

Bubalus



Quarterly Newsletter of the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center

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FEATURES

At heart and at work,
foreigners no more:
The Fujiharas'
decade of
volunteer work
in PH

By Charlene Joanino

Far away from home, Dr.
Tsutomu Fujihara, an animal

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**6th NCC underscores positive
outlook in carapreneurship
under the 'New Normal'**

By Ma. Cecilia Irang

The Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center's (DA-PCC) efforts and interventions to continuously perform its mandate and serve its clients amidst the global health crisis were highlighted in a virtual 6th National Carabao Conference (NCC) held last

November 17.

According to Dr. Eric Palacpac, chief of DA-PCC's Knowledge Management Division and overall chair for the 6th NCC, the confab consisted of three strategic sessions to echo and realize this

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Editor's Word



It has been several months since the onset of COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing health protocols to prevent the spread of the virus. For us working at the DA-PCC, we have continued performing our functions and delivering our services to the public while observing and practicing said protocols with the aid of information and communication technologies.

Many of DA-PCC's regular in-person gatherings pre-pandemic have now been replaced with virtual events. While the latter took away the intimate and more interactive nature of these events, they nonetheless were equally effective in achieving the desired outputs. Three of these regular events that have gone virtual included the 5th National Carabao Conference, the annual R&D In-House Review, and the 5th International Livestock Biotechnology Symposium. It was also the first time that the agency hosted a Technology Pitch event, wherein promising technologies from DA-PCC (e.g., A2 milk, Blockmate, Nyogurt, Quickcare, Buro Booster, etc.) were presented virtually by proponents to persuade or invite potential adopters or investors. Likewise, the Coconut-Carabao Development Project (CCDP), which seeks to benefit participating farmers in 17 provinces was successfully launched online.

While all these virtual events were taking place, in-person activities with strict health protocols have, likewise, been held successfully. These included the groundbreaking ceremonies for the construction of the dairy processing plants and stores in Orani, Bataan and Victoria, Tarlac both in support of the Carabao-based Business Improvement Network (CBIN), the CCDP strategic planning workshop in Tubigon, Bohol, and the capability enhancement activity on carabao care and management in Tayasan and La Libertad, Negros Oriental under the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program.

In the future, we foresee a more blended approach to these various activities or events to maximize outputs and at the same time ensuring the safety of everyone.

It goes without saying that behind all these activities of the DA-PCC are the combined knowledge and skills of previous and current rosters of dedicated individuals which helped shape what the agency is now. We pay homage to the new retirees led by Dr. Arnel del Barrio (former Director of DA-PCC at UPLB and Executive Director of DA-PCC), Dr. Annabelle Sarabia (former Director of DA-PCC at WVU and R&D Division Chief), Prof. Franklin Rellin (former Director of DA-PCC at CSU), Dr. Daniel Aquino (former Director of DA-PCC at CLSU), and Ms. Gloria Dela Cruz (former Director of DA-PCC at DMMMSU). We also welcome newly appointed OIC-ED of DA-PCC Dr. Claro Mingala, Director of DA-PCC at USF Dr. Maria Dinah Loculan, and Director of DA-PCC at VSU Prof. Francisco Gabunada, Jr. Finally, we decided to feature on our cover story the Fujihara couple from Japan, who for the past 10 years have generously extended their expertise and support (pro bono) to the agency and to the wider community of farmers in the province via a livelihood project.

For as long as there are remarkable and committed individuals who embrace both or a blend of traditional and novel technologies for the common good, DA-PCC shall continue to serve its clients and we will be more than glad to share such stories with you.


Dr. Eric P. Palacpac

About the cover

All smiles as the Fujiharas spend their time feeding the carabaos at the DA-PCC Gene Pool. What started as a volunteer work has turned into a calling and led them to what they deem as a passion with a purpose. More than ever, they are now one in spirit and heart with the Filipino people.



(Photo by Charlene Joanino)

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DA-PCC In-House Review migrates to digital space

By Charlene Joanino

For the first time, the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) broadens reach in its R4D In-House Review through a combination of physical and online presentations that were broadcasted via a web conferencing platform. It was held last December 3-4 at the DA-PCC National Headquarters and was joined in virtually by participants all over the Philippines.

"The In-House Review sums up the activities of the DA-PCC Research and Development Division (RDD) for the whole year," underscored by DA-PCC RDD OIC-Head Dr. Eufrocina Atabay in her message.

A total of 15 papers were evaluated by Dr. Annabelle Sarabia, Former DA-PCC RDD chief; Dr. Ericson Dela Cruz, DA-PCC OIC-Chief of Planning and Information Management Division; and Dr. Virginia Venturina, Dean of



Rovelyn Jacang, Science Research Specialist I, presents the research titled "Extension Method for the Adoption of Dairy Buffalo Technologies in the Philippines" during the R&D Symposium held on December 3-4.

Central Luzon State University (CLSU) College of Veterinary Science and Medicine.

The papers were categorized under four thematic areas namely Genetic Improvement-Animal Genomics or Genetic Diversity and Cryopreservation, Biosafety Production Systems and Nutrition, and Socio-Economic Dimensions of Carabao Development Program Implementation.

"Most number of papers presented" award was bagged by the DA-PCC at University of the Philippines-Los Baños and DA-PCC at Visayas State University.

The "Comparison of Progeny Testing and Genomic Selection Breeding Schemes in Dairy Buffalo" by Dr. Jesus Rommel Herrera, Dr. Ester Flores, and Dr. Julius van der Werf was hailed the "Best Paper" (average score of

92.67%). Dr. Herrera who presented the said paper also won as the "Best Presenter" (average score of 93.67%).

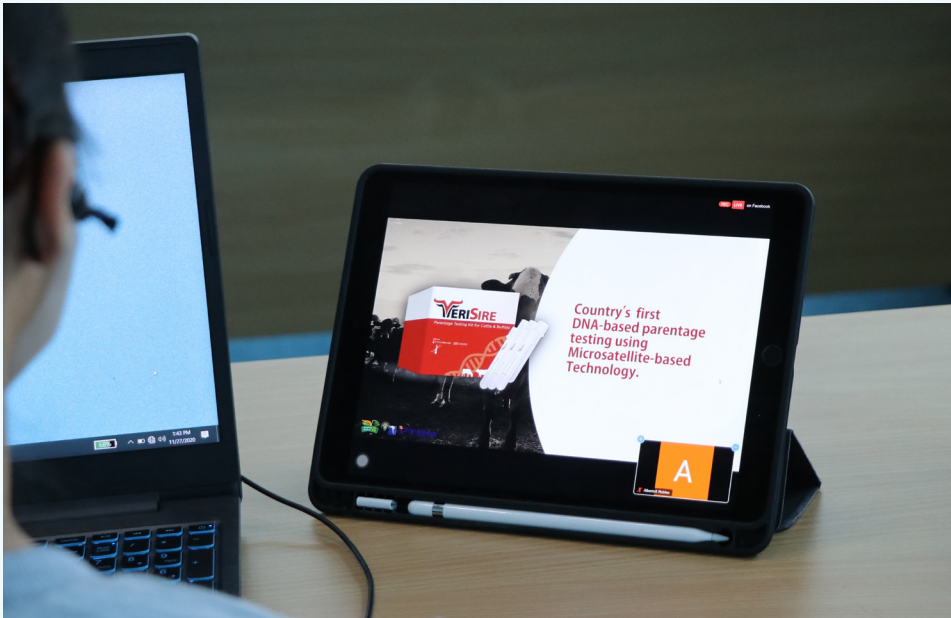
Criteria for judging for the "Best Paper" include Title and Abstract (10%), Introduction (10%), Materials and Methods (25%), Results and Discussion (40%), and Summary and Conclusion (15%). While the "Best Presenter" was chosen based on Clear and Logical Presentation (25%), Comprehensive Knowledge on Subject Matter (30%), Answers to Questions (25%), and Clear and Relevant Visual Aids (20%).

