

Bubalus



Quarterly Newsletter of the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center

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FEATURES

June Flores blooms in dairying

By Chamanei Elias

With no formal education or training on dairy farming, June Flores took a leap of faith and entered into dairying, dearly holding onto nothing but hope.

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Some 4k schoolchildren now benefiting from sterilized canned carabao's milk

By Ma. Cecilia Irang

More undernourished children from far-flung and remote areas in Luzon can now benefit from local carabao's milk following the onset of the distribution of sterilized canned milk with extended shelf life.

Piloting the distribution was the Schools Division Office (SDO) of Aurora with 4,568 beneficiaries under the nationwide school-based feeding program (SBFP) led by the Department of Education (DepEd).

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Editor's Word



We are not yet out of the pandemic woes, but despite this predicament, we endeavor to provide you with inspiring stories, as they happened in the course of DA-PCC implementing its mandate. Guided by the DA-wide strategic and holistic approach called OneDA, this past quarter has been very fruitful and rewarding for the agency and its client-stakeholders, as it has continued in stewarding various projects in the countryside.

Foremost are the turnover of dairy processing facility to KARBENA farmers association in Mati, Davao Oriental under the Carabao-based Business Improvement Network (CBIN) project along with the entrustment of dairy carabaos to CARCO in Biliran and capability-building of coconut farmers through Cara-Aralan sa Niyugan in Zamboanga Sibugay, both under the Coconut-Carabao Development Project, a collaboration between DA-PCC and DA-PCA.

While such projects are taking place, DA-PCC has also continued its support to the implementation of RA 11037 (Masustansyang Pagkain Para sa Batang Pilipino) through DepEd's School-based Feeding Program (SBFP) in various provinces in Region 3 as well as DSWD's Milk Feeding Program in Central and Southern Luzon, Western and Eastern Visayas, and Zamboanga Peninsula. A retort facility by a private firm is also currently being test-run in Isabela, which will sterilize and pack carabao's milk produced by SADACO in San Agustin, Isabela and QUIDACO in Maddela, Quirino for wide distribution in target schools in Cagayan Valley and Northern Luzon in the near future, again in support of DepEd's SBFP.

The agency is also continuously developing novel products that have high potentials for commercialization such as whey-based isotonic drinks, Kardeli choice (carabao) meat, and Milkybun, the latter proving to be very popular these days.

In implementing these various development projects and initiatives and in keeping with Gender and Development (GAD) mainstreaming, DA-PCC also constantly recognizes the equal and valuable roles and contributions of individuals of any genders. We are featuring their remarkable success stories here and in future issues of Bubalus.

I wish all of you good health, as we journey through the remaining half of the year.

Eric P. Palacpac
Dr. Eric P. Palacpac

About the cover

June Flores of San Manuel, Tarlac City has promised herself to let her children and the younger generation experience the simple but fun life in the farm. With her daughter Adeline by her side, she is determined to traverse the world of dairying whatever struggles that may come her way. (Photo by Ralph Josh C. Ballado)



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First-ever dairy processing plant, marketing outlet in Mati City, Davao Oriental

By Rodolfo Jr. Valdez

The DA-Philippine Carabao Center turned over the first-ever dairy processing plant and marketing outlet in the City of Mati, Davao Oriental to Kalaparan Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association (KARBENA) last June 18.

The said facility will serve as the hub in processing of buffalo's milk and in marketing of dairy products that will be enjoyed not only by the people of the City of Mati but also in the whole province of Davao Oriental.

Aside from the building, DA-PCC also turned over motorcycles, refrigerators, milk cans, mother and field AI tanks, AI kit and other equipment needed in the said building.

DA-PCC Deputy Executive Director for Admin and Finance Dr. Caro B. Salces shared success stories of dairy farmers to inspire participants by saying: "It is not easy to take a step into dairying but we at DA-PCC and our other partners are always here to support you."

In an interview, City Mayor Michelle Rabat gave assurance to the farmers that they have the full support from the city government of Mati



Members of KARBENA happily show off the certificate for the new dairy processing plant and marketing outlet awarded to them by the DA-PCC under the ALAB-Karbawan project.

in implementing the carabao development project.

Meanwhile, DA-PCC at USM Center Director Benjamin John C. Basilio, represented by Jeffrey A. Rabanal, extended his gratitude to DA-PCC's partners for rolling out such project.

DA-PCC at USM CBED Coordinator Nasrola Ibrahim also expressed his appreciation to the farmers who have been actively participating since the beginning of the project. "Without our main actors (farmers), we are nothing. This project will not be successful without their efforts," Ibrahim added.

In addition, KARBENA Chairman Rhodora Datar gave her word and pledge to take care, sustain, and develop the ALAB-Karbawan project in the city.

KARBENA is one of the associations and cooperatives in the Philippines who received ALAB-Karbawan project components worth Php10M, as funded by the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food, and Agrarian Reform headed by Senator Cynthia A. Villar.

DA-PCC conducts blended approach for Milkybun Production Training

By Charlene Corpuz

The DA-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC), through the Product Development and Innovation Section (PDIS) and KMD's Learning Events Coordination Section (LECS), is currently conducting a virtual learning activity on Milkybun Production Training to pre-identified cooperatives by island clusters in coordination with the DA-PCC regional centers.

The two-day training employs a blended approach of lecture-discussion, open discussion, on-site virtual tour of the cooperative's baking facility, followed by a hands-on training virtually supervised by PDIS team.

These select cooperatives were Lamac Multi-Purpose Cooperative

DA-PCC makes available whey-based isotonic drink for health buffs

By Chamanei Elias



The DA-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC), through the Product Development and Innovation Section (PDIS), recently reached a milestone in advancing products development through the incorporation of whey into its fruit-flavored isotonic drink. This means that whey, which is previously considered as waste, is now put to good use while reducing harm to the environment.

The PDIS team headed by Ms. Mina Abella, Supervising Science Research Specialist, submitted the utility model for registration under the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines, which was approved and published last February 2021.

