

# Bubalus



Quarterly Newsletter of the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center

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## FEATURES

### Continuing the legacy: A second liner's carapreneurship journey

By **Ma. Cecilia Irang-Mariano**

In a world where social media feeds are flooded with selfies and snapshots of fleeting moments, one young woman in

To page 16

### Crossbred buffalo hits 20 kg peak yield, highlights DA-PCC's genetic improvement efforts

By **Ronaline Canute**

Records show that a crossbred buffalo at the DA-PCC reached a yield of 20 kg and maintained a daily yield of over 15 kg at its peak for two months during its second trimester of lactation.

Said crossbred buffalo maintained an

average daily milk yield of 12.9 kg during its last lactation.

This, according to the agency's National Coordinator of the Genetic Improvement

To page 4

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## Contents

- 3** DA-PCC's island cluster anniv celebrations highlight successes in CDP implementation
- 5** National milk feeding program benefits 4.2M children, empowers dairy farmers
- 5** New Dairy Boxes in Davao region scale up dairy biz for Davaoeños
- 6** PWD farmer entrusted with bull
- 6** Entrustment of dairy carabaos mark NE farmers' vision of better life
- 7** ALAB Karbawan project reaches dairy farmers in Agusan
- 7** First taste of carapreneurship for dairy farmers in Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija
- 8** DA-PCC champions school mental health, feeding program
- 8** Silage prod'n seen to aide herd buildup
- 9** Dairy co-ops supply milk to 37k pupils in Region X, CARAGA
- 9** LGU-Asingan supports BSNMPC's carabao biz initiatives
- 10** DA-PCC boosts carabao breeding in Region 2, CAR
- 10** AI technicians in Regions IX, X, CARAGA all set to increasing reproductive efficiency of water buffaloes
- 11** Biz confab eyes opportunities on carabao dev't
- 11** DA-PCC, USM strengthen tie-up on extension, advisory services
- 12** DA-PCC collaborates with agri insts in NegOcc to boost livestock industry
- 12** BizTalk session promotes dairy biz literacy
- 13** CBED coordinators capacitated to design market study
- 14** Agri Center Chief receives CSC Pagasa Award
- 14** USM exec takes directorship for DA-PCC at USM, underscores innovative, value-added outcomes
- 15** Dr. Liza Battad reports back as DA-PCC Exec. Director, underscores resilience and unity
- 17** DA-PCC shares the love under 'LAB for All'
- 18** Cebuano farmers complete 'Eskwelahan sa Kahanginan' on Dairy Buffalo Prod'n
- 19** 2023 Outstanding Employees

## About the cover

As Miccaela Alfonso, a young carapreneur in San Jose City, Nueva Ecija, embarks on carabao dairying to carry forward her father's legacy, she stands as a testament to the resilience of the second liners—those who, in the face of adversity, rise to shape the future of this enterprise. Through her management, the carabao farm becomes not just a livelihood, but a symbol of continuity, perseverance, and the enduring bond between past, present, and future.



Photo by Dine Yve D. Daganos



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2018 Agricultural Newsletter of the Year

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# DA-PCC's island cluster anniversary celebrations highlight successes in CDP implementation



By Ma. Cecilia Irang-Mariano

The DA-PCC underscored the importance of fostering collaboration and shared goals in achieving transformative success, particularly in championing the Carabao Development Program (CDP), as it celebrated its 31st anniversary across different island clusters.

Marking a first in the agency's history, the anniversary celebration took place in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao clusters to highlight the DA-PCC's consortia tie-up with the National Agriculture and Resources Research and Development Network and its host universities.

The island cluster celebrations, themed "Excellence in Unity," were hosted by the DA-PCC at CLSU for the Luzon cluster on March 8, 2024, DA-PCC at VSU for Visayas on March 12, 2024, and DA-PCC at USM for Mindanao on March 14, 2024.

During the celebrations, DA-PCC Executive Director Dr. Liza Battad showcased the advancements made under the CDP through audio-visual presentations, highlighting industry milestones for each cluster.

Dr. Battad took the opportunity to thank all stakeholders for their contributions to the growth and success of the carabao sector, noting the establishment of a robust carabao supply chain economy as a key

outcome of the collective effort.

Industry partners voiced their support for the DA-PCC's endeavors in advancing the livestock sector.

Central Luzon Agriculture and Aquatic Resources Research and Development Consortium Director Dr. Edgar Orden, speaking at the Luzon cluster event, affirmed the DA-PCC's impact on the country's carabao industry, mentioning its surpassing achievements over 31 years. An impact assessment by CLSU researchers highlighted the DA-PCC's efforts in significantly advancing the livestock sector, including a notable increase in milk production and the genetic improvement of carabaos.

In the Visayas, Board Member Matt Palabrica emphasized the strong partnership between Iloilo Province and DA-PCC at West Visayas State University, endorsing resolutions to further the carabao industry's growth in line with the province's goals.

Similarly, in Mindanao, Board Member Jonathan Tabara conveyed Cotabato Province's commitment to the carabao industry, announcing funding for dairy buffalo procurement, which will aid the country's agricultural sector in achieving milk sufficiency, and the enactment of the Enhanced Carabao Propagation and Promotion Ordinance to help DA-PCC in achieving carabao industry goals in the province.

The industry's pledge of support, signed by partners nationwide, underscored a shared dedication to promoting carabao products and encouraging agricultural engagement among the youth.

Additionally, a Memorandum of Commitment was signed between DA-PCC at VSU and the Visayas Consortium for Agriculture, Aquatic, and Natural Resources Program, alongside the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development, which aims to promote science, technology, and innovation applications in Region 8 through research and development.

Recognition was given to DA-PCC's program implementation partners, alongside initiatives like the Dairy Herd Buildup Project and the turnover of dairy buffaloes to cooperatives, which reflect the collective commitment to promoting the carabao industry.

Furthermore, a symbolic act of unity took place as leaders and staunch supporters of DA-PCC poured milk into a bottle, symbolizing their dedication to collaborative efforts and resource-sharing for present and future initiatives.

The event also featured an exhibition showcasing the diverse products derived from carabaos, including hide, meat, and dairy delicacies. **B**



Some of the highlights of the agency's island cluster anniversary celebrations include symbolic act of unity, exhibit, and recognition of industry partners.

# Crossbred buffalo hits 20 kg peak yield...



From page 1

Program (GIP) Dr. Ester Flores, is a groundbreaking record showcasing the program's success.

This remarkable achievement was accomplished by a crossbred buffalo identified as 7UP15001, which yielded a total of 3883.7 kg of milk over a 299-day lactation period—the highest milk yield ever recorded among female buffaloes in the agency's institutional herds.

It now holds the highest 100 days-in-milk average daily milk production (16.6 kg) and the highest 200 days-in-milk average daily milk production (15.6 kg).