Meanwhile, winners of DA-PCC Technology Pitch Day last November were once again recognized. The presenters on the agency's research and innovations webinar series namely Dr. Claro Mingala, DA-PCC OIC-Executive Director; Dr. Arnel

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DA-PCC gears up for techno commercialization

By Charlene Joanino



One of the participants tunes in to the Virtual Technology Commercialization Seminar and Pitch Demo conducted by the DA-PCC through its Research and Development Division.

Innovative technologies from the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) are set to further the livestock industry as the said breakthroughs will be cascaded to broader masses.

In a four-day seminar, the DA-PCC sharpened the ability of its researchers on translating “Research and Development (R&D) innovations to products and services for client and public good”. The activity entitled “Virtual Technology Commercialization Seminar and Pitch Demo” was conducted last November 18-20 and 27.

“The pandemic may be tough but our goal to innovate and improve agriculture technology is tougher,” said Dr. Claro Mingala, DA-PCC OIC Executive Director.

A highlight of the seminar was the awarding of best pitches. The “A2 Choice” presented by Pauleen Pineda won 1st place and “Prolipig” pitched by Sherwin Mathias bagged 2nd place. Both “Blockmate”,

presented by Victorino Mayo, Jr. and “Nyogurt” by Teresita Baltazar tied at 3rd place. The “QuickCare” discussed by Dr. Gabriel Tubalinal took the “People’s Choice Award”.

All pitches were adjudged based on the Delivery of pitch (40%), Structure of pitch (30%), and Content of pitch (30%).

Three judges were invited, namely Dr. Annabelle Sarabia, former DA-PCC Research and Development Division (RDD) chief; Dr. Ester Flores, RDD ABGS head; and Jan Czarina Salas, Intellectual Property Specialist.

The other pitches and presenters were Buro Booster Silage Inoculant by Reynald Amido; e-RS (Enriched Rice Straw) by Charity Castillo; Milkybun by Joel Cabading; and Milkpops by Jennica Salazar.

There were three categories, namely, Molecular-based Technologies, Nutrition, and Product Development.

“This activity is very challenging,

if not nerve breaking but very exciting,” shared by Dr. Eufrocina Atabay, DA-PCC OIC RDD chief.

The resource speakers and facilitators were Dr. Flores; Abigail Gueco, Senior Science Research Specialist of Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (DOST-PCAARRD) Technology Transfer and Promotion Division (TTPD); and Dr. Lily Ann Lando, Motivational Coach/ Mentor of Core Consulting and Development.

Also part of the event were Dr. Reynaldo Ebor, DOST-PCAARRD Executive Director; Engr. Greelda Eusebio, Intellectual Property and Technology Business Management (IP-TBM) project leader; and select DA-PCC RDD staff.

In 2018, the DA-PCC started its IP-TBM efforts through a 2-year joint project between the agency and DOST-PCAARRD.

International experts agree: Livestock biotech is key to mitigating the impact of COVID in the industry

By Justine Joy Salvador



DA-PCC staff members facilitate the online 5th International Livestock Biotechnology Symposium with the theme “Research-Driven Innovations Addressing and Mitigating the Impacts of Global Pandemic in the Livestock Industry”.

The DA-PCC recently underscored research-driven innovations to address and mitigate the impact of the pandemic in livestock during an international symposium held last October 27-28.

The Department of Agriculture-Livestock Biotechnology Center (DA-LBC), in cooperation with the National Research Council of the Philippines (NRCP) - Division XIII has recently concluded the 5th International Livestock Biotechnology Symposium, which enables local and international researchers and scientists together with representatives from the government/public and private sector, non-government organizations, and academe to convene for the strengthening of agricultural outputs amidst pandemic. The ultimate goal is to foster a more competitive, profitable, and sustainable livestock industry.

With the recent outbreak of global pandemics such as COVID-19, African Swine Fever (ASF), and

Avian Influenza, this year’s symposium theme was “Research-Driven Innovations Addressing and Mitigating the Impacts of Global Pandemic in the Livestock Industry”. It has brought together various experts from the USA, Thailand, Japan, Australia, and Philippines. The two-day virtual webinar symposium was attended by some 400 participants from different countries, mostly from the Philippines.

Dr. Claro N. Mingala, chief of the DA-LBC and OIC-Executive Director of the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC), said the emergence and resurgence of different global pandemic threatens biodiversity. He added that lives and livelihoods are harmed with the current pandemic impacting on global population in various levels. With globalization, he said, the persistence of animal diseases poses a serious risk to public health and causes damage to businesses and the economy at large.

Dr. Roger Merkel, an Associate Professor from Langston University, Oklahoma, USA shared that to replace antibiotics, one should promote growth of the animal, enhance its GI tract health, feed efficiency, and immune function, and reduce pathogenic bacteria found in animals.

Meanwhile, Dr. Sukolrat Boonyayatra of Chiang Mai University in Thailand lectured on antimicrobial resistance of Bovine Mastitis pathogen while Dr. Rangsun Parnpai talked about the utilization of reproductive biotechnologies for production of genetically elite cattle and buffaloes.

Prof. Shin-Ichiro Kawazu of Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine in Hokkaido, Japan, presented studies on the development of Babesia parasites using gene manipulation and bio-imaging analysis. The main goal of his Plasmodium and Babesia research is to understand the basic

Carapreneurship in Bataan soon to boom with ALAB-Karbawan project

By Chrissalyn Marcelo



Some of the top officials of DA-PCC and LGU-Orani leading the groundbreaking ceremony of the new dairy processing plant and store held at Orani, Bataan.

Business opportunities and a sure market for milk are soon to benefit carapreneurs in Bataan following the groundbreaking ceremonies for the establishment of a 300 sq m dairy processing plant and outlet in Orani last December 7.

The Local Government Unit (LGU) of Orani, Bataan, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center at Central Luzon State University (DA-PCC at CLSU), led the ceremonies.