The utility model relates to the use of whey and fruit as flavoring in beverage production. Whey is the liquid remaining after the milk has been curdled and strained during cheese production. It was previously considered as a pollutant or a waste because of its high organic matter content causing serious

environmental problem. Various technological approaches have been employed to convert whey into value-added products such as energy drinks.

“When we do cheese making, we only get the curds so the whey usually goes to waste. Instead of letting it go to waste, we thought we should just develop it into another valuable product as additional income for dairy cooperatives and interested entrepreneurs. We wanted to add value to it because whey is still nutritious. In fact, whey-based food and beverage products are already introduced in the market and they are often a choice for health-conscious people,” Abella said.

She furthered that whey is an excellent source of high quality protein and amino acids good for muscle tissue development. It also helps in lowering blood pressure, enhancing body’s antioxidant defense, which can prevent or slow down the damage of cells caused by

free radicals, and promoting weight loss.

Out of 10 liters of fresh milk utilized for cheese production, 8 to 10 liters of whey are produced. The fruit-flavored isotonic drink utilizes fresh acid whey and aims to reduce its lactose content using lactase enzyme. The collected whey is then used in preparation of an isotonic whey beverage intended for the lactose intolerant and to replenish nutrients that are lost during physical activities.

The drink is flavored to give a much more soothing, refreshing, and pleasing drinking experience for consumers. Currently, the fruit flavoring includes mango, lemon and orange.

The DA-PCC at Central Luzon State University (CLSU) has also produced a line of whey products such as whey vinegar, whey wine, whey taho and ricotta cheese.

Kardeli carabao meat products highlight celebration of Filipino Food Month in DA-PCC

By Chamanei Elias



The Department of Agriculture Philippine Carabao Center (DA PCC) features Kardeli carabao meat products through the Caralutuan food vlog series as part of the celebration of the Filipino Food Month or Buwan ng Kalutong Pinoy 2021.

Kardeli was derived from the words carabao (meat) and delicacy. The brand represents the healthful and natural farm fresh goodness of meat products sourced from ethically grown carabaos in an environmentally sound and hygienic production system.

The Kardeli carabao meat and meat products are under the Meat Development Program planned by the DA-PCC through the Product Development and Innovation Section (PDIS), Animal Breeding and Genomics Section (ABGS), Production Systems and Nutrition Section (PSNS) and Carabao-based Enterprise Development Section

(CEDS). The project includes sub-programs and activities such as breeding, feeding, development of quality meat products, and enterprise development.

“Kardeli has been an idea a few years back. Carabao meat products have already been available in the market even before the plan on Meat Development Program. DA-PCC at CLSU have produced carabao tapa, tocino and papaitan while DA-PCC at UPLB manufactured 10 variants of carabao meat sausage. The project will be a long-term program, which aims to formally re-introduce carabao meat in the market,” said Patrizia Camille Saturno, Science Research Specialist II (SRS II) of PDIS.

Initially, the agency has dwelled mainly on dairy production. Now, it will also implement a deliberate program for meat production. Saturno furthered that the project also intends to develop a carabao

CHOICE CUTS



SAUSAGES



meat line wherein carabaos will be studied and bred specifically for meat production.

“Research studies show that carabao meat is similar to cattle meat [beef] in tenderness, texture and flavor especially when reared and fed for early slaughter. Furthermore, it provides lower cholesterol, lower calories and higher protein compared to beef. We want to break the stereotype that carabao meat is tough and has poor quality. If we could develop a meat line, we can produce higher quality carabao meat and meat products for the market,” she added.

The agency showcased Filipino dishes using the Kardeli carabao meat and meat products such as pre-packed choice cuts, gourmet sausages and specialty quick meals every Friday in the whole month of April through the Caralutuan food vlog series posted on the DA-PCC Facebook page.

Cagayan is prepped to become 'valley' of milk in the north

By Joel Cabading

Team KISAVIQ, which stands for Kalinga, Isabela, Aurora, Vizcaya, Ifugao and Quirino Province, dairy zone, has successfully installed and operationalized the first ever retort facility for the sterilization of carabao's milk in Cagayan Valley.

Said facility is seen to boost milk production and marketing in the region while fulfilling its commitment for the School-based Feeding Program (SBPF) of the Department of Education (DepEd) under the RA 11037 or the "Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act".

Spearheaded by Ms. Noime C. Liangco, owner of the Amancio Nicolas Agri-Tourism Academy Inc., Team KISAVIQ is now ready to consolidate, process, and distribute sterilized carabao's milk to far-flung areas in the Northern part of Luzon, which is expected to improve the nutritional status of undernourished children.

The delivery and installation of said retort facility was completed last April 15. The trial run was carried out soon after. The facility can



Engr. Eric Basto demonstrates to DA-PCC National Milk Feeding Program Coordinator Mina Abella how to operate the retort facility.

produce at least 12,000 packs of sterilized carabao's milk in two shifts per day.

DA-PCC assisted dairy cooperatives in the region including Quirino Dairy Cooperative (QUIDACO) in Maddela, Quirino and San Agustin Dairy Cooperative (SADACO) in San Agustin, Isabela pledged to consolidate their excess milk production with the aim of contributing to the sustainability and realization of the goals and objectives of the dairy zone.

The team conducted their first meeting and strategic planning on December 11, 2020 at Amancio Hotel, Cordon, Isabela through the initiative of DA-Philippine Carabao Center at Cagayan State University (DA-PCC at CSU) headed by Dr. Rovina Piñera and Dr. Caro B. Salces, DA-PCC's Deputy Executive Director for Admin and Finance. Also present during the meeting were DA-PCC's OIC-Planning Officer Dr. Ericson N. Dela Cruz and National Milk Feeding Program Coordinator Ms. Mina P. Abella; Ms. Liangco; and other key employees and staff of DA-PCC at CSU.

The strategic planning is a move to set a direction on how dairy development will prosper in the region. With the ongoing intervention, DA-PCC is certain that carabao's milk is set to reach far, benefitting more undernourished children in previously unreachable areas.