7UP15001 has surpassed the typical lactation period of 265 days observed in dairy buffaloes within DA-PCC herds, which typically ranges from 200 to 369 days. Moreover, its milk production exceeds the 4.5 kg and 10 kg average milk yield per day per lactation for dairy buffalo and dairy cattle, respectively, during a 305-day lactation period under Philippine conditions.

This crossbred stands as a testament to the concerted efforts of DA-PCC's GIP, specifically focused on backcrossing to harness the genetic potential of carabaos for enhanced milk and meat production. Born on January 6, 2015, at DA-PCC's institutional herd at the University of Los Baños (DA-PCC at UPLB), this buffalo boasts a genetic composition of 87.5% Bulgarian Murrah and 12.5% swamp buffalo.

"7UP15001 is the result of our strategic backcrossing initiatives aimed at augmenting the population of dairy buffaloes in the Philippines while enhancing genetic selection to produce superior offspring," Dr. Flores emphasized.

Backcrossing approach involves mating purebred riverine buffaloes with native swamp buffaloes (carabaos). The resulting offspring—crossbred carabaos—are bigger, meatier, and produce more milk than native carabaos, which can only provide an average of one to two liters of milk a day.

Imported purebred (riverine) buffaloes were initially used as semen donors in artificial insemination of swamp buffaloes. The resulting offspring are



called crossbred carabaos. The resulting offspring, which has 50 percent riverine blood and 50 percent swamp blood, is called the first filial generation (F1).

The second filial generation (F2) is produced by mating a purebred bull with an F1 cow. They will now have 75% riverine and 25% swamp offspring. After that, the F2 cow is mated to a purebred bull to produce offspring that have 87.5% riverine and 12.5% swamp blood, leading to the third filial generation (F3). Mating a F3 cow to a purebred bull produces the fourth filial generation (F4), which has 93.75 percent riverine blood and 6.25% swamp blood. It is worthy to note that the DA-PCC's backcrossing program follows a protocol of a no-father-daughter mating to avoid inbreeding depression.

When Murrah buffalo and Philippine carabao are crossed (mated), the resulting first generation crossbreeds grow up to 70%–100% quicker and yield 200% more milk than their native parents without compromising draftability or reproduction. A further increase in milk yield has come from the ongoing backcrossing of crossbreeds with purebred Murrah.

The financial situation of small-scale farming households is anticipated to greatly improve as a result of the additional revenue brought in by this increased productivity.

"We are producing animals that can adapt to the tropical climate with little

input and resource requirements. Our goal is to provide our farmers with the finest dairy carabao genetics through breeding," Dr. Flores continued.

The processes of selective breeding and genetic evaluation under Philippine conditions include the recording of pedigree and phenotype, maintenance of pedigree and performance database, genetic evaluation and progeny testing, cryobanking of frozen semen, and continuous backcrossing.

"Animals like 7UP15001 are the result of a long-term effort to produce better buffalo with higher productivity. It didn't come over night; it's a series of actions. We cannot implement it without the sacrifice of the institutional herds using the semen of young bulls, recording the production of females, and doing it again from generation to generation," Dr. Flores said.

Dr. Jesus Rommel Herrera, supervising science research specialist of DA-PCC at UPLB, clarified that there was no special treatment in raising 7UP15001, the animal just like carries favourable genes for high milk production suitable in a tropical climate.

"Even if a female has the genetic potential to produce more milk, this will only occur under the right management and feeding conditions. Effective management begins at birth," said Dr. Herrera.

Wide-scale upgrading to benefit more families is being carried out through the judicious use of artificial insemination (AI) and natural mating (via the DA-PCC's Bull Entrustment Program) in key carabao development areas.

Currently, DA-PCC has 12 institutional herds across the country collaborating to achieve the agency's noble mission to conserve, propagate, and promote the carabao as an important source of milk and meat, in addition to draft power and hide. **B**

# National milk feeding program benefits 4.2M children, empowers dairy farmers

By Ma. Cecilia Irang-Mariano

The DA-PCC “flexes” significant achievements of the National Milk Feeding Program, positively impacting over 4.2 million undernourished children nationwide and concurrently boosting the income of dairy cooperatives, collectively generating a total revenue of PHP2 billion.

Said initiative, in line with Republic Act No. 11037 or the “Masustansyang Pagkain Para Sa Batang Pilipino Act of 2018,” showcases the successful collaboration of the DA-PCC, dairy industry partners, the Department of Education (DepEd), the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and the provincial and local government units.



Since its inception in 2019, the program has generated over PHP 2.06 billion in revenue, which showcases the significant role of the National Milk Feeding Program in creating institutional markets that significantly enhance the livelihoods and incomes of dairy farmers. This initiative has not only addressed the immediate nutritional needs of children but has also laid a strong foundation for a sustainable dairy industry.

To further extend the program's impact, especially in remote areas where delivering fresh milk is challenging, the DA-PCC has leveraged the capabilities of retort facilities. These facilities, located in Isabela, Nueva Ecija, Batangas, and Sorsogon, ensure the safety and quality of milk products, facilitating their distribution to undernourished children in hard-to-reach locations. This innovation not only creates sustainable income streams but also paves the way for a more robust dairy industry. **B**

📍 DA-PCC at USM

## New Dairy Boxes in Davao region scale up dairy biz for Davaoños

By Rodolfo Valdez Jr.

The DA-PCC at USM unboxed a wide array of dairy business opportunities in the Davao region as two new Dairy Boxes were opened in Cateel, Davao Oriental, and Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental on March 12 and March 15, respectively.

The Dairy Boxes, designed to offer tourists and local customers products made from fresh carabao's milk, will be managed by the Taytayan Irrigators Farmers Agriculture Cooperative (TIFACO) in Cateel and the United CARP Beneficiaries Association Incorporated Multipurpose Cooperative (UNICARBAI) in Sta. Maria. The facility is a component of the Accelerating Livelihood and Assets Buildup (ALAB Karbawan) project, funded by the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food, and Agrarian Reform, chaired by Senator Cynthia A. Villar.



According to TIFACO Chairperson Joenil Madani, they will actively collaborate not only with DA-PCC at USM but also with other agencies as they see the advantages resulting from this cooperation.

DA-PCC Executive Director Dr. Liza Battad highlighted in her statement the marketability of carabao products brought by the significant growth in collaborative efforts of various local chief executives and other government agencies. She also affirmed that the Dairy Box initiative could provide



an opportunity to boost income for dairy farmers and enhance their cooperatives' revenue streams.

Moreover, DA-PCC at USM Center Director Geoffray Atok challenged the key players of the carabao upgrading program in the region to accelerate artificial insemination and bull services.

The Davao region has three other Dairy Boxes located in Matanao, Davao del Sur; Montevista, Davao de Oro; and the City of Mati, Davao Oriental. **B**

## PWD farmer entrusted with bull

By **Camilla Soliman**

Andrew Delos Santos, a Person with Disabilities (PWD) farmer from Liwayway, Sta. Rosa, Nueva Ecija, received a bull from DA-PCC at CLSU on January 25, 2024.