Orani Mayor Efen Dominic Pascual, Jr. said the facility will serve as a venue where farmer-members of Tapulao Multi-Purpose Cooperative (TMPC) can process and sell their milk-based products.

The facility is the first-ever processing plant and outlet for carabao’s milk in

their province.

“At present, thousands of children are in need of milk. In fact, the national government allocated a total budget of Php31M for the milk supplementation program alone in order to provide milk for these children,” former DA-PCC at CLSU center director Dr. Daniel Aquino said.

He added that carapreneurs in Orani can also gain profit by selling ice cream made from carabao’s milk through the ice cream making machine, which was turned over to TMPC during the ceremony.

Meanwhile, DA-PCC Deputy Executive Director Dr. Caro Salces underscored the multiple benefits that the project could bring not just to the individual beneficiaries but largely to the community.

“The project will help boost the local economy, raise smarter kids through provision of proper nutrition, and bring farmers daily income from selling of carabao’s milk,” Dr. Salces said.

In a video message, Senator Cynthia Villar, who sponsored the ALAB-Karbawan Project, said that she is pleased with the implementation of the said project as it can benefit farmers who will continue to engage in the dairy business.

TMPC was earlier entrusted with 40 dairy buffaloes from the project prior to the groundbreaking ceremony.

The DA-PCC at CLSU also turned over three forage choppers to TMPC as part of its production support.

The facility is a component of the Carabao-based Business Improvement Network (CBIN) project popularized as Accelerating Livelihood and Assets Buildup (ALAB)-Karbawan.

DA’s PCC, PCA partner for coconut-carabao project

By Rovelyn Jacang



DA-PCC Deputy Executive Director Dr. Claro Salces presents an overview of the Coconut-Carabao Development Project.

The DA-PCC formally commenced the Coconut-Carabao Development Project (CCDP) in partnership with the DA-Philippine Coconut Authority (DA-PCA) during a virtual launch last October 26.

The CCDP is a two-year project, which aims to provide opportunities for coconut farmers to have additional income through the carabao-based enterprise. The components of the project include entrustment of animals, provision of equipment and supplies for the establishment of processing facilities, establishment of market outlets, capability building, coordination with identified stakeholders, and monitoring and evaluation.

Dr. Claro N. Mingala, DA-PCC OIC Executive Director, said to those in attendance during the ceremony that while the agency is confronted with difficulties due to the current crisis, no pandemic can stop DA-PCC from delivering programs and projects that will benefit farmers.

The project is seen to benefit coconut farmers in 17 selected provinces identified by the DA-PCA. The recipients, who are members of the

conduit cooperative, shall allocate resources for the development of the enterprise including forage establishment and construction of animal housing.

Senator Cynthia Villar, Chair of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform graced the said event. She said the project will bring increased incomes to coconut farmers with an integrated venture on coconut and dairy. She also emphasized that the milk that will be produced out of the project will provide sufficient supply for beneficiaries of RA 11037 or the “Masustansyang Pagkain Para sa Batang Pilipino Program” augmenting the National Feeding Program for malnourished Filipino children.

The virtual launch also featured a video presentation on “Cara-Aralan sa Niyugan”, another component of the CCDP which aims to equip participants with the basic knowledge on and appreciation of dairy buffalo production.

Dr. William Medrano, DA Undersecretary for Livestock and Benjamin Madrigal Jr, Administrator of DA-PCA, also remotely joined the

ceremonies.

Meanwhile, Dr. Caro B. Salces, DA-PCC Deputy Executive Director gave an overview of the project. He also revisited some development strategies that can help both DA-PCA and DA-PCC in implementing the project.

Kick-off activities

Initially, project implementers and partners geared up for the project through capability-building activities.

These activities included project orientation, introduction of the Cara-Aralan sa Niyugan, and the facilitators learning workshop.

Cara-Aralan sa Niyugan will utilize a blended learning modality with instructional supplements in printed and audio-visual formats. Participants will also be given hands-on and take-home exercises for a meaningful learning experience.

Just recently, a pilot session was launched in Zamboanga Sibugay under the DA-PCC at Mindanao Livestock Production Complex. Other sites are preparing to follow suit.

Coconut-Carabao Development Project takes off in Tubigon, Bohol

By Leinefe Aton



DA-PCC at USF and DA-PCA together with the OPV of Bohol, LGU-Tubigon and LMPC start off the strategic planning workshop to develop a concrete plan for the implementation of CBIN.

The Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center at Ubay Stock Farm (DA-PCC at USF), Department of Agriculture-Philippine Coconut Authority (DA-PCA), Office of the Provincial Veterinarian (OPV) of Bohol, Local Government Unit (LGU) of Tubigon, and the Libertad Multipurpose Cooperative (MPC) conducted a strategic planning workshop for the implementation of Carabao-based Business Improvement Network (CBIN) in Tubigon last November 5-7.

Said activity launched the newest partnership initiative between

DA-PCC and DA-PCA dubbed as the “Coconut-Carabao Development Project or CCDP” in which the Libertad MPC of Tubigon, Bohol is one of the beneficiaries.

The workshop aimed to develop a concrete three-year operations plan that will guide the Program Management Team (PMT) composed of the aforementioned offices and the co-op throughout the implementation of the project.

This event was conducted after a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was signed last September 12 between DA-PCC and DA-PCA. The

MOA stipulates that the DA-PCA will allocate funding for the project amounting to Php140 million, which will be downloaded to DA-PCC on a staggered basis.

Said amount will fund development interventions in 17 project sites related to the implementation of the CCDP. The DA-PCC, on the other hand, will conduct orientations, social preparation and capability-building activities for coconut farmer-beneficiaries on carabao production, processing and marketing.

Both parties shall ensure that the identified project site is operational not later than two years after the MOA signing, otherwise, another eligible beneficiary shall be identified.

“For this project, the town of Tubigon through the Libertad MPC was selected as the project site because it is an identified coconut area in the province. We also considered that it is strategically located, which makes it a good dairy site,” Emeliano Romero, PCA-Bohol Manager said.

“This particular project in Tubigon, which is worth almost Php10,000,000, will be used for the procurement of 50 dairy buffaloes, construction of a dairy processing plant and a dairy box outlet.”

Dr. Gundolino Bajenting
CBIN coordinator, DA-PCC at USF



Skills enhancement for farmers goes digital

By Charlene Corpuz

The Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) lends tablet PCs to 20 select dairy farmers in Nueva Ecija. At any given time, the gadget will be used by farmers to access the learning modules on dairy buffalo production and management developed by the DA-PCC.

The digitization of the training modality, spearheaded by the PCC’s Knowledge Management Division (KMD) and National Impact Zone (NIZ), is a component of the Cara-Aralan Webinar Series on “Gabay sa Wastong Pangangalaga ng Kalabaw” in response to the new normal. With this intervention, farmers will still be in the know with the latest technologies and updates about the DA-PCC.