Milk feeding program underway for day care children

By Ma. Cecilia Irang

The tie-up between the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and DA-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) in a 120-day milk feeding program is already making headway in eight cities nationwide with a total of 10,619 beneficiaries.

Said program is being implemented in the cities of Olongapo, Angeles, Lucena, Puerto Princesa, Iloilo, Tacloban, Zamboanga, and Bacolod.

Pursuant to the Republic Act No. 11037 or "Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino", the DSWD in coordination with the local government units (LGU) and agencies is mandated to implement a supplementary feeding program (SFP) to address undernutrition among children (ages 2-5 years) currently enrolled in the day care centers or Supervised Neighborhood Play (SNP) groups by incorporating fresh milk and fresh milk-based food products in the hot meals.

Several memoranda of agreement between the DSWD Field Offices and DA-PCC Regional Centers were signed to implement the program with a total funding of Php24,211,320 provided by DSWD.

The DSWD coordinated with DA-PCC to link them with local dairy producers and cooperatives where



LGU and DSWD Regional Office milk feeding focal persons inspect the milk products delivered by the cooperative. (Photo by Yamang Bukid Farm-Palawan)

milk can be sourced from. The latter identified and tapped its assisted dairy farmer-cooperatives as suppliers of milk in the feeding program, which include Catmon Multi-Purpose Cooperative (MPC), Rosario Livestock and Agriculture Farming Cooperative, Yamang Bukid, Calinog Farmers' Agriculture Cooperative, Baclay MPC, Baybay Dairy Cooperative, and San Julio Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Cooperative.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing health protocols, the co-ops delivered milk products to the designated drop-off points, which were inspected afterwards by LGU and DSWD Regional Office milk feeding focal persons.

Under the program, each child is given 200 ml toned carabao's milk for 120 days to combat malnutrition. The DSWD-funded milk feeding program carries twin benefits, as it will not only protect children from malnutrition by improving and/or maintaining their nutritional status, but will contribute to the sustainable economic activities of the local dairy farmers as well.

Meanwhile, the DSWD also partners with DA-PCC through its assisted co-ops in Region 3 for the facilitation of the 10th Cycle SFP with 588,492 beneficiaries. Through

this scheme, the children are given 200 ml of milk each for 12 days (once a week for three months) in addition to the regular nutritious, hot or alternative meals under the government's SFP.

"We provided them (carapreneurs) technical assistance on aspects of proper and hygienic milk handling and processing to produce food safety-compliant pasteurized toned carabao's milk. Aside from that, we also target to teach them how to develop sustainable milk-based livelihood enterprises like Milkybun production," said Mina Abella, DA-PCC's milk feeding national coordinator and Product Development and Innovation Section head.

"DSWD considers Milkybun as alternate food for its SFP, so this is another livelihood for the carapreneurs. Hopefully, they will start the inclusion of Milkybun in their 11th cycle SFP," she added.

Apart from DA-PCC, DSWD also partners with the National Dairy Authority, Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), LGUs, non-governmental organizations, and other agencies in the implementation of the milk feeding program.

DA-PCC implements One DA's reform agenda on diversification in Zambo

By Dorie Bastatas



CCDP project stakeholders from Makilas and Tomitom, Ipil, Zamboanga Sibugay completed the 11-week Cara-Aralan sa Niyugan.

Through a joint project of DA-Philippine Coconut Authority (DA-PCA) and DA-Philippine Carabao Center called Coconut-Carabao Development Project (CCDP), the One DA's reform agenda on diversification is being implemented in select areas in Mindanao.

One of the 18 key strategies, diversification is a development

approach that encourages farmers to venture in another commodity(ies) to maximize income.

This, according to the project implementers, is the very objective of the CCDP i.e. for traditional coconut farmers to engage also in carabao dairying. To carry out this purpose, capacity building and technical support services, aside

from the other components—which include production, processing, and marketing—are actively carried out in the identified project sites.

Popularized as “Cara-Aralan sa Niyugan”, this component was recently fulfilled in Zamboanga Sibugay, a coverage area of DA-PCC

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Some 4k schoolchildren now benefiting...

The Licaong Agricultural Cooperative (LAC), one of the DA-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC)-assisted cooperatives in Luzon and milk supplier for the program, delivered in bulk a total of 159,880 cans of sterilized carabao's milk to the designated drop-off points in Dingalan and San Luis, Aurora, which were received and inspected by their respective SBFP focals.

SDO started the distribution of sterilized milk on June 14 with assistance from the parents of the beneficiaries. It was done simultaneously with the provision of

the students' learning modules.

Under the program, each child will receive 180 ml sterilized canned milk every day for 35 feeding days.

Recently, the DA-PCC contracted a third-party toll packer to pack an initial four million cans of sterilized milk through a retort facility using some 40,000 liters of carabao's milk supplied by local farmer's cooperatives in Luzon. The products will be distributed in Regions 1 to 3 and parts of the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR).

The retort process allows fresh carabao's milk to be sterilized in aluminum cans without the need for preservatives.

Through this improved packaging, the shelf life of carabao's milk is extended from seven days to six months; hence more school children will be able to drink nutritious

carabao's milk, particularly those in previously unreachable areas, and those with no electricity or limited storage facilities.

Aside from the extended shelf life, the sterilized canned milk can easily be transported, stored under room temperature without spoilage, and delivered in bulk rather than on a daily basis.

LAC is also set to deliver 153,725 cans of sterilized carabao's milk to Bulacan; 4,000 to Mabalacat; and 24,219 to Olongapo before the end of June.

Other DepEd SDOs that will distribute sterilized canned carabao's milk to their respective beneficiaries include Zambales, Tarlac Province, Pampanga, Ilocos Sur, Abra, Pangasinan, San Fernando City, Kalinga, Tabuk City, Bataan, and Nueva Vizcaya.

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June Flores blooms...

At a young age, June cherished a simple and peaceful farm life. Growing up, she would frequently reminisce their family gatherings like those spent over sumptuous breakfast of hot steamed rice poured with fresh carabao's milk and dried fish. Those fond memories instilled in her heart a dream of having her own farm.