Andrew said he never saw his disability as a barrier to pursuing his passion for carapreneurship.

“I never saw myself as being disabled. I have a rare degenerative condition called “AS” or Ankylosing Spondylitis. Kahit ganoon, hindi ko inisip na ‘di na ako makakagawa ng mga bagay na kaya ring gawin ng ibang tao. I always look for opportunities na kahit ‘di ako masyado gagalaw ay magagawa ko pa rin. It is a matter of delegation at karamihan sa mga trabaho sa bukid ay nakadelegate sa mga katuwang ko sa bukid,” said Andrew.

Andrew then shared the story of how he embarked on his journey as a carapreneur and developed a keen interest in the programs and services of DA-PCC.

“Pangarap ang isa sa nagtulak sa akin na mag-venture sa pagkakalabawan. Noong high school ako ay itinatayo pa lang ang DA-PCC at may nabasa akong article tungkol sa mga programa nito. Noong panahon ni dating pangulong Estrada nag-umpisa ang interes ko sa pagkakalabawan,” Andrew shared.

He encouraged people with disabilities to enhance their skill sets, which would contribute to their personal development. He said if God has allowed them to have weaknesses, the same God has blessed them with the spirit of endurance and strength to overcome.

He expressed his appreciation to DA-PCC at CLSU for choosing him as recipient of the Bull Entrustment Program. He hopes the agency will continue to support small farmers and the vulnerable sector so that they may have a chance at having a good life.

The Bull Entrustment Program is an initiative of DA-PCC that strategically entrusts purebred buffalo bulls to selected farmers, enabling them to utilize the bulls for natural mating with local carabaos. This program effectively spreads the superior genetic potential of purebred buffaloes, aiming to upgrade the overall quality and productivity of the local carabao population. **B**

## Entrustment of dairy carabaos mark NE farmers' vision of better life

By **Ronaline Canute**

“Babaha ng gatas sa Nampicuan!” This is the vision of 22 Nampicuan farmers after they received 25 head of crossbred buffaloes through an entrustment activity held on January 30 in Nampicuan, Nueva Ecija.

The activity was part of the implementation of the Expanded Gatasang Kalabaw Convergence Project under the Enhanced Partnership Against Hunger and Poverty (EPAHP) program.

EPAHP is a convergence project of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), DA-PCC, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and the Commission on Population and Development (POPCOM). These government agencies collaborated to increase the

volume of locally produced milk in support of the government's feeding program.

The DSWD is in charge of the provision of seed capital funds and community mobilization funds; the DA-PCC is in charge of social preparation, provision of buffaloes, and extension of production support services; the DTI is responsible for entrepreneurial training; and POPCOM on the provision of responsible parenthood and family planning trainings.

Dr. Caro Salces, Deputy Executive Director of DA-PCC, inspired the recipients to thrive in carapreneurship. “Kaagapay kayo ng gobyerno natin sa pagpapataas ng milk sufficiency at nang hindi na natin kailangan pang mag-angkat ng gatas mula sa ibang

bansa,” Dr. Salces said.

Prior to the entrustment activity, DA-PCC, through the National Dairy Business Hub (NDBH), conducted social preparation trainings (SPT) and Basic Buffalo Production Management (BBPM) for the recipients. The agency is also conducting continuous monitoring to ensure that the population of dairy buffaloes in Nampicuan will multiply.

The recipients are members of the Nampicuan Dairy Association (NDA), whose dream is to be among the faces of success in carapreneurship and foster milk production in Nampicuan. Edilberto Aliado, president of the association, expressed his gratitude and support to the collaborating agencies. **B**

## ALAB Karbawan project reaches dairy farmers in Agusan

By **Jeson Candole**

Fifty-six dairy buffaloes were entrusted to 14 members of the Maong Farmers Agricultural Cooperative (MAFCO) as part of the Accelerating Livelihood and Assets Buildup or ALAB Karbawan project of the DA-PCC.

The entrustment activity took place alongside the celebration of the city's 17th Dagkot Festival on January 15, 2024 at the Provincial Capitol, Cabadbaran City in Agusan del Norte.

ALAB Karbawan was initiated and funded by the Office of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food, and Agrarian Reform chaired by Senator Cynthia Villar to establish a robust carabao-based value chain in recipient provinces, thereby generating livelihood opportunities for farmers.

DA-PCC at CMU Center Director Dr. Lowell Paraguas started off by providing an overview of the ALAB Karbawan project. He mentioned the

project's goal is to create livelihood and enterprises anchored on carabao-based products, particularly milk and meat.

Also, he highlighted the project's benefits to dairy cooperatives nationwide as he discussed income opportunities along the dairy buffalo value chain specifically in support of RA 11037 or Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act.

Meanwhile, Dr. Elena Paraguas, DA-PCC at CMU Carabao-Based Enterprise Development coordinator, reminded farmers who completed the 34-week training on Farmer Livestock School on Dairy Buffalo Production to apply their skills and knowledge to effectively manage the dairy buffaloes entrusted to them.

On the other hand, Maria Arceli Soria, city agriculture officer of Cabadbaran City expressed her full support for

the project and gave words of encouragement to the farmer beneficiaries.

"We are very lucky here in Cabadbaran City because you have chosen us as the beneficiaries of the ALAB Karbawan project. Now, it is a challenge for us in the Local Government Unit to sustain the project," Soria said.

With positive response and commitment, Liza Parativo, chairperson of MAFCO, expressed her gratitude for the opportunity given to their cooperative. In her message, she looks forward to the cooperation of each member of the cooperative as a key contribution to the success of the project in Agusan del Norte. **B**

## First taste of carapreneurship for dairy farmers in Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija

By **Camilla Soliman**

It's just the first month of the year, but the Samahang Pangkaunlaran ng Magsasaka sa Calancuasan Irrigators Association Corporation (SPMCIAC) in Calancuasan Norte, Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija has begun to reap the rewards of their carapreneurship endeavors after the buffaloes owned by six of its members gave birth in January.

This event gave inspiration to the members of the association to actively participate in seminars and training sessions being conducted by the DA-PCC at CLSU.

"Hinihikayat ko silang dumalo sa mga trainings at seminars upang mas lumalim pa ang kaalaman nila sa wastong pangangalaga ng gatasang kalabaw at kung ano pang mga dapat at hindi dapat gawin sa pag-aalaga," said Lourdes Fontanilla, chairperson of SPMCIAC.

Anthony Rodico, one of the six farmers, is happy that he is now living his dream as a dairy farmer.

Like Anthony, his fellow farmer Florante Presto conveyed the same story of gratitude.

The other farmers who also had the same experience with Anthony and Florante are Artemio Ventura, Benigno dela Cruz, Allan Valdez, and Loreto Adriano.

