization Unit (BDCU) on July 27–28 in Davao City.

The BizTalk event is part of an advocacy program initiated by BDCU that aims to broaden the business and financial literacy of the young generation, aged 18 to 30, in DA-PCC’s assisted cooperatives.

Additionally, the DA-PCC recognizes the important role of the youth in sustaining the development of the local dairy industry. Exposing them early on in the dynamics of cooperativism

## DA-PCC hosts product benchmarking for mozzarella cheese, processed buffalo meat

By **Mikee Antonio**



Dr. Renelyn M. Labindao, head of the Product Processing and Marketing Unit, showcases DA-PCC at CLSU’s Dairy Outlet, featuring a range of products out of carabao’s milk, meat, hide, and horn.

In a bid to foster innovation and collaboration within the agricultural sector, the DA-PCC at Central Luzon State University (DA-PCC at CLSU) hosted a benchmarking activity showcasing its select developed products.

The benchmarking mission aimed to offer participants with an in-depth understanding of the products and technologies developed by DA-PCC at CLSU, specifically centered around mozzarella cheese and processed buffalo meat. The ultimate aim was to foster networking and collaboration throughout Central Luzon, solidifying the region’s status as an agricultural and technological hub.

This activity coincided with the 3rd quarter meeting of member agencies of the Provincial Inclusive Innovation Center (PIIC) Nueva Ecija and representatives of the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises on August 16 in the Science City of Muñoz, NE.

The PIIC collaborated with the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise Development (MSMED) Council to harness the potential of technology adaptation from both private and public sectors. This collaboration aimed to foster unique product innovations through Research and Development Projects across Region III.

During the event, Dr. Ericson N. Dela Cruz, center director of DA-PCC at CLSU, took the opportunity to unveil a range of newly developed carabao leather hide novelty products that are set to launch this year, further diversifying the product offerings available.

Dr. Richard Simangan, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Provincial Director of Nueva Ecija Provincial Office (NEPO), emphasized the importance of leveraging existing mature technologies within the region. He stressed that through collaborative

efforts with partner stakeholders, these technologies could be promoted and integrated into Central Luzon’s commercial landscape, with a long-term vision of extending the reach nationally.

Dr. Simangan outlined a two-pronged strategy to achieve these goals. First, he advocated conducting surveys to ascertain the specific needs of MSMEs. This information would then be communicated to technology developers, suppliers, and service providers to ensure alignment. The second approach involved integrating traditional research and technology resources with survey data to refine and improve ongoing projects.

The meeting was attended by representatives from different MSMEs, dairy cooperatives, the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), DA-PCC, DA-PCC at CLSU, Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST)-TBI, CLSU-AFTBI, PhilRice, and DTI as the lead agency. 📺

return on investment, which is vital for developing business plans and attracting future investors. According to DA-PCC, the average age of the carabao farmers is 45, and part of their goal is to strengthen the dairy industry by empowering the entire carapreneur families, specifically involving the youth in the industry.

Zadieshar G. Sanchez, Administrative Officer V and one of the organizers, said the youth program’s theme “Kaugmaon ng Kalabawan” perfectly aligns with the agency’s goal of future-

proofing the carabao industry through the active and early engagement of the youth.

“We should also take advantage of the observed qualities of the young generation in agriculture industry such as being digitally inclined, wildly innovative, and collaborative. This training helped them organize their business plans through the business model canvass tool and to inform them of their next steps through the lectures on cooperatives and business fundamentals,” he concluded. 📺



# Dairy Box-Lubao, Pampanga soon to rise in town’s trading hub

By Mikee Antonio



DA-PCC at CLSU Center Director Dr. Ericson Dela Cruz (middle) and Lubao Mayor Esmeralda Pineda (2nd from left), together with the LFFAC officials, sign a memorandum of agreement for the establishment of a dairy processing plant and marketing outlet as a market development support for carapreneurs in the town.

The groundbreaking ceremony and signing of a memorandum of agreement (MOA) for the dairy processing plant and marketing outlet was held on July 20 in Brgy. Sto. Tomas, Lubao, Pampanga.

This facility, called Dairy Box, is the seventh of its kind in Region 3. It will be operated by the Lubao Farmers and Fisherfolk Agriculture Cooperative (LFFAC).