She was able to realize that dream after she gave birth to her only child Adeline. At 43, she is a proud mother and owner of Adeline's Dairy Farm and Buffalo Products, the very first of its kind in San Manuel, Tarlac City.

June is a chemical engineer by profession but despite her success, she has never forgotten to look back to how and where she started.

“I still mingle and talk with our local farmers. During those conversations with them, I realized how seriously bad are the issues surrounding our country's pursuit of food security. I thought I should contribute in any way I can to be part of the solution. In this way, I might be able to help many farmers, like those from my hometown, have a better life in the countryside. To do this, I am currently teaching and encouraging other farmers to consider dairying as another source of income,” shared June.

Although she initially struggled when starting the dairy farm, June's determination has eventually made a name for Adeline's Dairy Farm as a model carabao-based enterprise in Tarlac. Her plans to prosper the farm goes beyond production as she is also planning to establish it as a training center or learning site for buffalo production.

She has been coordinating with the Provincial Veterinary Office for training and information campaigns that could help her and other interested farmers in her community.

In 2017, she bought a farm lot and started traditional farming. This did not pan out well for her as their first harvest was sold at barely break even. This pushed her to find other means of livelihood and decided to venture into dairy farming.

“We started with nothing. We relied solely on Google and YouTube. From two native carabaos as our startup stock, we bought additional 14 head of Murrah buffaloes. We were at first overwhelmed and challenged because we had to work out forage, feeding and health management,” said June.

She soon found her way to groups who have the same interest in buffalo raising or carabao farming through Facebook and immersed herself on YouTube how-to videos. In her mind, giving up is not an option and always found a way to keep moving forward with her venture.

In October 2019, she started with product development. She created her brand name Adeline's Fresh Buffalo Milk Products.

They usually produce 20 to 30 bottles of fresh carabao's milk for students. But since the pandemic, she had to find another way to sell her products with the absence of face-to-face classes.

June said she learned a valuable lesson from what happened: “Do not focus on just one market. During the lockdown because of the pandemic, our problem was where to bring our milk to. Instead of waiting for the milk to get spoiled, we decided to just supply it to our frontliners, to the orphanage and home for special children,” shared June.

Also during this time, June resorted to the internet to sell her products. She was able to market her products through online selling. It turned out that their biggest sales were during the lockdown. At one point, she couldn't meet the demand for her products so she had to source out from other dairy farmers in nearby provinces such as Richard Reyes of Pampanga and Chairman Lodovico Guieb, Sr. of Guimba, Nueva Ecija.

To meet the sudden spike in demand for Adeline's Fresh Buffalo Milk Products, June bought another 16 head of pure Murrah buffaloes from Zambales. Most of these were pregnant but were ill managed causing their death after giving birth.

During this crisis, she met Dr. Marvin Villanueva and Erwin Encarnacion from DA-Philippine Carabao Center (PCC) who helped rehabilitate the health of her buffaloes. She was also consistently communicating with the Carabao-based Enterprise Development (CBED) team of the agency for technical support and trainings on genetic improvement, herd management, and product development.

“I hope more farmers would engage in dairy farming. They should take this chance as this is a good time to also benefit from related projects that are carried out by the Tarlac City Veterinary Office. The DA-PCC also offers learning modalities such as the webinar series that are available online, which can be very helpful to first-time buffalo raisers like I once was,” June said in high hopes.

Aside from her personal pursuits, June also wants to make Adeline's Dairy Farm an instrument to help her farm workers have better lives. She said she wants them to grow with the farm. According to her, this

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BAYANIHAN AGRI CLUSTERS & COLLECTIVE ACTION/ COOPERATIVES DEVELOPMENT

The strategy on farm clustering and cooperative development through the "Bayanihan Agri Clusters" (BAC) of DA integrates provision of government interventions to provide farmers' cooperatives more benefits from the agriculture value chain and directs interventions to achieve economies of scale.

The DA-PCC approaches this strategy with the establishment of carabao-based business hub with provincial-level approach through Carabao-based Improvement Network or CBIN, and integration of buffalo production with crop-based farming system through the Coconut-Carabao Development Project or CCDDP.

PROVINCE-LED AGRICULTURE & FISHERIES EXTENSION SYSTEMS (PAFES)

To strengthen the collaboration between DA, local government units, academe, and private sector, the Provincial Agricultural and Fisheries Extension Systems (PAFES) is institutionalized to bring extension services to the grassroots level amid the challenges of devolution. The CBIN and CCDDP also support this strategy.

MOBILIZATION & EMPOWERMENT OF PARTNERS

Partners are mobilized and encouraged through the DA's policy on active partnership with the private sector, which is expected to establish more agri-based industries in the countryside and develop markets for agriculture products.

DIVERSIFICATION

Diversification encourages and supports rice, corn, and coconut farmers to venture into other commodities such as vegetables, high-value seasonal crops, and livestock to boost their incomes.

CREDIT SUPPORT

DA's agricultural credit policy framework promotes active participation of the banking sector and government financial institutions in the rural financial system.

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION INCLUDING DIGITAL AGRICULTURE

Increased access to digital technology and innovations (products, processes, and services) through the conduct of Webinar Series, Cara-Aralan and client-level mobile application on extension and advisory services (health, breeding, nutrition) is DA-PCC's advocacy effort to hasten farmers' participation in digital agriculture. This is complemented with the creation of a Knowledge Portal that hosts the DA-PCC's various knowledge products.

FARM MECHANIZATION & INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

The DA-PCC is helping pave the way for the establishment of dairy hubs nationwide with interventions on production to postharvest and marketing.

Support to farmers' cooperatives along this line has made possible the rise of FDA-compliant dairy processing facilities, marketing outlets, and mechanized dairy production.

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION & MITIGATION MEASURES

Measures to mitigate climate change are pursued while helping cooperatives profit from buffalo-based ventures under farming systems such as rice and corn. Such are the utilization of crop byproducts as feed resource for livestock and solid waste management as fertilizer.