The association was established on August 23, 2019, with 300 members. The DA-PCC at CLSU remains dedicated to assisting farmers in Region III. This exemplifies the agency's commitment to advancing the Carabao Development Program. **B**

# DA-PCC champions school mental health, feeding program

By **Ronaline Canute** and **Kyrene Abad**

The DA-PCC joined the Department of Education (DepEd) in the national launch of the School Mental Health Program and kick-off of the School-Based Feeding Program (SBFP) hosted by the school division of Quezon City, at the Esteban Abada Elementary School, Project 7, Quezon City, on January 24, 2024.

The DA-PCC, through the Carabao-Based Enterprise Development (CBED)-Milk Feeding Program Unit, led the distribution of 315 sterilized carabao's milk to the guests and participants.

With the theme “Batang Matatag: Nourishing Mind and Strengthening Bodies,” DepEd emphasized that addressing undernutrition among schoolchildren is a priority.

“Napakahalagang bigyan ng importansya ang pagpapabuti sa physical at mental na kalusugan ng mga mag-aaral. Kapag ang isang bata ay kulang sa nutrisyon, hindi matututo ‘yan,” said Sara Duterte, vice president of the Republic of the Philippines and

secretary of DepEd, who served as the keynote speaker.

The event aligned with the DepEd's MATATAG (Make the curriculum relevant to produce job-ready, Active and responsible citizens; Take steps to accelerate the delivery of basic education services and provision of facilities; Take good care of learners by promoting learner well-being, inclusiveness learning, and positive learning environment; and, Give support for teachers to teach better)

agenda, which recognizes the significance of students' physical and mental well-being in achieving their maximum potential and making significant contributions to the country.

The kick-off includes the provision of one fortified meal to all undernourished public school children from kindergarten to sixth grade over a period of not less than 120 days in a year. **B**



Vice President Sarah Duterte alongside other officials and students showcase and enjoy DA-PCC's sterilized carabao's milk and Karabun during the program.

## DA-PCC at CSU

# Silage prod'n seen to aide herd buildup

By **Steven Marx Tangonan**

The DA-PCC is taking a step forward in its nationwide Dairy Herd Buildup Program (DHBP) by partnering with local farmers to ensure sustainable feed supply for its expanding buffalo herd.

The DA-PCC at CSU conducted an “Integrated Training Program for Improved Corn Silage Production, Conservation, and Utilization in Dairy Buffalo Farming” for the farmer-members of Ar Vyk Eco-Farm in Sta. Maria, Isabela on February 6.

This initiative, facilitated by the DA-PCC's Production System and Nutrition Section, equipped farmers with the knowledge and skills to produce high-quality corn silage, a

crucial feed source for dairy buffaloes. The training covered best practices for corn cultivation, effective silage conservation techniques, and the potential for turning silage production into a profitable business venture.

“The DHBP requires a reliable and sustainable feed source to optimize the health and milk production of our buffaloes,” said Dr. Rovina R. Piñera, OIC-center director of DA-PCC at CSU.

“We hope that after this training program, you will have a better appreciation of the benefits of silage production and eventually consider venturing into it. Imagine turning knowledge into a thriving business, you will not only be supplying for the DHBP

but also catering to the wider ruminant farming community in the region. This could be a game-changer, addressing feed scarcity and making high-quality silage readily available to all,” Dr. Piñera added.

This partnership between the DA-PCC and Ar Vyk Eco-Farm exemplifies the agency's commitment to building strong collaborations with local stakeholders. By empowering local communities and businesses, the DHBP can achieve its goal of increasing the national dairy buffalo herd and boosting local milk production, contributing to food security and economic development not only in Region II but nationwide. **B**



## Dairy co-ops supply milk to 37k pupils in Region X, CARAGA

By **Jeson Candole**

A total of 37,720 undernourished pupils in Kindergarten to Grade 6 are benefiting from a 43-day milk feeding program in select Schools Division Offices (SDOs) in Region X and CARAGA. The program commenced in March and will run until July 2024.

In a recently conducted School-Based Milk Feeding Suppliers' Meeting, four Community Social Organized Groups (CSG) were identified as suppliers for the School-based Milk Feeding Program (SBFP) for the School Year 2023-2024, which include the Don Carlos Buffalo Dairy Cooperative (DCBDC), Oro Integrated Cooperative (OIC), Caraga State University (CarSU), and El Pasyalan Dairy Farm.

Target beneficiaries in Kindergarten to Grade 6 will each receive 200 ml pasteurized carabao's milk daily for at

least 43 feeding days. This program has a total budget of Php29,209,965.00 covering nine Schools Division Offices in the two regions, namely: Bukidnon, Misamis Occidental, Oroquieta City, Ozamis City, Tangub City, Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Sur, and Surigao del Norte.

Dr. Lowell Paraguas, center director of DA-PCC at CMU, stated that this venture will support the local dairy farmers for the sustainable economic operations and to protect the children from malnutrition by enhancing and/or preserving their nutritional condition.

He said the agency has not only helped smallhold farmers but has also significantly ushered in enhanced nutrition in their communities because of its unwavering service to promote

carabao's milk in the regions. Meanwhile, Business Development Officer of Oro Integrated Cooperative (OIC), Kilian Deveza, expressed his appreciation, noting that the co-ops valued the support from DA-PCC at CMU. They ensured to remain faithful to its mandate by assisting dairy farmers throughout the value-chain approach.

On the other hand, Carabao-based Enterprise Development Coordinator Dr. Elena Paraguas, discussed the DepEd Order number 2021-031 and advisory of implementation of the School-Based Feeding Program Guidelines 2023-2024. She highlighted the exact pasteurized milk specifications and Food Safety Standard set by the Department of Education (DepEd). **E**

## LGU-Asingan supports BSNMPC's carabao biz initiatives

By **Maximo Peralta Jr.**

The LGU of Asingan, under the leadership of Mayor Carlos Lopez Jr., demonstrates strong support for Bantog Samahang Nayon Multi-Purpose Cooperative (BSNMPC) through proactive backing of the co-op's carabao-based business initiatives.

Recognizing the significance of the carabao, LGU-Asingan has prioritized it as a key commodity, evidenced by their funding of the LGU-led Milk Feeding Program.

Mayor Lopez has also initiated turning the carabao farms of the co-op members into tourist attractions, as this helps boost their livelihood and promote their products.

The LGU also rallies behind the BSNMPC as it gears up to host the first-ever Carabao Meat and Milk Festival in the Philippines.

Scheduled to take place from April 19 to 21 in Bantog, Asingan, Pangasinan, this event aims to showcase opportunities anchored on the carabao industry.

Mayor Lopez expressed his support and provided invaluable insights to ensure the success of BSNMPC's initiative. He emphasized the importance of highlighting the potential and significance of the carabao industry, not just locally but on a broader scale.