The outlet, a market development support for carapreneurs, will rise in the area where Lubao town’s former slaughterhouse and National Food Authority (NFA) office were situated. The trading hub, which is owned by the LGU, was chosen as a strategic site for the Dairy Box because of its prime location, according to Mayor Esmeralda Pineda.

The MOA was signed by Mayor Pineda, LFFAC Chairperson Jesus Nuqui, DA-PCC at Central Luzon State University Center Director Dr. Ericson Dela Cruz, and witnessed by partner stakeholders.

The Dairy Box is an infrastructure component of the Carabao-based Business Improvement Network (CBIN) or ALAB Karbawan project supported by the Office of Senate Committee on Agriculture and Food chaired by Senator Cynthia Villar. ❸

# NEO Program’s pilot batch bares positive outcome

By Ma. Cecilia Irang-Mariano

The DA-PCC conducted a graduation ceremony for the pilot batch of its New Employees Orientation (NEO) Program, marking the successful completion of an intensive training program that equipped new employees with knowledge and skills related to their roles, as well as the agency’s mandate, programs, and services.

Zadieshar Sanchez, NEO Program champion, presented the results of knowledge gained by Batch 1. He cited that the overall knowledge of NEO students about DA-PCC programs significantly increased with an average improvement rate of 58.19% between the initial diagnostic exam and the final exam. This means that the NEO program successfully achieved its intended main outcome.

After the presentation, a recognition ceremony ensued to acknowledge and honor the graduates for their unwavering commitment and dedication in familiarizing themselves with the agency’s mission, vision, and goals.

A total of 67 graduates received certificates of recognition, acknowledging their exceptional efforts and determination throughout the NEO program. Recognizing the outstanding achievements of select graduates, the event also included the awarding of medals and certificates to the top performers. Such acknowledgment served as a testament

to their exemplary dedication and grasp of the core values and principles of DA-PCC.

Dr. Caro Salces, DA-PCC OIC Executive Director, concluded the event by delivering a closing message where he extended heartfelt congratulations to the graduates. He emphasized the significance of embracing continuous learning, nurturing personal growth, and maintaining unwavering dedication to foster excellence within the agency. As the NEO program concludes its successful pilot batch, DA-PCC looks forward to the continued development and growth of its employees. ❸



Graduates of the NEO Program’s pilot batch gear up to apply their learnings and sustain their dedication in nurturing excellence within the agency.

# DA-PCC at USM eyes revival of carabao program in Lanao del Sur

By Rodolfo Valdez, Jr.

A renewed Carabao Development Program in Lanao del Sur can be expected soon following discussions on enhanced partnership between the DA-PCC and the provincial government of Lanao del Sur.

After nearly a decade, this initiative aims to revive the carabao industry in the region and contribute to its goal of becoming a food-secure domain in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

DA-PCC at University of Southern Mindanao Center Director Benjamin John C. Basilio presented concrete plans to the government of Lanao

del Sur during the conduct of 2nd Livestock and Poultry Congress on July 11 in Marawi City bearing a theme “Building Resilient Communities Livestock and Poultry as Pillars of Progress”.

“I had presented concrete plans to Vice Governor Mohammad Khalid Adiong in order to increase the population of carabaos and dairy farmers in the province given the obvious surge in demand for milk and meat in the country,” Basilio said.

Director Basilio has outlined several major plans for Lanao del Sur officials: conducting an information drive

on carabao upgrading program, organizing massive AI activities, strengthening carabao-based community development, and integrating carabaos into the local agriculture commodity plan. The government of Lanao del Sur, led by Governor Mamintal Adiong duly represented by Vice Governor M. Adiong, is looking forward to the revitalization of the carabao industry. This initiative aligns with the province’s journey toward sustainable development, recognizing the pivotal role of livestock industry in fostering robust and thriving communities.

“The last PCC services conducted in Lanao del Sur were recorded in 2013 due to security reasons such as the Marawi siege. But today, with the help of local government and other agencies, we can embrace once again our agency’s slogan ‘Sa dairy, ang kita ay daily!’ for the ‘People of the Lake,” Basilio expressed. ❸

# DA-PCC at DMMMSU partners...

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The overall goal of the activity is to provide disadvantaged communities a sustainable source of income through carabao-based enterprises, as mentioned by Paul Andrew P. Texon, the operations head of DA-PCC at DMMMSU.