AGRI-INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS CORRIDORS (ABCS)

Participation of buffalo-based cooperatives in major market grids and mainstreaming of PCC-derived products to establish ABCs in the carabao sector.

FOOD SAFETY & REGULATIONS

The strategy on Food Safety and Regulations puts focus on upscaling buffalo-based products through the development of Philippine National Standards for buffalo milk and meat products in partnership with the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards (BAFS), close coordination with the National Dairy Authority (NDA) and Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), and Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The effort gives prime importance on consumers' welfare through compliance with the Food Safety Act.



GLOBAL TRADE, EXPORT DEVELOPMENT, & PROMOTION

Market expansion for buffalo-based products through export of Philippine Dairy Buffalo Breed's frozen semen to ASEAN countries and profiling of meat and hide business players in the carabao industry is continuously developed by the DA-PCC in order to be globally competitive.

POSTHARVEST, PROCESSING, LOGISTICS, & MARKETING SUPPORT

Upscaling of buffalo-based products through provision of milk processing technologies and equipment and marketing support by way of establishing products outlets and mobile stores are among the DA-PCC's support to carapreneurs in the dairy value chain.

AGRICULTURE CAREER SYSTEM

The DA-PCC joins the DA in its pursuit to produce the next generation of farmers and carapreneurs. The youth are consistently engaged in activities that can increase their appreciation of the dairy buffalo enterprise and encourage them to eventually venture into the business.

YOUTH & WOMEN ENGAGEMENT

The DA-PCC is consistent in its information dissemination and communication campaigns on long-term Carabao Development Program, innovations, technologies, practices, and services through various learning platforms that will engage the women and the youth in the carabao sector.

EASE OF DOING BUSINESS & TRANSPARENT PROCUREMENT

The DA-PCC, guided by its core values, continues to strengthen and streamline efforts to institute a more transparent and technology-driven procurement system related to its conduct of the carabao development program. The Agency's compliance to Administrative Order 25 Series of 2011 streamlines client service delivery, ensures transparent procurement and adherence to other good governance criteria.

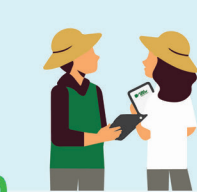
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

The DA-PCC pursues proactive and participatory communication strategies that inform, educate, inspire, and engage farmers, partners and all industry stakeholders to actively participate in the national Carabao Development Program. This is approached with integration of the DA's key information, education and communication strategies through all forms of media channels.

ONED DA

EDUCATION & TRAINING: AGRIBUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Learning events such as trainings, conduct of Farmer Livestock School, and School-on-the-Air (SOA) are among the DA-PCC's extension and advisory support services to make knowledge on dairy buffalo management and related topics accessible to a wider audience.



milk milk milk

Agrarian reform beneficiaries venture into coconut-carabao enterprise

By Emy Goritte Gorra



PHOTO BY CHRESTIAN BACALLA

Agrarian reform beneficiaries and small coconut farmers in Biliran have ventured into social entrepreneurship by recently joining the Coconut-Carabao Development Project (CCDP), a joint undertaking of the DA-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) and DA-Philippine Coconut Authority (DA-PCA).

Said venture commenced with the entrustment of 34 head of dairy buffaloes as initial breeding stocks to the recipient cooperative Canila Agrarian Reform (CARCO) last April 26-27 in Brgy. Canila, Biliran, Biliran. CARCO is a small coconut farmers organization (SCFO) supported by the DA-PCA. This cooperative is composed of farmer-members who are

cultivating rice and coconut. Currently, CARCO is an active recipient of DA-PCA's Kasaganaan sa Niyugan ay Kaunlaran ng Bayan (KAANIB) Projects with components that include distribution of cacao seedlings and livestock. As an active SCFO involved in DA-PCA's KAADIB Enterprise Development Program (KEDP), CARCO was selected by DA-PCA to serve as conduit cooperative for the CCDP in Biliran.

The recipients were initially met with challenges on handling the crossbred buffaloes but with the introduction of Cara-Aralan sa Niyugan, they were gradually walked through on how to go about with the project. Cara-Aralan sa Niyugan is a blended learning modality

on dairy buffalo management and production.

Chrestian Bacalla, project development officer for CCDP-Biliran, said while the farmers were initially challenged to take on the project, they were grateful of this opportunity and they are willing and committed to make their newfound venture a success.

The entrustment activity was also attended by DA-PCC's Regional Center operating in Eastern Visayas led by Director Francisco Gabunada, Jr, Senior Science Research Specialist Dr. Ivy Fe Lopez, Community Development Officer Renato Briones, and Farm Superintendent Andres Amihan, Jr.

The DA-PCC's developed Milkybun, an enhanced nutribun owing to incorporation of carabao's milk, contributes in addressing the malnutrition. Each bun's nutritive value is equivalent to that of one glass of milk.

The DA-PCC ensures that this product provides the energy requirement of the undernourished children, making it compliant to the standards set by the Department of Education (DepEd) and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). This innovation complements provision of fresh milk in the ongoing DepEd's School-Based Feeding Program (SBFP) and DSWD's Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP).

From page 3

DA-PCC conducts blended...

(1st batch) representing Visayas cluster, Bohol Dairy Cooperative and Nueva Segovia Consortium of Cooperatives (2nd batch) for Visayas and Luzon clusters, respectively, and lastly, Baclay Multi-Purpose Cooperative for Mindanao cluster.

More or less 30 participants are trained initially from these identified cooperatives. More participants are anticipated from the National Impact Zone (NIZ) or the towns of Nueva Ecija and other DA-PCC regional centers in the future.

The PDIS team headed by Ms. Mina Abella, Supervising Science Research Specialist, explained the rationale of the said activity, which is to address the needs of the cooperatives in acquiring knowledge and skills about the Milkybun production.

On the other hand, Dr. Eufrocina C. Atabay, Chief of PCC's Research and Development Division, discussed about the Technology Transfer Agreement or Non-disclosure agreement to ensure that the formulation of this technology is exclusive only to the trained cooperatives. She highlighted that this is the first technology or product cascaded for production to support the livelihood of our assisted farmers and partner-cooperatives.