Initially, select farmers from NIZ-assisted cooperatives in Nueva Ecija

such as Licaong Dairy Producers Cooperative, Science City of Muñoz; Bongabon Dairy Cooperative, Bongabon; and Aayos Lomboy Dairy Producers Cooperative, Guimba were oriented about the use of the gadget and how to effectively navigate through its content of pre-loaded learning videos.

The gadgets contain instructional videos on raising healthy and productive buffaloes and establishing a dairy business.

In 2021, the KMD-Learning Events Coordination Section and NIZ will facilitate the access of more cooperatives to the learning platform that is expected to be useful for more farmers by pass-along viewership.

Priority cooperatives would be those that are newly organized or can not

be serviced yet due to the health crisis. Farmers will also receive various information, education and communication (IEC) materials as supplemental reference.

Participants of the webinar who will use the tablet will be asked to accomplish a digital feedback form to gauge their knowledge pre- and post-webinar.

While remote digital learning would suffice to ensure that capability building for farmers is pursued without close physical interactions, some trainings still require such. “Cara-Aralan sa Niyugan”, a webinar specifically intended for the DA-PCC and DA-Philippine Coconut Authority collaborative project called Coconut-Carabao Development Project, will use a blended approach to cater to this.

DA-PCC at LCSF trains SAAD beneficiaries in Neg Or on carabao care and management

By Victor Geroche

The Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center at La Carlota Stock Farm (DA-PCC at LCSF) conducted trainings on the care and management of carabaos for farmer-recipients in Negros Oriental under the DA's Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program last October 1 and 14 in the municipalities of Tayasan and La Libertad, respectively.

Select farmer-associations will receive carabaos and plough as interventions to augment their livelihood.

The series of trainings kicked off in Tayasan, Negros Oriental last



DA-PCC at LCSF Project Development Officer Ma. Lee Lugsanay discusses to SAAD beneficiaries the proper milking procedures and milk handling.

October 1 with 36 farmer-recipients from Barangays Pinocawan, Panubigan, and Tanlad.

During the opening program, Sarah Perocho, Agricultural Program Coordinating Officer of Negros Oriental, emphasized the need to develop the skills and knowledge of farmer-recipients to ensure sustainability of the interventions that they received. She said this is of great help to their livelihoods especially during the pandemic.

Experts from the DA-PCC at LCSF discussed topics on forage production and proper feeding, ruminant health management, and

breeding of carabaos with emphasis on artificial insemination.

The potential of the carabao as a source of meat and milk was also discussed. Participants of the training conducted last October 14 in Barangay Pacuan, La Libertad had a chance to do actual production of Urea-Treated Rice Straw (UTRS).

Two more trainings will be conducted by the end of this year in the municipalities of Mabinay and Sta. Catalina on November 12 and 26, respectively.

A total of
23 draft carabaos
will be distributed in Negros Oriental this year under the SAAD Program.



DA-PCC at DMMMSU engages Elyu students in 'carapreneurship'

By Jan Rose Maon

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on people in all walks of life. Students are not exempted and in fact are faced with some of the most challenging circumstances during lockdown. But while they are shut off from the outside for safety, their extra time post fulfillment of learning module requirements can be used for other worthy pursuits.

The DA-PCC at Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University (DA-PCC at DMMMSU) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) saw this as an opportunity to introduce the youth in Naguilian, La Union to an agri-entrepreneurship program.

Initially, six high school students from Cabaritan Sur were chosen to receive one buffalo each for fattening last November 25.

Said program aims to encourage the Filipino youth to engage in agriculture, address the ageing population of Filipino farmers, and guarantee a strong labor force for the agri-fishery sector.

Majority of the student-beneficiaries belong to poor farming families. The program aims to train the students on basic buffalo management and are expected to eventually engage in dairy buffalo production as a source of additional income.

"The purpose of the program is to nurture our youth economically and socially and to inculcate in their young mind the value of being a farmer. Hopefully, this initial venture into buffalo raising would encourage them to fully engage in the business," DA-PCC at DMMMSU OIC-Center Director Vilma Gagni said.

Carlo Jowan Aspiras Jr., an AI technician of the DA-PCC at DMMMSU in the area and Freddie Ledda, a successful buffalo raiser in the said town, will serve as the mentors of the recipients.

LGU-Victoria welcomes dairy livelihood initiative

By Charlene Joanino



Select DA-PCC, LGU-Victoria and Tarlac province execs lead the groundbreaking of the dairy and processing store in Victoria, Tarlac.

The town of Victoria in Tarlac will soon add the processing of dairy products with carabao’s milk to its roster of livelihood opportunities for the town’s residents. A ceremonial groundbreaking of dairy and processing store and entrustment of production, processing, and marketing equipment were conducted last October 27 at the Bulwagan ng Kalayaan in Victoria.

Said ceremony was led by DA-PCC OIC Executive Director Dr. Claro Mingala, LGU-Victoria Mayor Christian Tell Yap, and DA-PCC at Central Luzon State University Center Director Dr. Daniel Aquino.

According to Mayor Yap, said initiative is important in diversified

agricultural production inclusive of milk, vegetables, and rice that can contribute in progressing their town.

Victoria is among the towns covered by the DA-PCC’s ALAB-Karbawan project that ushers Carabao-based Business Improvement Network (CBIN) in 17 provinces. It was funded by the office of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform and is geared towards progressing the carabao dairy industry.

Through the CBIN, three conduit cooperatives were selected as beneficiaries in Victoria. Two ice cream making machines, three forage choppers, one freezer, sacks of silage, and vermicasts were awarded.

Initially, the DA-PCC entrusted 11 carabaos to Amaia Cruz Conduit Cooperative (ACCC). The Palayamanan Agricultural Cooperative, Mabulod Green Farm Producers Cooperative and ACCC also participated in a training on Buffalo Management facilitated by the DA-PCC at CLSU.

Meanwhile, the facility was funded by the DA while a container van will be provided under the CBIN.

Others in attendance included National Dairy Business Hub Coordinator Dr. Peregrino Duran, PLGU 2nd District Board Members Hon. TonyBoy Cervantes and Hon. Dan Canlas Asiaten, and Sipag Villar Representative Malen Galang.

“I would like to laud the vision of Mayor Yap in pursuing the establishment of carabao-based venture in Victoria. The facility will help farmers gain more income.”

Dr. Claro Mingala
DA-PCC OIC Executive Director

DA-PCC celebrates WFD

By Ma. Cecilia Irang

The DA-PCC participated in the opening ceremony of the World Food Day (WFD) with the theme “Grow, Nourish, Sustain, Together”, last October 12.

DA-PCC Deputy Executive Director Dr. Caro Salces substantiated the theme in his opening remarks by giving his own meaning of the acronym TEAM.

“The TEAM stands for Transform, Envision, Align, and Make it happen. We need these to grow, nourish,

and sustain the carabao industry together,” he said.