BSNMPC's carabao-based products, including meat and dairy delicacies, will be featured in booths throughout the festival grounds. Additionally, products from co-ops assisted by the Department of Trade and Industry will also be showcased to highlight the collaborative efforts in promoting local products and sustainable livelihoods.

The LGU-Asingan offers support in event planning, communication and guest invitations, provision of two trucks for the motorcade, and ensuring peace and order through the Philippine National Police.

With such valuable contributions to the CDP implementation of the DA-PCC at DMMMSU, the LGU-Asingan received an award from the DA-PCC during the Luzon Cluster anniversary celebration earlier this month.

The DA-PCC took this as an opportunity to extend its gratitude by recognizing its partners and supporters to build a stronger bond and foster potential partnerships. **E**

# DA-PCC boosts carabao breeding in Region 2, CAR

By **Steven Marx Tangonan**

The DA-PCC at CSU is revving up its artificial insemination (AI) program in Region 2 and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) with a recent workshop and the awarding of motorcycles to key partners.

The DA-PCC at CSU held a “Review and Planning Workshop on Artificial Insemination Program Implementation in Region 02 and CAR” at its Regional Extension Center in Tuguegarao City on January 10, 2023. The event brought together active AI partners, village-based artificial insemination technicians (VBAITs), and LGU technicians from across the region.

The workshop served as a platform for reviewing past accomplishments, addressing challenges, and setting targets for the AI program in the coming year. Participants actively shared knowledge and experiences, paving the way for a more collaborative

and impactful implementation of the program.

Highlighting the workshop’s success, the DA-PCC at CSU awarded four motorcycles to the Provincial Governments of Cagayan and Isabela, the Apayao Provincial Government, and the Municipality of San Mariano, Isabela. This initiative stems from a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed between the DA-PCC at CSU and these partner LGUs for the project entitled “Enhancing the Implementation of the Massive Artificial Insemination Program in Region 02 and CAR.”

Under the MOA, the DA-PCC at CSU commits to providing mobility support to its active partners, recognizing their crucial role in the AI program’s success. The motorcycles will equip VBAITs and LGU technicians with improved mobility, allowing them to reach more

farmers and perform inseminations more efficiently.

“These motorcycles are not just vehicles; they symbolize the commitment of the DA-PCC at CSU and our partner LGUs to improve the lives of carabao farmers in Region 2 and CAR,” said Dr. Rovina R. Piñera, OIC-Center Director of DA-PCC at CSU.

“By enhancing our AI program, we are not only boosting carabao breeding but also contributing to food security and rural development in our region,” she added.

Confident in the power of teamwork, knowledge exchange, and enhanced reach, DA-PCC at CSU is poised to propel its AI program to new heights, impacting carabao raisers and local economies in Region 2 and CAR. **E**

# AI technicians in Regions IX, X, CARAGA all set to increasing reproductive efficiency of water buffaloes

By **Jeson Candole**

The “Carabulls” are ready to forge ahead toward improved artificial insemination (AI) in Mindanao. This was following the advanced training on intensified reproductive management last February 5 to 23 at the DA-PCC at CMU Training Center in Musuan, Maramag, Bukidnon.

“Carabulls” was the name that was chosen by the batch to identify them.

According to Dr. Lowell Paraguas, center director of DA-PCC at CMU, advanced AI training is crucial for the agency’s nationwide strategy to increase water buffalo production

efficiency. The program was designed to broaden the skills of private village-based AI technicians (VBAITs) from cooperatives, technicians from local government units (LGUs), and DA-Regional Field Offices (DA-RFO), in line with the agency’s goals and commitments.

Dr. Edwin C. Atabay, National AI Coordinator, emphasized the Triple “E” strategy during the program. This strategy focuses on enhancing pregnancy rates, implementing effective rebreeding programs, and ensuring early detection of pregnancy. The goal is to strengthen the AI

technicians’ knowledge and skills in reproductive management to improve AI efficiency further.

Armando Racho, the DA-PCC at CMU Bull loan coordinator, pointed out the significant value of the technical training, noting improvements in participants’ critical thinking, interpersonal skills, field attitude, and camaraderie. Racho expressed confidence that the course would greatly benefit and assist local farmers, with trained technicians serving as valuable partners in the field.

Manny Maglangit, municipal

## Biz confab eyes opportunities on carabao dev't

By **Jeremie Marinella Ledesma**

The DA-PCC at UPLB collaborated with the Regional Project Coordination Office 4A (RPCO 4A) to enhance the carabao dairy industry's market and income in Region IV-A, CALABARZON, under the DA-Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP).

RPCO 4A recently organized a business conference on dairy carabao on February 2, 2024, at Argosino Hall, DA CALABARZON, Lipa, Batangas. The event aimed to create awareness about DA-PRDP priorities and identify collaboration opportunities within the region.

"Our goal is to utilize DA-PRDP to boost dairy farmer's prosperity and income and attain significant developmental results in CALABARZON," said RPCO 4A Deputy Project Director Engr. Redeliza Gruezo.

agriculturist of Naawan, Misamis Oriental, shared his positive experience and the knowledge gained during the training. "I am eager to share what I have learned with the farmers in our municipality," Maglangit said, expressing his excitement to apply advanced technologies and techniques as an AI technician.

AI is a reproductive tool used to produce animals with better productivity for milk and meat, without disregard for draft power through harnessing superior genetic materials of dairy buffalo breed. **B**

DA-PCC at UPLB Senior Science Research Specialist Anna Reylene J. Montes discussed the carabao dairy industry's status in CALABARZON and DA-PCC's value chain approach. This includes prioritizing interventions, efficient resource allocation, and promoting public-private partnerships.

Ma. Edna N. De Jesus, RPCO IVA I-PLAN component head, presented the Provincial Commodity Investment Plan (PCIP) wherein they identified the emerging regional carabao dairy industry as a beneficiary requiring interventions like land improvement, technical training, farm machinery, production support programs, market linkages, and research studies.

The program included a plenary workshop where they identified a potential subproject focusing on the establishment of a carabao dairy milk processing and marketing enterprise. The identification stemmed from their needs assessment, covering aspects of production, processing, marketing, input supply, and financial assistance.

"We will utilize the opportunities and collaborative efforts offered by the DA-PRDP for the carabao dairy industry commodities in CALABARZON," said DA-PCC at UPLB Agricultural Center Chief IV Dr. Thelma A. Saludes while expressing her gratitude to RPCO 4A for including the carabao dairy industry.

The DA-PRDP, a World Bank-supported project, aims to establish a government platform for a modern, climate-resilient, and market-oriented agri-fishery sector through partnerships with local government units and proponent groups for key rural development programs and investments. **B**

## DA-PCC, USM strengthen tie-up on extension, advisory services

By **Rodolfo Valdez Jr.**

DA-PCC at USM and its host institution, USM, entered into strengthening collaboration in the carabao upgrading program such as in the provision of extension and advisory services with the recently concluded basic training course in artificial insemination (AI) and pregnancy diagnosis in large ruminants on January 26, 2024.