DA-PCC at CSU passes regional evaluation on GAHP certification

By Steven Marx Tangonan



DA-PCC at CSU – The DA-PCC at Cagayan State University is soon to be certified compliant to Good Animal Husbandry Practice (GAHP) after passing the regional evaluation of the Department of Agriculture.

GAHP certification ensures the welfare, safety, and quality of the animals that are raised in the facility and guarantees the adoption of food safety standards among livestock and poultry farmers. As an essential component of good husbandry practices, GAHP is a safeguard for the environment against degradation.

The GAHP regional team evaluated the DA-PCC at CSU farm in Piat, Cagayan. Also subjected to evaluation were the quarantine facility that houses new and

incoming animals in order to minimize the risk of introducing infectious agents, the isolation facility where sick animals were treated, and the milking parlor where carabao's milk is collected.

The regional evaluators also inspected the DA-PCC's mortality pit that is used as a burying ground for dead animals. The biogas facility where animal manure, trash, and bio waste are recycled into natural gas or fuel was also evaluated. Similarly, the vermi house where vermicast, an organic fertilizer, is produced was also evaluated.

DA-PCC at CSU has been recommended by the central agency for the national evaluation of pertinent documents and facilities for GAHP certification. If the process continues to be

favorable to DA-PCC at CSU, it could be the very first facility in the whole PCC network to receive a certification from the Department of Agriculture's GAHP program.

Currently, there are only 13 farms nationwide that have been awarded a GAHP certification. The goal of DA-PCC at CSU is to be included in the list of certified farms to give not only its clients but also farmers and consumers an assurance that the animals coming from the center were raised and maintained in accordance to food safety and environmental standards.

DA-PCC at CSU shares the initial milestone to seizing a GAHP certification with its community and the whole PCC family.

S&T support empowers Isabela carapreneurs

By Steven Marx Tangonan

Dairy farmers in San Agustin, Isabela, will soon be producing more milk as it recently received support to improve its capability for the milk feeding program.

The San Agustin Dairy Cooperative (SADACO), a DA-PCC assisted cooperative, has been a recipient of interventions from other government agencies such

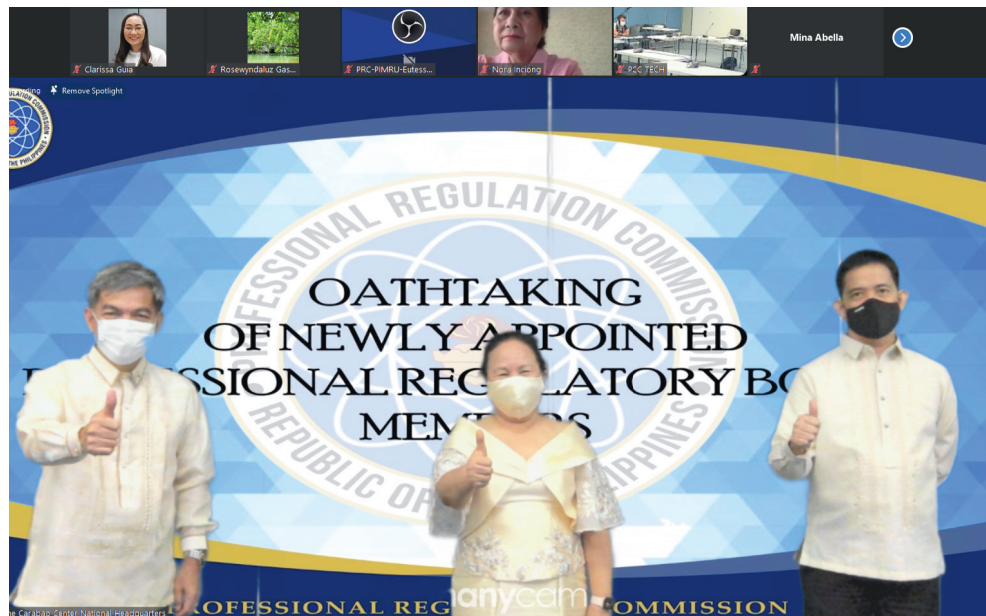
as the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) since last year. Such intervention is under the Community Empowerment Thru Science and Technology (CEST) Program of the agency. Through the DOST CEST, DA-PCC at Cagayan State University (DA-PCC at CSU) and the Provincial Science and Technology Center of Isabela and the Local Government

Unit of San Agustin, science and technology innovation strategies for improved carabao-based enterprise are carried out in San Agustin.

Just recently, the cooperative received a total of Php490,000 worth of financial assistance from the said government agencies. The

DA-PCCeans join PRC-PRB of Agriculture

By Chamanei Elias



Newly appointed members of the Professional Regulatory Board (PRB) of Agriculture Dr. Eric Palacpac (right) and Dr. Annabelle Sarabia took their oath of office virtually last June 18, which was witnessed by DA-PCC OIC Executive Director Dr. Ronnie Domingo.

DA-PCCeans Dr. Eric Palacpac and Dr. Annabelle Sarabia were appointed as members of the Professional Regulatory Board (PRB) of Agriculture. They had their virtual oath of office on June 20 together with Dr. Emma Sales, a retired professor from the University of Southern Mindanao, newly appointed PRB of Agriculture Chairperson, as administered by Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) Chairman Hon. Teofilo S. Pilando, Jr.

Dr. Sarabia is a retired DA-PCC employee who held various top management positions such as Chief of the Research and Development Division, Chief of Operations Group, Agricultural Center Chief IV (Center Director) of DA-PCC at West Visayas State University, and Supervising Science Research Specialist of DA-PCC at UPLB. She is a graduate of Doctor of Philosophy in Animal Science Major in Animal Physiology, Minor in Agricultural Chemistry, and Master of Science in Animal Science Major in Animal

Physiology at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB). Her research interests include animal physiology, animal reproduction, livestock production and management, project implementation, monitoring and evaluation of agriculture projects, networking with NGOs and LGUs, and formulation and implementation of training programs in animal production.