Meanwhile, DA-PCC Officer-in-Charge Executive Director Dr. Claro Mingala related the mandate of the agency to the acronym FOOD, which means Factual, Objective, Organized, and Development-driven.

“Let’s all be happy working together not only for the agency but also for the farming communities. We should all be one

in pursuing DA-PCC’s mandate and objectives to better serve our farmer-clients,” he said.

DA-PCC Division Chiefs Dr. Eric Palacpac, Dr. Eufrocina Atabay, Minda Diloy, and Aimee Fulgencio also gave updates on the activities and accomplishments of their respective divisions.

WFD is a global day of action that focuses on food security, which is celebrated annually on October 16 worldwide.

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DA-PCC In-House Review migrates to digital space

Del Barrio, former DA-PCC Executive Director; Ms. Mina Abella, RDD CEDS Head; Dr. Annabelle Sarabia, former RDD head, Dr. Edwin Atabay, Scientist I, and Dr. Daniel Aquino, Former DA-PCC at CLSU center director, were also recognized.

Dr. Aquino was recognized for his study on the “Development of Feeding Protocols and Practices to Support the Nutritional Requirements of Dairy Buffaloes”, which won “Best paper” award last August in an event facilitated by the CLSU.

Dr. Emerson Tapdasan of DA-PCC at Ubay Stock Farm was also recognized for his paper entitled “Prevalence and Risk Factors of Trypanosoma evansi infection in Water Buffaloes (Bubalus bubalis) of Ubay, Bohol”, which bagged the award in the Agriculture and Fisheries Cluster during the Regional Research and Development Symposium of Central Visayas,

Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources R&D Consortium held last October.

Other highlights of the event were the talks given by Dr. Diana Ignacio, Assistant Secretary for Human Resources, Management Services and Special Concerns, Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and Dr. Lily Ann Lando, motivational coach/Training and Facilitator CORE Consulting and Development. The topics are on Guidelines in Certification of Eligibility of Non-DOST and S&T Personnel under RA 8439 as amended by RA 11312” and “Innovator Mindset: Changing mindsets from researchers to innovators”, respectively.

Also in the event were DA-PCC OIC-Executive Director Dr. Mingala, DA-PCC Deputy Executive Director Dr. Caro Salces, and other DA-PCC RDD staff.

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International experts agree...

cellular mechanisms of these apicomplexan parasites.

Another speaker was Ms. Rowena Aguilar-Sino, a Fermentation Scientist from Australia. She talked about animal vaccine accessibility in the regional areas. The last speaker for this year was Dr. Saturnina Halos from the University of the Philippines Diliman. She discussed the regulatory issues on animal biotechnology in the Philippine perspective.

Symposiasts raised questions during the last part of each session. Results of the feedback poll show that 83% of the participants believe that biotechnology is essential in mitigating the pandemic.

6th NCC underscores positive outlook in carapreneurship in the 'New Normal'

year's theme: "Pag-asa Karbawan: Lahat Aahon, Susulong, Aasenso".

"What matters most now is we press forward in unity despite all the calamities and health crisis that we have been going through. Together, we rise above challenges, we move forward, and we progress especially our dedicated carapreneurs," Dr. Palacpac said.

The first part, which was titled "Pag-asa Karbawan, May Pag-Ahon", tackled how the DA-PCC and its clients cope with the challenges brought about by the pandemic. It featured audio-visual presentations on government-funded activities such as Ahon Lahat, Pagkaing Sapat Kontra COVID-19 (ALPAS-COVID-19) interventions and Accelerating Livelihood and Assets Buildup (ALAB) Karbawan projects (Carabao-Based Business Improvement Network and Coconut-Carabao Development Project). A closed group convergence meeting on clustering of dairy farms led by DA-PCC's Deputy Executive Director Dr. Caro Salces was also conducted. Meanwhile, OIC-Executive Director Dr. Claro Mingala, gave updates on the carabao development program (CDP) and the agency's initiatives and efforts to foster the carabao industry in the "New Normal".

"This year has placed the CDP in the most challenging period thus far. The pandemic while inflicting

chaos and unrivaled economic stress worldwide has brought opportunities for the program making way for innovations that in many years would be worth reckoning," Dr. Mingala said.

He also added that the "New Normal" ushered DA-PCC's stride against these trying times while staying true to its mandate and approaching its operations vigorously with the unwavering commitment and significant contributions of all its partners.

In the "Pag-asa Karbawan, May Pagsulong" part, it involved launching of DA-PCC knowledge portal, digitized knowledge products, and manuals for Artificial Insemination and Farmer Livestock School on Dairy Buffalo Production. It also included discussions on School-based Milk Feeding Program by Dr. Ma. Corazon Dumlao, chief health program officer of the Bureau of Learner Support Services-School Health Division-Department of Education; Loan Program for Carapreneurs by Emmaly Guinto, chief of Agricultural Credit Policy Council's (ACPC) Communication and Public Affairs Division and Justine Cubos, ACPC's information officer; and DA-PCC's technology highlights by Dr. Eufrocina Atabay, Scientist I and OIC-Research and Development Division.

"Under the new normal and DA's

new thinking, there is a great challenge and opportunity for DA-PCC to pursue the new RDD paradigms and I call it research revolution. Our new mindset is 'research translation to innovations' for us to contribute to boosting the industry and continuously improving the lives of our farmers and the public," Dr. Atabay shared.

On the other hand, the last part, named "Pag-asa Karbawan, May Pag-Asenso", included a series of video presentations featuring carapreneurs who rose above adversities and winners for 2019 outstanding dairy farmers, dairy buffaloes, cooperative, and region 3 technicians.

Dr. Peregrino Duran, Scientist I and Search for Outstanding Farmers, Co-op, and Dairy Buffaloes committee chair, presented the guidelines and criteria for each award.

The "Outstanding Dairy Buffalo Farmer" awardees were Juanito Dumale of Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija (smallhold category), Corazon Badie of Cadiz City, Negros Occidental (family module category), Bonifacio Alagar of Rosario, Batangas (semi-commercial category), Roger Mactal of Botolan, Zambales (commercial category), and Dominic Paclibar of M'lang, North Cotabato (independent category).

Meanwhile, Grace Boyles of

Mabini, Bohol was awarded the "Modelong Juana sa Kalabawan" (model woman in carabao dairying) while Moises Alfonso of San Jose City, Nueva Ecija was adjudged the "Modelong Kabataan sa Kalabawan". For the second consecutive time, the Catalanacan Multi-Purpose Cooperative was bestowed the "Best Dairy Buffalo Farmer Cooperative" title. Arnold Cunanan and Victoriano Dumale of San Jose City and Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija took home the "Gintong Kalabaw Cup" for owning the "Best Senior and Best Junior Dairy Buffalo Cows", respectively. Moreover, a special award titled "KaTropang Vlogger" was given to Richard Reyes of Bacolor, Pampanga.