The center’s activity partner DSWD said it aims to assist marginalized carabao-based farmers through capacity-building and livelihood interventions. They also aim to enhance their socioeconomic conditions by connecting them to possible institutional public and/or government markets.

Chad Everett Q. Llanes, the regional program coordinator of the

Sustainable Livelihood Program of DWSD-FO1, emphasized that this enterprise is intended to be linked to feeding programs of partner agencies, allowing them to have a stable market for the products. TBPSLPA President Joel Punsalan expressed hope in the long-term results of the training, anticipating improved lives for their members because of the carabao.

Another participant, Menchie Adsua, said, “hindi lang [ito] pang-pamilya kundi pangkalahatan ito at nakakatulong pa sa bawa’t isa kasi yung gatas [...] pampasigla, nagbibigay ng kalakasan at [ito’y] masustansyang inumin” [The training is not just for the family; it is for everyone because milk gives energy, strength, and nutrition].

The carabao’s milk produced under the GK3K project is expected to contribute to the total milk supply for the national feeding program of the government, as mandated by Republic Act 11037 or the “Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act” that aims to address the problem on undernourished Filipino children.

The closing ceremonies of the training took place at the Dairy Box of Bantog Samahang Nayon MPC in Asingan, Pangasinan, where the participants received their certificates of participation and were treated with Dairy Box products. ❸



# 'Karbaw Magasin' is Binhi Awards' Best Agri-related Government Publication

By **Ma. Cecilia Irang-Mariano**

The DA-Philippine Carabao Center's (DA-PCC) "Karbaw Magasin" bagged the 2022 Binhi Awards' "Best Agri-related Government Publication" during the awarding ceremony held on July 20 at the National Food Authority Building in Quezon City.

The Binhi Awards, organized by the Philippine Agricultural Journalists (PAJ) in collaboration with the San Miguel Corporation (SMC), aims to honor the exceptional contributions and achievements of the country's agricultural journalists and government information officers involved in agri-related matters.

"Karbaw (a Hiligaynon word which means "carabao" or "buffalo") Magasin" is a quarterly publication written in Filipino. It showcases success stories of carapreneurs and other value chain players in the carabao industry. The magazine extensively covers topics related to the Carabao Development Program, including innovative dairy carabao farming practices, scientific breakthroughs, and the socioeconomic impact of carapreneurship on rural farming communities.

The publication's team of editors, writers, layout artists, and

photographers collaborate to bring agriculture stories to life by weaving together informative articles, in-depth interviews, engaging visuals, and success stories from various stakeholders.

Karbaw Magasin is produced by the Applied Communication Section (ACS) of the Knowledge Management Division (KMD). It is edited by KMD chief Dr. Eric Palacpac and ACS-KMD head Rowena Galang, managed by Ma. Cecilia Irang-Mariano, and designed by Dine Yve Daganos. Its writers Ma. Cecilia Irang-Mariano, Ronaline Canute, Dine Yve Daganos, Rovelyn Jacang, and the DA-PCC's regional knowledge managers are regular contributors.

Dr. Palacpac expressed his heartfelt gratitude for the recognition and extended warm congratulations to the team, saying, "I am sincerely grateful to all of you who have breathed life into Karbaw Magasin throughout these years. Thank you for your unwavering passion, hard work, and dedication".

According to PAJ President Fermin Diaz, this year's Binhi Awards contest, themed "Sharpening our pens towards recovery," received a total of 67 entries. However, following a rigorous screening process, only 37 entries advanced to the judging

stage.

The competition encompassed various categories, both minor and major, such as Agri Photojournalist of the Year, Agri Broadcast Journalist of the Year, Agri Beat Reporter of the Year, Best Agri-related Social Media Page, and Best Agri-related Advocacy Campaign, among others. 



DA-PCC team together with the officials from the Philippine Agricultural Journalists during the awarding ceremony on July 20.