DA-PCC at USM incoming Center Director Geoffray R. Atok welcomed 10 new AI technicians from Kabacan, including LGU-based and village-based technicians, as members of the extension arms of DA-PCC at USM. They will implement AI not only in Kabacan but also in nearby municipalities.

"Let us make this initiative fruitful. Our goal is to establish a sustainable carabao value chain here in Kabacan. With your help as new AI technicians, we can materialize this vision," Director Atok said.

In her message during the closing program, Dr. Mary Joy S. Cañolas, Director of the USM Extension Services Office, expressed gratitude towards DA-PCC at USM for continued support in providing information and other services to farmers and other clients to enable them to improve their quality of life.

**To page 13**

# DA-PCC collaborates with agri insts in NegOcc to boost livestock industry

By **Ronaline Canute** and **Grande Saturno**

The DA-PCC recently explored partnership with agricultural institutions in Negros Occidental to boost the livestock sector in the province.

In a series of talks, Dr. Claro Mingala, DA-PCC's deputy executive director for production and research, Dr. Marvin Villanueva, OIC chief of DA-PCC's Research and Development Division, and Eva Alvarez, center director of DA-PCC at LCSF initially identified livestock initiatives with the Provincial Veterinary Office, City Veterinary Office, Negros Occidental Research Outreach Station, and State University of Northern Negros on February 5-7, 2024.

The parties are expected to collaborate on cryobanking, capacity building on semen processing, technology adaptation, nutrition and disease management, and the promotion and utilization of DA-PCC's mobile applications.

“The province of Negros Occidental strongly supports livestock production led by the Governor and

the Provincial Veterinary Office. The DA-PCC is collaborating to strengthen its support for technical assistance in improving livestock production in the province. This is potentially so considering that Negros has abundant land resources and favorable climatic conditions for agriculture production,” DA-PCC at LCSF Center Director Eva Alvarez said.

The DA-PCC at LCSF is working on the development plan of Negros Occidental in cryopreservation and the provision

of technical training—all toward boosting AI efficiency.

The center also established partnerships with LGUs (Cadiz, Sagay, Victorias, Kabankalan, Candoni, Sipalay, Canlaon, EB Magalona, among others), state universities (Central State University, State University of Northern Negros), and other national government agencies in Negros. **B**



## BizTalk session promotes dairy biz literacy

By **Ma. Cecilia Irang-Mariano**

The DA-PCC recently organized a Business Talk (BizTalk) for its assisted cooperatives managing Dairy Boxes and Processing and Marketing Outlets, aiming to help them maximize the potential of their carabao-based businesses for increased profitability. The learning event, held from January

15 to 19, aimed to foster knowledge-sharing by providing insights into various aspects of business literacy and marketing strategies in the dairy value chain.

Representatives from 56 DA-PCC-assisted cooperatives nationwide participated in the activity, geared

towards enhancing their ability to make rational financial and investment decisions for sustainable business growth.

During the event, participants had the opportunity to learn and understand the fundamentals of business, including its nature, objectives, and general role.

# CBED coordinators capacitated to design market study

By **John Josef Cari**

A wider market for local dairy cooperative's carabao-based products is the new way forward for the regional Carabao-Based Enterprise Development (CBED) coordinators after they were immersed in an in-depth market study writeshop on February 12-13, 2024 at the DA-PCC NHQGP, Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija.

The coordinators explored the prospective market for carabao milk

and carabao-based products, evaluated its strengths, opportunities, and weaknesses, and bridged the gaps and emerging trends in the carabao-based enterprise.

The activity is part of the implementation of the milk feeding program of the Department of Education (DepEd) and DA-PCC adapting the Negotiated Procurement-Community Participation (NPCP) as a mode of procurement to ensure that

local cooperatives will be prioritized as suppliers of milk.

Central Luzon State University (CLSU) professors Katrina Sedillo and Sherwin Celestino emphasized the framework and process of marketing, the value of market research and economic analysis in decision-making, the comprehension of the marketplace, and the identification of target customers' needs and desires. **B**

## DA-PCC, USM strengthen tie-up...

**From page 11**

Additionally, Dr. Ap Warren P. Adamat, the Extension Coordinator at USM-College of Veterinary Medicine, mentioned that the training is part of the university's Farmer's Field School project, aiming to use a technology delivery system to enhance farmers' skills in swine production and AI. The technology delivery system supports the viability and profitability of large ruminant producers and the swine industry by providing the necessary skills and information.

"We'll be doing a farmer-to-farmer radio broadcast after this training that addresses artificial insemination in large ruminants," Dr. Adamat continued.

"Malaking tulong at hamon ang dalang pagtatapos naming bilang AI technician. Mas lalawak ang aming serbisyo bilang agricultural technician para sa mga magsasaka sa bayan," Irene John M. Nidoy, a newly trained LGU-based AI technician, said.

During the closing program of the activity, Kabacan Municipal Agriculturist Joseph A. Dela Cruz and Municipal Veterinarian Dr. Louise P. Mosquera expressed their challenge and commitment to strengthening the carabao development program in the locality. **B**

Additionally, strategies for asset management, such as cash handling, accounts receivable tracking, and inventory management, were discussed in detail to equip them with practical skills for effective business operations.

Participants also learned to measure the financial performance of their businesses using metrics such as

Return on Investment (ROI) and other key parameters, as well as calculate the breakeven point.

Moreover, they gained knowledge and techniques related to product costing and pricing, enabling them to navigate these critical aspects of their operations with confidence.

The activity was organized by DA-PCC's Monitoring and Business Planning Support Section under its Planning and Information Management Division. **B**

📍 DA-PCC at CLSU

## Agri Center Chief receives CSC Pagasa Award

By **Camilla Soliman**

Dr. Ericson N. Dela Cruz, Agricultural Center Chief IV of the DA-PCC at CLSU, was honored with the prestigious CSC Pagasa Award. This recognition, presented as part of the 2023 search for outstanding government workers by the Civil Service Commission (CSC), was bestowed upon him during the awarding ceremony held today at the Ceremonial Hall of Malacañan Palace. President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. led the ceremony.

Dr. Dela Cruz earned this accolade for his unwavering commitment to sustaining the achievements of the national carabao development program, resulting in the successful attainment of 100% of targets for improving the genetic potential of buffaloes.

“God is great all the time. Para sa Diyos, sa bayan, at sa bawat magsasakang pamilyang Pilipino sa Luzon, Visayas at Mindanao ang karangalang ito,” Dr. Dela

Cruz expressed.