Dr. Palacpac, on the other hand, is currently DA-PCC's Chief of Knowledge Management Division, (Information Officer V) and was previously the Lead Researcher of the agency's Operations Research Task Force, former National R4D Coordinator, and former chief of Program Monitoring and Evaluation Division. He earned his PhD in Social Geography (specialized on science-society interface) from the School of Geography, University of Leeds, West Yorkshire, United Kingdom and his MS in Animal Science specialized in Ruminant Production, and BS Agriculture

Major in Animal Science, both from the UPLB. His research interests include livestock-based innovations, technology transfer, and commercialization, science communication; agricultural extension, social dimensions of livestock development programs, evaluation and impact assessment of livestock development programs, ruminant production and nutrition, and dairy technology.

The PRB of Agriculture is tasked not only to supervise the licensure examination for agriculture profession but also to look into the conditions affecting its practice and adopt the measures for the enhancement or maintenance of professional standards.

DA-PCC OIC Executive Director Dr. Ronnie Domingo and other PRB of agriculture members and PRC commissioners also witnessed the oath-taking.

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DA-PCC implements One DA's reform agenda...

at Mindanao Livestock Production Center, with 27 coconut farmers participating in a season-long training for dairy buffalo production. The training, which was concluded in a graduation rites last April 30, capacitated CCDP project stakeholders from Makilas and Tomitom, Ipil, Zamboanga Sibugay. They are members of the Small Coconut Farmer Organizations (SCFOs), which is also a component of Coconut Agro-Industrial Hub Project.

The Cara-Aralan sa Niyugan is an 11-week learning event that utilized webinar series on capability enhancement topics and aimed to capacitate farmers on dairy carabao production, processing and marketing. The participants were also given hands-on exercises while maintaining health and safety protocols.

Course topics included: (1) Kwento at Kwenta sa Kalabaw ni Juan, (2) Forage Production and Conservation, (3) Feeding of Buffalo at Different Physiological Stages, (4) Disease Prevention and Control, (5) Proper Housing for Calves and Adults, (6) Best Practices in Artificial Insemination and Breeding, (7) Artificial Insemination in Large Ruminants, (8) Calving Management, (9) Wastong Paraan ng Paggagatas at Pangangasiwa ng Aning Gatas, (10) Hygienic Milk Handling Practices, and (11) Basic Financial Management.

Present in the graduation ceremony were Ferdinand Acaylar, PCA Regional Director; Ariel Tomong, OIC Division Chief, PCA-Ipil; Bernadette Ventura, Municipal Cooperative Officer; Masdi Hasim, Ipil Community Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Manager; Fe Emelda Academia, Carabao-based Enterprise Development Coordinator; and project staff.

During the program, Academia gave an overview of the project. In behalf of DA-PCC, she warmly congratulated the graduates and conveyed her praises for them for completing the training despite the restrictions brought by the pandemic.

Acaylar, on the other hand, challenged the participants, "I challenge you to finish what you have committed to start by taking diligent care of the dairy animals that were entrusted to you. Help and support the implementing agencies as well as the stakeholders so that this project will have its envisioned impact".

The graduation ceremony was highlighted by a ceremonial signing of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) of DA-PCA, DA-PCC, and the local government units of the province of Sibugay and the municipality of Ipil.

The municipality of Ipil was selected as the pilot site because of the LGU-DA-PCC's strong partnership in the area and its potential to prosper as a dairy hub in Zamboanga Sibugay. The CCDP is an initiative of Senator Cynthia Villar, Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform. The project aims to (1) contribute in uplifting the economic situation of coconut farmers through the establishment of carabao-based enterprises complemented by the increased coconut farm productivity, and (2) increase the local milk production in order to contribute in improving the nutrition of the community.

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S&T support empowers...

co-op used this for the purchase of packaging materials. For this year, a fund has been earmarked for the training of dairy farmers and for the purchase of milk tanks. Additionally, the cooperative also received a new freezer van, which

will be used for the speedy and timely transportation of milk from the processing center to the drop-off points.

DA-PCC at CSU through its retired Center Director Dr. Franklin T. Rellin, who pioneered the dairy development program in San Agustin, expressed its full support to the DOST program and shared a message of inspiration based on the journey of the San Agustin

dairy project. Meanwhile, DA-PCC at CSU's current OIC Center Director Dr. Rovina Piñera gave her message of thanks to all the key players in making the dairy project happen and in supporting its sustained success. This project, which has tangible effects to the people of San Agustin, Director Piñera said, is meant to progress successfully and change the lives of its current adopters and many others.

DA-PCC identifies means of verifications for gender mainstreaming

By Ma. Cecilia C. Irang

The DA-Philippine Carabao Center's (DA-PCC) Gender and Development (GAD) Focal Point System (FPS) and technical working group (TWG) members convened in a workshop

following health and safety protocols to assess the level of the agency's efforts on GAD using Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework (GMEF) tool.

GAD Focal Person Aimee Fuljencio and outgoing GAD Focal and TWG Lead Sonia Pol facilitated the said workshop held on April 21 at the DA-PCC National Headquarters and Gene Pool in the Science City of Munoz, Nueva Ecija. The DA-PCC GMEF assessment period covers GAD activities from 2018 to 2020.

Upon going through the organizational

assessment questionnaire, the group was able to identify a number of means of verifications (MOV) for the agency's GMEF in four key areas namely Policy, People, Enabling Mechanisms, and Programs, Activities, and Projects. The initial assessment with baseline score will be submitted to the Philippine Commission on Women on May 3 for validation.

After the workshop, the group also laid out plans and activities for the following years to develop gender-responsive policies and program for a more gender-sensitive institution.

DA-PCC treats mom-employees to a day in the spa

By Kimberly Antonio



Some of the parlor services offered for the Mother's Day treat include hair rebond, body massage, and foot spa.

Employees who are mothers in the DA-PCC headquarters were treated to a day in a makeshift salon as a tribute to them in celebration of Mother's Day last May 11-13.