Other awards were also given to outstanding technicians and bull loan recipient in Region 3. Among those recognized were Luisito Espiritu and Eduardo Dela Cruz, Jr. of San Miguel, Bulacan as Outstanding Village-Based Artificial Insemination (AI) Technicians in terms of AI services and calf drop, respectively; Lito Lopez of Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija as "Outstanding Local Government Unit AI Technician"; Arturo Pascua of San Jose City, Nueva Ecija as "Outstanding Newly Trained AI Technician"; and Renato Villeza of Talavera, Nueva Ecija as "Outstanding Bull Loan Recipient".

The annual confab, which was

6TH
NATIONAL
CARBAO
CONFERENCE
11.17.2020



PAG-ASA Karbawan
Lahat Aahon, Susulong, Aasenso



initiated by former DA-PCC Executive Director Dr. Arnel Del Barrio, aims to gather participants, trustees, and all those who are benefitting from the carabao-based industry. It serves as a venue for meaningful interaction among the participants and a source of significant information, ideas, and good practices for sharing and disseminating, which is expected to inspire more to participate in the CDP.

Minda Diloy, DA-PCC's Integrated Management Representative; Dr. Danilda Duran, Scientist I, and

Wilma Del Rosario, carabao-based enterprise development section head, served as moderators for the sessions.

DA-Undersecretary for Livestock Dr. William Medrano and Senate Committee Chair on Agriculture, Food, and Agrarian Reform Senator Cynthia Villar also joined the event online and extended their respective messages to the DA-PCC, its clients and viewers.

More than 300 online and in-person participants locally and abroad tuned in to the 6th NCC.

A2 milk is for everyone

By Charlene Joanino



Many regard staying fit and healthy as the best defense against the dreaded coronavirus. But apart from hitting the running track or the gym, boosting immunity is a more proactive stance to ward off the disease and the right choice of nutritious food is crucial to this. One such immune-booster is A2-type milk.

Compared to A1 milk, A2 milk has A2 B-casein protein that helps ease digestion. It also strengthens the body with regular intake as nutrients and minerals are better absorbed. This is why A2 milk is regarded as a healthier choice. And it is good to know that the buffalo is a good source of pure A2 milk.

The study entitled “Screening for Genetic Polymorphism of B-Casein Gene in Different Breeds of Buffaloes (*Bubalus bubalis*) in the Philippines” determined that four breeds of buffaloes carry only A2 alleles.

Said breeds are Bulgarian Murrah Buffalo, Brazilian Murrah Buffalo, Italian Murrah Buffalo, and Philippine Native Swamp.

Due to the absence of A1 allele in buffaloes, production of A1 milk with beta-casomorphin-7 (BCM-7) is also prevented. The BCM-7 increases risk of diabetes, neurological disorder, and ischemic heart disease.

“Investigation of the gene causing the variance in B-casein gives us information if the native buffaloes and other breeds in the Philippines have the mutation for BCM-7 gene. In this manner, selecting the favorable allele in the population can be conducted,” said by Paulene Pineda, one of the members of the research team that conducted the study.

Pineda worked alongside Jonalyn Delos Santos and Dr. Ester Flores at the Department of Agriculture-

Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC).

Meanwhile, A2 milk can be identified through “A2 choice”, a DA-PCC technology. It is a “genotyping test for A1 and A2 beta casein variants in bovine and bubaline species that determine cattle and carabao’s milk type through the beta casein gene”.

A2 choice helps set apart A2 milk in the market which is saturated with cow’s (cattle’s) milk, which has A1 or combination of A1 and A2 B-casein.

“Classification of A2 milk from A1 milk is important because the price for A2 milk could increase your income with up to 55%,” Pineda shared. She added, the test can now be availed at Php700 per animal. The result is released within two to four weeks.

From page 1

At heart and at work, foreigners no more: The Fujiharas’ decade of volunteer work in PH

nutrition scientist and consultant, has been engaged with the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) for the past 10 years. It was his volition to help local farmers the moment he set foot on Philippine soil.

When asked why he chose to render volunteer work in a tropical country, which differs significantly to his home country in many respects including climate and culture, Dr. Fujihara enthusiastically shared that his passion for the carabao, an iconic agricultural asset in the Philippines, has drawn him to this country.

“Although I find the country extremely hot and humid in most months, this does not hinder me from enjoying the countryside where farmers would receive my frequent visits with exceptional warmth,” he said.

In the past, he had visited different places in Asia and East Africa that allowed him to conduct over 175 ruminant nutrition researches.

In 1986, he first came to the Philippines for a goat-related project. Later on, he collaborated with the DA-PCC and was invited by Dr. Libertado Cruz, forerunner and former DA-PCC executive director, to join the agency. From then on, he would regularly fly in and out of the country.

By 2011, he and his wife Kazumi (a

retired teacher) were invited by the DA-PCC to reside inside the agency’s staff housing facility at its national headquarters in Nueva Ecija. They only go back home in Japan once every year to see their two children who are already working professionals.

“If I were to compare the local buffalo industry then and now, I’d say that the DA-PCC’s programs and services have gone headways in terms of the agency’s contribution in improving the sector,” he said.

As a retired professor of Shimane University in Matsue, Japan, he deems the DA-PCC as a venue to share his expertise with other specialists and workers in the field of animal nutrition and consequently help improve the livelihood of carabao farmers.

Dr. Fujihara is known for his active engagement in the commercialization of silage production initially in Nueva Ecija. Silage is produced from the anaerobic fermentation of forage or corn, allowing the preservation of said feedstuff for buffaloes.

Silage is often used as a buffer feedstuff during the dry season when fresh green grasses become scarce. Farmers, such as Isagani Cajucorn of Lupao, Nueva Ecija, also earn from silage production selling a 40-kg sack of corn silage at Php160-Pphp180.



Aside from Dr. Fujihara’s volunteer work in DA-PCC, he and his wife are also benefactors to locals who are in need of livelihood. Shelling out money from their own pockets, the couple distributed start-up goat stocks to select families and guided them throughout all stages in goat raising and meat production.

“We are not expecting to get anything in return for doing this. We just sincerely want to help however we can,” Dr. Fujihara shared.

The couple were able to give more than 200 goats to locals that are often referred to them by their Filipino friends. They would also do random acts of kindness such as buying just about anything from a Filipino vendor who passes them by.

“We have already acclimatized our way of life here in the Philippines. We can even understand Tagalog and can speak common greetings and courtesies such as “salamat,” he shared.

Another indication that the Fujiharas are now, to some extent, Filipinized is that they are now avid drinkers of carabao’s milk.

More than that, the couple has now imbibed a heart that beats for the Filipinos. Both are quick to agree that the Philippines is now their second home and at home they will be for years to come.

Del Barrio is ‘Doctor to the Barrios’

By Ma. Cecilia Irang

“In my years of service, I was able to carry out my duties well as the agency’s head because of DA-PCC’s culture where everyone works hand-in-hand despite differences. Surely there is harmony in diversity as depicted by how well we work together towards a common goal of helping our farmers. I hope the agency continues to nurture such practice.”