In accordance with Executive Order No. 292, the CSC Pagasa Award acknowledges individuals or groups who demonstrate exceptional dedication in serving the public. This annual award is part of the CSC honor awards program and stands as the highest recognition bestowed upon a government employee. **B**



President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. presents Dr. Ericson Dela Cruz with the esteemed CSC Pagasa award, which recognizes outstanding government workers.

📍 DA-PCC at USM

## USM exec takes directorship for DA-PCC at USM, underscores innovative, value-added outcomes

By **Rodolfo Valdez Jr.**

“We shall transform DA-PCC at USM through innovation and collaboration. We will harness carabao products and by-products to generate income for our farmers and their communities.

We will promote the carabao as an instrument to foster peace,” DA-PCC

at USM recently designated Center Director Geoffray Atok outlines his goals for the agency.

To attain this vision, Atok pledged his commitment to creating an environment where employees are co-creators of innovations and valued

contributors to DA-PCC’s outputs.

The designation of Atok as center director of DA-PCC at USM is seen as beneficial to the agency and its clients, considering his expertise and experience in the animal sector.

# Dr. Liza Battad reports back as DA-PCC Exec. Director, underscores resilience and unity

By Ma. Cecilia Irang-Mariano

“A resilient leader recognizes that adversity is part of life and leadership. We cannot control the actions or opinions of others but we can control our own reactions and responses. Instead of being weighed down by negativity, we use it as fuel to drive our determination and resilience.”

Dr. Liza Battad, executive director of the DA-PCC, bared this realization and shared her ways forward, as she returned to her mother agency after her stint as Technical Adviser to the Department of Agriculture (DA).

In a welcome ceremony this morning, January 29, Dr. Battad encouraged the PCCeans to work together as a family, recognizing the value of their abilities in serving both DA-PCC and its clients. She urged them to persevere and maintain a positive work environment despite challenges.

She also emphasized the need for an “equity culture,” fostering a psychologically safe workplace for both regular and contractual employees to freely share ideas and opinions. This, she believes, will contribute to the overall performance of the agency in meaningfully serving its clients.



Acknowledging the collaborative efforts of various agencies, Dr. Battad stressed the importance of partnerships to bring about positive impact and support the upscaling initiatives of DA-PCC. She called for support for those directly involved in the industry and advocated for relevant policies to aid business start-ups and provide assistance through credit facilities.

She also extended her gratitude to Dr. Caro Salces, DA-PCC deputy executive director, for steering the agency in her absence to perform its deliverables for

2023. Dr. Salces, in turn, outlined the agency’s achievements in the past year aligned with the DA-PCC core values. Among the accomplishments under his leadership were the seamless transition of DA-PCC management, surpassing major final output targets, successful implementation of programs, and scaling up contributions to the industry.

Dr. Battad wore her heart on her sleeve, saying, “I’m home. Thank you for welcoming me back home,” embodying her commitment to leading the DA-PCC with grit and resilience. **B**

“To our partner carapreneurs, our combined experiences and perspectives in improving the dairy carabao industry will create openness and build trust among us. Let us welcome opportunities for growth and progress in the same way that we embrace the challenges together to foster a culture of open-mindedness, bayanihan, and resilience,” Atok expressed.

Atok finished his Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science, Master’s degree in Animal Science, and Doctorate degree in Agri-Sciences with a major in Animal Sciences at the USM. Concurrent to his designation as center director, Atok is an Associate Professor IV at USM. **B**



Former DA-PCC at USM Center Director Benjamin John Basilio officially transfers the leadership baton to Associate Professor IV Geoffray Atok.

# Continuing the legacy: A second liner's carapreneurship journey

From page 1



San Jose, City, Nueva Ecija, paints a different picture. Meet Miccaela Alfonso, affectionately known as “Micca,” a 28-year-old whose digital content diverges from the norm and offers a peek into a life of a carapreneur.

Micca's posts feature videos of her while bathing carabaos, milking, fetching food under the scorching sun, cleaning pens and manure, and creating haystacks. Despite her impressive skills in carabao farming, there's a deeper reason driving her wholehearted embrace of this enterprise.



In an instant, the usual course of operations in Alfonso family's carabao farm took an unexpected turn when her father, Miguel, 51, passed away. She shared that they were profoundly affected by the severe challenges that pushed them to the brink of giving up their carabao business. However, Micca remained resolute in carrying on the legacy her father had begun.

"When Papang passed away, it felt like our world crumbled," Micca says, her voice tinged with nostalgia. "But his words echoed in my dreams, urging me to carry on his work, to focus on the farm."

Miguel was an award-winning carapreneur in Barangay Palestina, assisted by DA-PCC. In 2019, his carabao won the Gintong Kalabaw Senior Cow Category during the National Carabao Conference due to its good body condition score and high milk production—a testament to Miguel's expertise in carabao management and production.

"Ever since Papang passed, our carabaos suffered. He was the heart and soul of this farm. Now, it's up to us to revive what he worked so hard to build," Micca shares.

Raised in the midst of the farm's hustle and bustle, Micca understood the financial benefits carabao farming brought to their family, especially when she and her siblings were still studying. It was the backbone that supported their education, leading to Michael Dean, 31, completing a degree in Information Technology, followed by Mitchieco, 30, in Tourism Management, and Micca herself in Cruise Ship Hotel and Restaurant Services. The youngest, Miguel II, 23, is a graduating student in Political Science.

With a strong determination, Micca navigated a path paved with challenges, drawing strength from the lessons instilled by her parents. She embarked on a journey of self-discovery and honed her skills in various roles before ultimately following the footsteps of her father in carabao dairying. She worked as a service crew, became a secretary and manager at Eastern Primary Multi-Purpose Cooperative (EPMPC), a co-op they are part of, and was an employee at DA-PCC.

Micca passionately continues her father's work, as she acknowledges the importance of having a successor in the family business. She now wears many hats, actively oversees every aspect of the farm's operations from milking to delivery and record-keeping. With 11 carabaos currently under their management, Micca starts her duties as early as 4:00 a.m. She directly supervises all tasks, from providing vitamins to examining the carabaos for pregnancy. She ensures their well-being with the same care and affection her parents once given them.

But for Micca, this journey is about more than just preserving her father's legacy; it's about paving the way for future generations. She envisions their





# DA-PCC shares the love under 'LAB for All'

By **Ma. Cecilia Irang-Mariano** and **Maximo Peralta Jr.**

farm not just as a place of production but as a place where others can learn and grow. Under Micca's management, Miguel Dairy Farm aims to become a learning site and eventually a farm school.

Micca champions the role of women in agriculture, underscoring their invaluable contributions to the sector's growth and sustainability. She believes that women, like men, can excel in this industry, particularly in carabao farming. As of 2019, data from the Philippine Statistics Authority show that 2.24 million women work in agriculture, which reflects the sector's recognition of women's capabilities.