The DA-PCC's Human Resource Management Section (HRMS) headed by Cecilia C. Abo organized this Mother's Day Special to give its mom-employees a quick respite from their usual routines with a little pampering. Those who availed of the treat were offered with parlor services including hair rebonding and treatment and a choice of massage

or foot care—all on the house. The personal care treat for the mom-employees of DA-PCC was just a simple way to appreciate their hard work at home and at work. This, according to the organizers, is expected to somehow recognize the important role of mothers in modeling a nurturing environment in the workplace as a way to boost productivity.

One of the special treat recipients, Minda Diloy, who is also the Agency's Management Systems Audit representative, said this is a very good initiative because when

a company rewards its employees, they are likely to be motivated to perform better.

Feedback from the other moms concluded that this initiative was well received and more of this creative employee reward system are expected to become a mainstay in the Agency's human resource development plan.

With 34 participants, the mom's day treat was successfully held at the DA-PCC national headquarters.



DA-PCC commemorates 123rd Independence Day

By Chamanei Elias

The DA-PCC family commemorates the 123rd Philippine Independence Day with the theme "Diwa ng Kalayaan sa Pagkakaisa at Paghilom ng Bayan" today at the PCC grounds.

In his message, Dr. Claro Mingala, Deputy Executive Director for Production and Research, said employees of the government are encouraged not only to remember what history has taught us but to also exercise patriotism and nationalism in public service. He underscored unity and cooperation as key to propelling the agency toward innovation and advancement despite the pandemic.

DA-PCC top ranking officials and employees donned their Barong

Tagalog and Filipiniana for the event. Also joining the simple celebration in their respective offices were the agency's regional centers. Safety and health protocols such as physical distancing and wearing of face mask were observed.

"Walang katapusan ang pagsusumikap ng ating ahensya upang patuloy na maglingkod at magbigay serbisyo sa sector ng agrikultura at paghahayupan sa larangan ng siyentipikong pananaliksik at mga pag-aaral para sa kapakanan ng maliliit at maralitang magsasaka at mga kooperatiba (There is no end to our agency's efforts to continue to provide services to the agricultural and livestock sector in the field of scientific research and studies for the benefit of small-hold farmers and cooperatives)".

-Dr. Claro Mingala

Grace Boyles: Huwarang Juana

By Leinefe Libres-Aton



Barely making it to the first level of education, this Juana was hard up for basic necessities that it was unimaginable for her what it feels like to have a decent living. Luck must have found its way home to her that when she dropped a tear on something that she is passionate about, it created a ripple of positive effects in her community.

What she was passionate about is also now the very livelihood that 55 other townspeople in the community are raving about. All of whom she influenced by her grit and guile.

She is Grace G. Boyles, 41, of Mabini, Bohol, a model dairy farmer. She is a member of San Jose Dairy Buffalo Producers Association, a cluster association of Bohol Dairy Cooperative. Once a maidservant in Manila, her unfavorable experience and

longing to be with her family made her decide to come back home and try her luck in dairying.

Grace recalled it was her constant search for a livelihood opportunity that can bring her out of poverty that spurred her to find out what dairy buffalo production is about. Initially, she joined an orientation-seminar on dairy buffalo production conducted by DA-PCC.

Convinced in the business proposition of a dairy buffalo-based venture, she joined the Mabini Dairy Multipurpose Cooperative (MADAMCO) and was granted with two American Murrah buffaloes. Five years later, she started milking the animals that are then producing an average of 4 liters of milk daily and sold at Php45 per liter. This became her family's source of monthly income, which, usually, would average to Php5,000.

Grace was then the only woman in

the association who was milking her buffaloes.

But it was not all smooth sailing for Grace. She could still recall how many times she cried while milking her animals, feeling downtrodden knowing that her husband does not approve of milking their animals because for him it should be fed to the calves. But bestowed with enduring spirit, Grace persisted and did not give up.

Her grit qualified her to receive additional carabaos from DA-PCC until her herd grew from two head to 17. Coupled with the recommended breeding activities and good care and management, Grace's income later hit Php27,000 a month. This gave her the leverage to finally convince her husband to support her in the business. Their teamwork later on earned them the money to fund their house renovation and their nieces' college education. Her

farm has also generated jobs in their community.

With this venture, Grace not only improved her livelihood but also made a role model out of herself that the community now looks up to. She was able to establish good influence among the townspeople who positively receive her testimonies whenever she gets a chance to preach the benefits of dairying.

As a model farmer, she opened her farm to anyone who wishes to take a tour or learn about the dairy business. From then on, she has become a constant partner of DA-PCC at Ubay Stock Farm in coaching and training newbie carapreneurs during actual immersion in dairy production. In one instance, she offered to take care and milk a newly-calved carabao under a 50-50 profit sharing arrangement with the owner. With genuine intention to demonstrate that dairying is indeed profitable, she even offered her milking carabao as paiwi and start-up stock to her relative.

Today, she has helped the community produce milk from an average of 4 liters a day to 80 liters a day. To her, being a woman should not be a hindrance to success.

"Di nato himoong rason ang pagka-baje. Ang importante nga makatabang ta sa atong bana", (Let us not make being a woman an excuse, what is important is that we can help our husband provide for the family.) she added.

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June Flores blooms...

is her way of repaying their hard work.

At present, Adeline's Dairy Farm is home to 43 buffaloes; one is a junior bull from DA-PCC under its bull loan program; 19 are calves and some were distributed to nearby Tarlac; and eight are currently milking producing 40 to 50 liters of milk daily.

Adeline's chocomilk, pasteurized milk, kesong-puti and yoghurt are currently available and sold in Tarlac, Laguna, Metro Manila, Zambales and select areas in Mindanao.

With all the challenges that she was able to overcome, Adeline said her being a woman is what made her enduring and resilient. Women, she deeply believes, play a very important role in the dairy industry because of their nurturing spirit.

"Women are natural multi-taskers and are more sensitive and meticulous. As for myself, I find joy in every role that I play in this life. I think one complements the other. With the unfailing support and inspiration of my family, I am enabled and am able to do so much more," June said.



GOT QUESTIONS
OR SUGGESTIONS?
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