This was how Dr. Arnel Del Barrio described his aspiration and stint as DA-PCC’s Executive Director from June 2014 until his official retirement on November 1.

During a recognition program held in his honor on October 28 (three days after his 60th birthday) at the DA-PCC national headquarters and gene pool in the Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija, Dr. Del Barrio wore his heart on his sleeve as he delivered his speech.

He underscored the need to focus on the DA-PCC’s deliverables especially its programs, projects, activities, and partnerships, which will contribute to increased production and income of carapreneurs.

“Our loyalty is to the agency, not to the person leading it. Our allegiance is to the DA-PCC’s goal. Let’s continue the program and add more,” he averred.

Aside from personal messages delivered by Dr. Del Barrio’s colleagues, the event also featured a series of video presentations, which included a chronicle of his contributions to the carabao sector, spiels and greetings from the DA-PCC’s regional center directors and staff members.

Notable contributions

An animal nutritionist, Dr. Del Barrio rose to the ranks of Researcher, Supervising Science Research Specialist, Center Director of DA-PCC at University of the Philippines Los Baños (DA-PCC at UPLB), Scientist I, Acting Executive Director, and Executive Director III. Recently, he was also elected as Academician by the National Academy of Science and Technology.

Dr. Del Barrio’s staunch advocacy efforts in progressing not only the carabao but also the dairy industry paved the way to monumental projects such as the Carabao-Based Business Improvement Network and Coconut-Carabao Development Project (CCDP). During his tenure as DA-PCC’s Executive Director, he also initiated and crafted the National Carabao Conference, an annual event where carabao keepers and other industry players gather and exchange technologies, ideas, and best practices.

Looking back to his service at DA-PCC, it was under his leadership

that the agency was given the “2018 Outstanding Institution Award” under Cluster IV (Divisions of Biological Sciences, Agriculture and Forestry and Veterinary Medicine) by the National Research Council of the Philippines and the “Bronze Award of PRIME-HRM” for having managed and implemented the processes under the four core HRM Systems. DA-PCC also ranked 3rd among DA’s attached agencies for FY 2018 fund utilization and was certified by TUV SUD Asia Pacific for its compliance with the integrated systems of quality management (ISO 9001:2015), environmental management (ISO 14001:2015) and occupational health and safety (OHSAS 18001:2007).

In 2019, DA-PCC was recognized by the Department of Trade and Industry as its “Most Outstanding Partner Agency”. Apart from this, it forged a number of meaningful partnerships and collaborations with both national and international institutions for the sustainable growth of the livestock particularly the carabao industry.

In the face of the current global health crisis, DA-PCC, under the headship of Dr. Del Barrio, also collaborated with various government and private institutions to help carapreneurs cope with the unprecedented challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. These include partnerships with the Department of Agrarian Reform for the establishment of Milkybun processing facility; Department

of Education and Department of Social Welfare and Development for the implementation of milk feeding program; DA-Philippine Coconut Authority for the CCDP; AgriCOOPh Federation for the promotion of the project titled “Establishment of the Nueva Ecija Sustainable Dairy Hub”; and Agriterro Philippines and National Dairy Authority for the conduct of the project “Improving the Dairy Value Chain in the Visayas Region thru GROW COOP”. Moreover, it partnered with San Miguel Corporation and San Miguel Foundation Inc. for other interventions in support of dairy farmers.

Awarded as Outstanding Young Scientist in 2000, conferred as Scientist I in 2014 by the NAST, and recognized by the Philippine Society of Animal Science (PSAS) as “Distinguished Fellow” in 2017, Dr. del Barrio’s name is, no doubt, a constant inclusion in the roster of promising researchers especially in the field of ruminant nutrition.

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ROSTER OF RETIREES



DR. ANNABELLE SARABIA

Research and Development Chief

"As an experienced researcher, I am happy knowing that my efforts help better the lives of local farmers. More than any monetary reward there is, I believe such emotion is beyond measure."

Amid the promising roster of career opportunities offered before Dr. Sarabia, both locally and abroad, she remained firm to her resolve to serve as a public servant in the Philippines. She became one of the pillars of the Philippine Carabao Center upon its establishment in the 1990s. Soon, her name became among the most respected names in the field of animal research. This year, she retired from her post as the DA-PCC's Research and Development Division chief.

At the onset of her professional life at the agency, she became the head of the Research and Development Unit in DA-PCC at UP Los Baños. Her prowess in her field led her to occupy important positions, having served as president of both the Federation of Philippine Agricultural Scientific and Professional Organizations, Inc. and Philippine Society of Animal Science.

She was engaged in 12 publications, 17 abstracts, 13 development projects, 3 unpublished completed researches, and 40 researches that were included in various scientific journals.



DR. DANIEL AQUINO

DA-PCC at CLSU Center Chief

"Because of DA-PCC, I've become and achieved many things. I built my career, had my family, and pursued my passion here. Because of DA-PCC, I've become who I am today."

Having dedicated decades of his life as part of the DA-PCC, Dr. Aquino takes pride on his work as an animal nutrition expert, researcher, and the head of the DA-PCC at Central Luzon State University (CLSU). He now takes his final bow as center director as he retires with notable accomplishments.

As center director of DA-PCC at CLSU, he spearheaded the erection of the new DA-PCC at CLSU office building and dairy farm milking parlor and led the center toward its certification to ISO 9001:2015, which is an international standard of quality management system.

Dr. Aquino is also well known for having done many researches that benefitted local dairy farmers. His most recent entitled "Sustainable Homegrown Forages and Complete Nutrients Diets Towards Enhancing Growth and Milk Production of Dairy Buffaloes" won first place on the development category of the Regional Symposium in R&D Highlights sponsored by Central Luzon Agriculture and Resources Research and Development Consortium.



DIR. GLORIA DELA CRUZ

DA-PCC at DMMMSU Center Chief

"I had set my heart in the service of the farmers. I hope the DA-PCC continues to bring hope and provide livelihood opportunities to its clients whilst progressing the carabao industry."

Dir. dela Cruz has served under the Philippine government in the span of 41 years. Of which, for 11 years she worked as the center director of the DA-PCC at her alma mater, Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University (DMMMSU). She earned her bachelor and master degrees at DMMMSU specializing in animal husbandry and animal science, respectively.

She has adept knowledge in livestock production and management, and breeding through artificial insemination. Such helped her immensely in the implementation of DA-PCC's program and services. Her ardent initiatives landed her the "Dangal ng bayan award" which was bestowed to her in 2015 by the Civil Service Commission in recognition of her outstanding work performance.



DIR. FRANKLIN T. RELLIN

DA-PCC at CSU Center Chief

"My journey as part of the agency has been wonderful. I am thankful to all the DA-PCC staff for being an important part of this great institution. Like a fruit tree, DA-PCC has blossomed and progressed into a very important institution for livestock research and dairy enterprise development."