As a young role model in carabao farming, Micca is invited to speak on various topics related to being a second liner and dairy buffalo management. For Micca, having a vision and passion for carabao production, qualities she inherited from her father, is crucial.

"Papang would be proud of what we've accomplished, but I know there's still much more to do. With every stride forward, I carry his spirit with me, guiding me through the challenges and triumphs that lie ahead," Micca reflects.

Even though it's been two years since Miguel's passing, Micca finds herself reminiscing about the joyful times she spent milking carabaos with her father whenever she's with them. She longs to relive and experience those moments again. Despite her father's physical absence, his spirit lives on in every drop of milk she harvests, every hay bale she stacks, and every calf born. **B**

The DA-PCC expressed solidarity with First Lady Atty. Marie Louise "Liza" Araneta-Marcos' 'LAB for All' initiative. As a show of support, the agency offered dairy products to a number of beneficiaries in Floridablanca, Pampanga and San Fernando, La Union, and Vigan City, Ilocos Sur.

A total of 350 beneficiaries, particularly indigenous people, were treated to a range of dairy delights, including choco milk, fresh milk, coffee milk, and lacto juice, personally distributed by DA-PCC at CLSU Center Director Dr. Ericson Dela Cruz in Nabuclod, Floridablanca, Pampanga on February 20, 2024.

DA-PCC at CLSU also flaunted its Cara Cuero products during the event. Cara Cuero is a brand that showcases local craftsmanship and innovation by utilizing carabao hide and horn to produce high-quality leather products, accessories, and decor items among others.

In recognition of her efforts, the First Lady received a special token from DA-PCC, which contained a variety of Cara Cuero products, including a mini Christine handbag, back scratcher, comb, carabao figurine, and candle holder.

Meanwhile, DA-PCC at DMMMSU provided 500 bottles and sachets of chocomilk and 700 packs of Karabun (bun with carabao's milk) at La Union Convention Center, Sevilla, City of San Fernando, La Union on February 6, 2024.

Vilma Gagni, center director of the DA-PCC at DMMMSU, said the center supports Marcos' advocacy in bringing medical services closer to the people, particularly the less fortunate Kaprobinsyanihan.

"DA-PCC shares with the purpose of advocating for Healthy Pilipinas, Bawat Buhay Mahalaga tungo sa Bagong Pilipinas. One of the products of DA-PCC is milk, which is also considered a complete food because it contains all the essential nutrients needed by our body to become healthy," she added. On the other hand, people of Vigan City also had the opportunity to savor complimentary pasteurized milk, choco milk, and yogurt drinks during the LAB for All activity at the Vigan Convention Center on January 23, 2024.

The "LAB (Lingap at Alagang Bayanihan) for All" caravan aims to provide primary healthcare services through free laboratory testing for various diseases, medical check-ups, family planning services, distribution of free medicines, tree-planting activities, coastal clean-up drives, and feeding programs, among other services to underserved communities.

Said program is in accordance with the Universal Health Care (UHC) Law, also known as Republic Act No. 11223, which aims to bridge the health disparity gap for poor communities and those living in remote areas who are unable to afford their medical bills by increasing access to quality health care. **B**



📍 DA-PCC at USF

# Cebuano farmers complete 'Eskwelahan sa Kahanginan' on Dairy Buffalo Prod'n

By Leinefe Aton



Recognition rites for SOA completers in Tuburan, Cebu.

Cebuano farmers in the northern part of Cebu recently celebrated the graduation of 230 individuals from the Eskwelahan sa Kahanginan (School-on-the-Air): Radio Broadcast on Dairy Buffalo Production. The ceremony took place on January 22 at Cebu Technological University (CTU)-Tuburan.

Conducted collaboratively by CTU-Tuburan, DA-PCC at USF, and the First Consolidated Cooperative Along Tañon Seaboards (FCCT), the School-on-the-Air (SOA) program consisted of 16 sessions broadcasted on "Bulawanong Tinubdan" (BT) radio at 98.1 MHz every Tuesday from 5:00-6:00 PM. The curriculum covered topics such as buffalo management, nutrition, health, breeding, milking procedures, milk handling, quality testing, carabao-based enterprises, and financial management.

In her welcome address during the ceremony, Engr. Naomi Bajao, project leader counterpart of CTU-Tuburan, expressed her gratitude for the realization of the program.

Dr. Carla Abaquita, campus director of CTU-Tuburan, acknowledged the university's crucial role in extending

agriculture-related technologies to farmers through its BT Radio Extension and Technology Transfer (BEATT) program, where the School-on-the-Air (SOA) was anchored.

On the other hand, Dr. Maria Dinah Loculan, center director of DA-PCC at USF, congratulated the farmers for completing the 16 sessions. She emphasized that in the process of learning, a learner can develop skills and shared her hopes that the farmers will apply what they have learned during the schooling.

Magdaleno Bargamento, chief executive officer of FCCT, mentioned during his inspirational message that one of the co-op's thrusts is to support the national government's call for food security. Thus, collaboration with institutions is helpful to expand its campaign to its members.

Egino Parone, a 15-year-old from Gimama-a, Tuburan, Cebu, one of the enrollees of the SOA, shared his testimony on how dairying has holistically helped his family. Aside from its contribution to his parents' livelihood, dairying has also helped him be productive and stay away from being addicted to gadgets.

Dr. Eric Palacpac, chief of the Knowledge Management Division of DA-PCC, expressed his felicitations to the graduates and facilitators for the successful delivery of the program. He encouraged the former that the journey in dairying has just started.

One hundred sixty-six (166) of the SOA graduates are from the municipality of Tuburan, Cebu, 43 from Tabuelan, 12 from Medellin, five (5) from Asturias, two (2) from Daan Bantayan, one (1) from Balamban, and one (1) from Bogo.

The graduates present at the ceremony received production support items such as rubber boots, silage bags, pails, aprons, and mineral supplements for animals through a raffle.

The ceremony also witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement between DA-PCC and CTU-Tuburan for the installation of the Carabao Development Program (CDP)-KIOSK (Karunungan, Impormasyon, at Oportunidad sa Kalabawan). The CDP-KIOSK, to be installed at the CTU-Tuburan library, consists of display panels and portable shelves for DA-PCC's knowledge products or publications. **B**

**2023**  
*Outstanding*  
**SUPERVISOR**  
DR. ERIC P. PALACPAC

**2023**  
*Outstanding*  
**CENTER DIRECTOR**  
DR. THELMA A. SALUDES

**2023**  
*Outstanding*  
**RESEARCHER**  
PATRIZIA CAMILLE O. SATURNO

**2023**  
*Outstanding*  
**DEVELOPMENT OFFICER**  
ERWIN C. ENCARNACION

**2023**  
*Outstanding*  
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**2023**  
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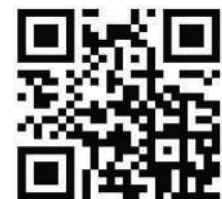
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