# DA-PCC at CLSU Center Director bags CSC's Pagasa Award

By **Mikee Antonio**

DA-PCC at CLSU Center Director Dr. Ericson N. Dela Cruz was the regional awardee of the esteemed Pagasa Award by the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

The recognition was part of the 2023 Search for Outstanding Government Workers, aimed at motivating or inspiring government employees to improve the quality of their performance and deepen their commitment to public service.


The award was conferred to Dr. Dela

Cruz at the CSC National Capital Region in Quezon City on May 19, 2023 and was formally recognized by the DA-PCC family during its Flag Raising Ceremony on August 14, 2023 at the Eusebio Hall within the national headquarters.

Dr. Dela Cruz took this opportunity to dedicate the award to his late mother, Ligaya Dela Cruz, whose memory continues to inspire him on his journey. He also extended his gratitude to the DA-PCC partner farmers

from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. These farmers, he said, continue to be his inspiration and motivation for delivering unwavering public service marked by excellence, professionalism, integrity, and commitment.

Dr. Caro B. Salces, DA-PCC OIC Executive Director, praised Dr. Dela Cruz for his notable contributions to the agency and expressed gratitude for his exemplary service.

The Pagasa Awards, established under Executive Order No. 292, recognizes individuals for their superior work performance and outstanding contributions benefitting an office, agency, community, or region. 



Dr. Ericson Dela Cruz (4th from left), Center Director of PCC at CLSU, proudly accepts the CSC Pagasa award as a regional honoree in the 2023 Search for Outstanding Government Workers.

## PLGU La Union banners...

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Salces, DA-PCC at DMMMSU Center Director Vilma C. Gagni, Rosario Dairy Farmers Cooperative (RDFC) Chairperson Annalyn L. Tade, and OIC Provincial Veterinarian Dr. Domingo Bobby C. Calub III.

Chairperson Tade, speaking on behalf of the members of RDFC, expressed her gratitude to the PLGU and DA-PCC for all the assistance their cooperative is receiving from the government.


She also committed to sustain the operations of RDFC as a conduit to prospering the local dairy industry in La Union in order to help more farmers. She stated that RDFC shares

the same spirit as the Governor's PROBINSIYAnihan saying, "hindi po competition, kundi collaboration".

The Dairy Box serves as a one-stop-shop designed to provide a market support for carabao-based dairy farmers. After the relaunch and MOA signing, the group moved to the Agoo Breeding Station in Nazareno, Agoo, La Union for the groundbreaking ceremony of the "Establishment of Carabao-Based Enterprise Development Dairy Farm".

Dr. Salces underscored the benefits of the project, "It is like hitting two birds with one stone, gaganda yung nutrition

ng mga bata and kikita din yung ating mga farmers." With the support of the political leadership in the Elyu, he believes there is no reason for the local dairy development program not to succeed.

Also present during the relaunching of Dairy Box-La Union were Dr. Edwin Atabay, head of Operations of PCC-NHQ, Regional Director Grace Falgui-Baluyan of the DTI-RFO I, Provincial Director Merlie D. Membere of the DTI-La Union, DA-PCC at DMMMSU staff and the officers and members of Aringay Dairy Raisers Association (ADCRA), Sudipen Dairy Farmers Association (SDFA), and RDFC. 



# Dairy fest in Bohol hails carabao as symbol of resiliency

By **Leinefe Aton**

The 7th Bohol Dairy Festival held during the Sandugo Festivities in Mabini on July 18 had a special focus on celebrating the carabao and promoting dairy development amidst climate change.

With the theme "Panggatasan Palamboon, Subay sa Hagit sa Panahon" (Dairy Development Amidst the Challenges of Our Times), the festival aimed to showcase and equip farmers and stakeholders on practices and technologies that could help mitigate the unfavorable effects of climate change on livestock production, according to Dr. Stella Marie Lapiz, OPV of Bohol.

Key highlights of the festival included a carabao parade, a contest for the best heifers, launching of the mobile applications on iHealth and iFeed, recognition of exceptional farmers, turnover of production support materials and equipment, and lectures on silage making, dairy safety regulations, and meat processing.