Former DA-PCC at Cagayan State University (CSU) Center Director Rellin actively pursued the progressing of the carabao industry. He had been on the field, serving the carabao sector since 1981.

He is an expert in animal breeding and reproduction who had served as a professor of CSU. Rellin also became the Campus Director for Research and Extension before he occupied the position in DA-PCC at CSU in 1992. He ushered the development of the DA-PCC at CSU farm by strengthening its animal facilities and personnel to conduct research, extension, and effective production, and management of animals.

Collaborations with various government arms and farmer organizations to accelerate the conduct of crossbreeding of carabaos locally were focused on during his term. Rellin initiated training of local government unit technicians, university personnel, and farmers on management of carabao, pasture development, and artificial insemination (AI), and was able to establish the first Fresh Extended Semen Laboratory and the first Crossbreed Buffalo in Region II through AI.

OTHER RETIREES

FIORELIA AGUINALDO, DA-PCC at CLSU- Training Specialist III
 EDELINA RELLIN, DA-PCC at CSU- Senior Science Research Specialist
 FLOCERFIDA AQUINO, DA-PCC NHGP- Senior Science Research Specialist
 WILFREDO HENSES, DA-PCC NHGP- Admin Aide III
 MERCEDITA AGUSTIN, DA-PCC AT CLSU- Admin Aide VI

ROSTER OF NEWLY APPOINTED DIRECTORS



DR. CLARO MINGALA
DA-PCC OIC Executive Director

"I am committed to provide continuous support to rural farming communities. Beyond technical assistance, we would thoroughly guide the farmers who are our clients, so they could fully benefit from our programs which can help change their lives."

Hailing from a family of public servants, Dr. Mingala has dedicated his life's work in furthering the livestock industry through research geared in helping Filipino farmers have an improved life. Since 1996, he had been part of the DA-PCC and eventually became Scientist III who's an expert in the field of Biotechnology. Last October, he was designated as OIC Executive Director of the DA-PCC.

Dr. Mingala wanted to be a doctor since he was in high school. He took Bachelor of Science in Animal Husbandry and Doctor of Veterinary Science and Medicine at Central Luzon State University (CLSU). He finished his Master degree in Veterinary Studies at CLSU and pursued Doctor of Philosophy on Infectious Diseases – Molecular Immunology and Microbiology in Hokkaido University at Sapporo, Japan.

He had more than 90 published research papers. Among the awards he had received include being one of the 2019 Faces of Biotechnology, Department of Agriculture-Biotechnology Program and DA-BAR's 2018 Best R&D Paper Gold Award under the Applied Research (Animal Science) Category. He had also served as the OIC-Assistant Director of the Bureau of Animal Industry. He is currently the Center Chief, Livestock Biotechnology Center, Department of Agriculture - Biotechnology Program Office (DA-BPO); President, Philippine Association of Career Scientists of the DOST; Vice President, National Research Council of the Philippines, Department of Science and Technology; and Chair, Division XIII (Veterinary Medicine), National Research Council of the Philippines, Department of Science and Technology.



DR. MARIA DINAH R. LOCULAN
DA-PCC at USF Center Chief

"I want to encourage all the staff and employees not to settle for complacency, instead aim to achieve more than the set targets. Given that the Center has established systems already as it has been certified to ISO for many years, I will continue to implement the best practices of the Center."

Dr. Maria Dinah R. Loculan, who brings with her impressive performance in research and extension as staff of the Department of Agriculture for 23 years, revealed that her focus as the new center director is to continuously work to augment the income of the clients and improve their livelihood through dairying. With her wide and varied experience in conducting researches, Dr. Loculan strongly believed the importance of its outcome to address the needs of clients and customers. She envisioned to connect the Center's researches to international funding agencies which could bring opportunities for the staff to collaborate with international researchers and could bring chances for staff to study overseas. Based on her experience studying abroad, as she finished her Doctor of Philosophy degree in Agricultural Development at the University of Queensland in Australia, she stated how it has broadened her views and perspective in agricultural development and how it honed her critical thinking skills in the field.



ASSISTANT PROF. FRANCISCO G. GABUNADA, JR.
DA-PCC at VSU Center Chief

"Our focus would be on sustaining and scaling up the progress of the activities in the Center despite the ever-changing scenario. This would call for new strategies, which include the utilization of available technologies and resources to be able to move forward."

Over 30 years, Dir. Francisco G. Gabunada, Jr. dedicated his life in agricultural research and development, which specializes in disseminating animal-related production technologies to farmers. He experienced hands-on coordination on livestock and forage-based feed resources technology development with farmers and partners in Southeast Asia. Being an Assistant Professor at the Visayas State University in Baybay City, Leyte, he is currently involved in a higher education institution administration as University Secretary and Executive Assistant to the University President from 2016 to present. He also became the Center Director of DA-Philippine Carabao Center at Visayas State University from 2008 to 2013. This year marks the "comeback" of Dir. Gabunada as center director of the DA-PCC at VSU, which according to him is a trailblazing opportunity to welcome new modalities and networks to propel services towards the betterment of its clientele and the realization of the agency's goals and objectives.

From page 19

Del Barrio is 'Doctor to the Barrios'

He was actively engaged in research studies such as (1) Enhancing Milk Production of Water Buffaloes through S&T Interventions with 5 project components (2) Nutritive Value, Digestibility and Performance of Buffaloes using Banana by-products and waterlily as alternative feed resources (3) Development of Sustainable Rice Straw Management Practices and Technologies for Ruminant Fodder in the Philippines.

Dr. Del Barrio's nearly four decades of exemplary work in scientific research and development has transcended various disciplines in animal science such as animal nutrition and feed management systems, rumen microbiology, reproductive biotechnology, meat science, and wildlife biology

and conservation. His effective leadership has also been widely esteemed by other professional organizations having served as president of PSAS in 2007 to 2008, Philippine Society of Animal Nutritionists in 2003 to 2005 and the Associations of Professionals in Livestock Production in 2000 to 2001 and as chair of the Asian Australasian Association of Animal Production Societies.

More importantly, his notable leadership as Executive Director steered the organization to become a more pragmatic R&D institution, utilizing science, technology, and innovations in engaging all stakeholders of the carabao industry value chain, particularly smallholder farmers toward improved productivity and profitability.

In his concluding statement, Dr. Del Barrio said: "Young leaders will replace us hence continuous capability building is crucial. Nevertheless, we, retirees, can still convene and contribute to the DA-PCC as an advocacy group by giving opinions and ideas where we can help."

Dr. Del Barrio may have bidden farewell and set towards a new phase of his life, however it can't be denied that he is a revered man of excellence who has dedicated his service for Filipino farmers, as his life's mantra goes: "Sa diwa at puso, I am one with farmers".

GOT QUESTIONS
OR SUGGESTIONS?
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