The attendees at the festival also enjoyed various agricultural products that were on display in the venue. Mabini town is an impact area of the DA-Philippine Carabao Center at Ubay Stock Farm (DA-PCC at USF) for carabao upgrading program, dating back to the Philippine Carabao Research and Development Center (PCRDC) in 1982.

"It is good that the Provincial Government of Bohol has chosen Mabini to host the festival this year because it has demonstrated a real transformation of the community in terms of the breed of animals and the lives of farmers that were changed because they're earning from the (dairy) enterprise," according to Dr. Caro B. Salces, then center director of DA-PCC at USF, now the OIC-Executive Director of DA-PCC. History stated that the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) has funded Php5.8 million out of a Php9-million project dubbed "Bohol Dairy Processing and Marketing Enterprise".

From that point on, through collaborative efforts and the support of the provincial LGU, the dairy program became institutionalized. It was already included in the Provincial Commodity Investment Plan (PCIP) of Bohol with a corresponding budget allocated every year.

In her speech, Dr. Lapiz also shared the challenges the industry has encountered especially in its early 15 years where there was a slow growth. This includes farmers' low adoption of Artificial Insemination (AI) technology, the absence of processing facilities, and the difficulty in marketing the milk produced.

"However, because of the intensive efforts made by the partner agencies, we have overcome those challenges," she added.

Lapiz gladly reported a 99% (or 175,032.38 liters) increase in milk production (comprising carabao, cattle, and goat milk) from Jan-June 2023 compared to the same months last year. Out of the total production, the farmers contributed 65%, which she said is a testament to their ability to sustain the business.

Moreover, the milk feeding programs of the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) have helped the industry reach the barangays and municipalities while assuring the market for the raw milk produced, according to Lapiz.

Gov. Erico Aristotle Aumentado, on the other hand, said that the government is always working hand-in-hand with the different agencies on how to continually improve the Bohol Dairy Industry. He encouraged the farmers to continue doing good and to be harmonious with one another, as this would cheer them up and inspire them to unceasingly extend support to the program and the people.

Based on the records of DA-PCC at USF, Mabini has 273 upgraded buffaloes and 212 dairy farmers engaged in the Carabao-based Enterprise Development (CBED) Program to date. Since then, it has produced a total of 340,366.13 liters of milk, translating to a total gross income of PHP17,018,306.90 with a farm gate price of PHP50.00/liter. It is the highest contributor to milk production in Bohol. 📍



The Provincial Government of Bohol awards certificates of recognition to DA-PCC and LGU-Mabini for their unwavering support to the province's dairy industry. (Photo by Jay Fraim Boiser)

## Young couple scores...

from page 1

Allen was then a student working as a delivery guy for a fast food restaurant while Mikee's scholarships helped her tide over her schooling. Both of them were taking their bachelor's degree in Education Major in Technology Livelihood Education at Tarlac State University.

In 2021, Allen had an accident while on his way to delivering food, which badly led him to leave the job. Although finding a different source of income became challenging, Allen was able to save from his earnings and Mikee was able to do the same from her scholarship grants. Finally, without any luck for a new job opportunity, the couple decided to use their collective savings to purchase one dairy buffalo after learning about DA-PCC's program.

Allen knew that it was not easy to take care of a buffalo, but their first, which they named "Big Momma" gave them hope and purpose. According to Allen, love and passion is the key to carrying on a project, he added, "walang mahirap kung gusto mo, mas mahirap kung wala kang gagawin".

He also claimed that many people do not believe in what they are doing. They heard a lot of criticism and they lacked moral support. They trudged on despite the hardship and soon proved that there is life in dairying, but only if one has perseverance, hard work,

patience, and unfailing faith.

Allen and Mikee consulted with the DA-PCC at Central Luzon State University through its center director Dr. Ericson N. Dela Cruz who encouraged and exposed the couple to becoming a successful young dairy farmer.

After months of consultation, the couple decided to request for a training on processing value-added products such as pastillas, pasteurized milk, flavored milk, and yogurt.

In 2022, the pair participated in the Department of Agriculture Young Farmer Challenge Program for Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service where they won and received financial assistance to help them achieve their current goal of building a small product processing facility for their value-added milk products. With the prize money that they received amounting to a total of PHP100,000, they decided to create the brand "Ka'Gatas", which means Kapamilya, Kaibigan, Kapatid, Kabukiran at Kaagapay, and has since became popular in their barangay.

Ka'Gatas products are supported by the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Tarlac City with the endorsement of the city's agricultural officer.

During lean months when the supply of milk becomes low and the demand is high, the young carapreneurs would resort to personally scouting milk from other dairy farmers. This situation also prompted them to put up an organization with initially 15 members. They named the group "EDEN Youth Association (EYA)".

Adding to the many benefits that EYA members are so far enjoying, the organization was recognized as Most Outstanding Youth Social Enterprise" last July by the Villar Sipag Awards – Youth Poverty Reduction Challenge. The group intends to invest their prize money in the establishment of their dream dairy outlet.

Allen said their passion and enthusiasm to keep winning in their dairy venture is because they want to create an indelible impact on their community. This is why, he said, they keep studying to further the business.

They believe that sharing their story will inspire others and help their community appreciate the benefits of joining DA-PCC's CBED program. All their efforts are dedicated to their four-month-old daughter Alora Freya C. Santos, a product of their marriage in 2022. 📍

**Allen and Mikee hope to someday be branded as young ambassadors of DA-PCC's Carabao-Based Enterprise Development (CBED) program by showcasing their expertise in dairying. For them, this is not about the accolade but the noble cause of bringing opportunities such as daily income for the Tarlaqueños.**





# DA-PCC assisted farmers group in SoCot bags ‘Outstanding South Cotabateños’ award

By **Rodolfo Valdez, Jr.**

The Canahay Dairy Farmers Association (CADAFA) in Surallah, South Cotabato was hailed as the 2023 Outstanding South Cotabateño – Group Category during the 24th T’nalak Festival and 57th Founding Anniversary of South Cotabato. The awarding ceremony took place on July 16 at the South Cotabato gymnasium.

CADAFA President Emilita Cabino led the group that received the award. This recognition acknowledges their contribution in raising the province’s profile on the national stage, contributing to the growth of their community, and uplifting the spirit of their fellow South Cotabateños.

“Maliban sa tulong ng ahensya ng gobyerno, hindi namin nakamit ang

award na ito kung wala ang pagkakaisa ng bawa’t miyembro ng CADAFA. Ang pagsisikap at mga karangalang nakamit ng bawa’t miyembro ang naging daan upang masungkit namin ang award at maging namumukod-tanging asosasyon sa South Cotabato,” Cabino said.

CADAFA is one of the assisted associations of DA-Philippine Carabao Center at University of Southern Mindanao (DA-PCC at USM).


Today, the association produces an average of 600 liters of carabao’s milk per month and serves as the supplier of raw milk for various PCC-assisted cooperatives participating in the national milk feeding program under R.A. 11037 or the Masustansyang

Pagkain Para sa Batang Pilipino Act.

“In the past few years, CADAFA has been receiving recognitions from various award-giving bodies for their good buffalo production and management practices. Wala itong mga award na ito kung wala ang taos-pusong pagtanggap ng mga magsasaka sa programang pagkakalabawan,” PCC at USM CBED Coordinator Nasrola Ibrahim said.

During the 8th National Carabao Conference of the DA-PCC, members of CADAFA bagged several awards to wit: OUTSTANDING DAIRY BUFFALO FARMER FAMILY MODULE Champion Joselino C. Cabino; BEST DAIRY BUFFALO COW (SENIOR CARACOW CATEGORY) 1st Runner Up Melgin M. Zenith; BEST DAIRY BUFFALO COW (JUNIOR CARACOW CATEGORY) 2nd Runner Up Rodel B. Estañol; and OUTSTANDING VILLAGE-BASED AI TECHNICIAN 2nd Runner Up Reyjohn R. Estañol. Meanwhile, DA-PCC at USM Center Director Benjamin John C. Basilio expressed his gratitude to the provincial government of South Cotabato in recognizing the dedication and achievement of CADAFA.

“We have made a significant impact on the lives of our carapreneurs through the collective effort of DA-PCC, Provincial Agriculture and Veterinary Offices, Municipal Agriculture Office, the local government unit of Surallah and other government agencies that serve as channels of blessings to our dairy farmers,” Basilio said.

Today, with the help of LGU-Surallah, the CADAFA envisions greater opportunities for its members as they begin the process of becoming a cooperative and in the future, being known as the Surallah Integrated Dairy Farmers Cooperative. 



On behalf of the CADAFA members, President Emilita Cabino and her husband Joselino Cabino receive the plaque of recognition for 2023 Outstanding South Cotabateño-Group Category. (Photo by LGU Surallah)

# Elyu co-op wins 2023 Productivity Olympics in Region 1

By **Ronaline Canute**

The Rosario Dairy Farmers Cooperative (RDFC) in Rosario, La Union, emerged as the regional winner in the Small-agri-business and Industry category during the 2023 Productivity Olympics held at ARVI Scenery Resort, San Fernando City, La Union earlier today.


The Productivity Olympics is a national competition initiated by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), which aimed to recognize the exceptional productivity exhibited by

micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) across the agribusiness, service, and industry sectors.

“The cooperative must optimize the utilization of its resources to enhance both productivity and profitability. By ensuring the co-op’s profitability, sustainable operations are guaranteed, leading to substantial benefits for the nuwang (carabao) farmers, as they gain a dependable market for their milk harvest,” Annalyn Tade, RDFC’s manager, said.

RDFC is one of the assisted cooperatives of DA-PCC at Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University (DA-PCC at DMMMSU).

From 2021 to 2022, the co-op actively participated in the Milk Feeding Program of DepEd and DSWD as a supplier of carabao’s milk. In one school year alone, they supplied PHP8 million worth of milk to DepEd.

The co-op also operates a Dairy Box outlet situated in Rosario, La Union. This establishment serves as a direct platform for the cooperative’s dairy products, proving advantageous for both dairy farmers and the local community. The store offers a diverse range of milk-based products, such as pastillas, fresh milk, and flavored milk drinks. 

# Young carapreneurs win Villar SIPAG Awards

By **Mikee Antonio**

Young carapreneur Allen Paul Santos, 23 years old and the founding leader of the Eden Youth Association (EYA), led his team of fellow young carabao-based entrepreneurs in receiving the prestigious Villar SIPAG award for “Most Outstanding Youth Social Enterprise” on July 21 at the Villar SIPAG Center in Las Piñas City.

EYA, a young carapreneurs’ group located in San Francisco, Tarlac City, established Ka’Gatas Dairy Farm. The area was previously used for dog breeding but has since been converted to a bustling carabao-based enterprise actively involving the local youth community in various milk production and marketing activities in Tarlac and the neighboring province of Pampanga. Ka’Gatas Dairy Farm is supported by DA-PCC at CLSU and the local government of Tarlac City.

Santos shared their experience of successfully navigating the stringent selection process, which took over a month of rigorous evaluation.


“Ang aming napanalunan ay para sa pinapangarap ng grupo na magkaroon ng sariling dairy processing at outlet. Ang layunin namin ay ang umasenso ang bawa’t kasapi ng grupo,” Santos said.

The young carapreneur, along with other founding members Mikee Anne

Castañeda, Patrick Rican Navarro, Philip Navarro, and Ron Mikko Rodriguez, who were present during the awarding ceremony, expressed their gratitude to the people who inspired EYA to join the competition. It is due to the constant support of these people, he said, that their group aspires to achieve more and expand its reach.

Dr. Ericson dela Cruz, center director of DA-PCC at CLSU, said the center will be in full support of the young carapreneurs’ journey as they soar high

in their chosen enterprise. The young carapreneurs, he added, prove that Rizal’s immortalized line “Ang kabataan ang pag-asa ng bayan” couldn’t be any truer today.

The Villar SIPAG Awards program is managed by the Villar SIPAG (Social Institute for Poverty Alleviation and Governance)—a hub of advocacies, activities and action to help poor Filipinos. It aims to recognize outstanding initiatives of community enterprises and models of good practices. 



Senator Cynthia Villar (3rd from right) personally presents the Villar SIPAG award to the Eden Young Association, led by Allen Paul Santos, recognizing them as the “Most Outstanding Youth Social Enterprise.”



# GOT QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS? CONTACT US



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DA-Philippine Carabao Center



Philippine Carabao Center



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