

# Bubalus



Quarterly Newsletter of the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center

Vol. 6 No. 2 • 2023



## **F**EATURES

### Typical farmers no more

By Rowena S. Galang

**It was a quiet, laid-back afternoon and the barrio people were just about to wind down after a day's work. When they saw visitors approaching, they blithely gathered around. A vibrant conversation ensued and those huddled in a circle gazed at one direction—it was toward an outmoded hut that**

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### DA-PCC celebrates 3rd decade of service as R&D institution

By Ronaline C. Canute

The DA-Philippine Carabao Center celebrates three decades of service as the lead agency responsible in conserving, propagating, and promoting the carabao as a source of milk, meat, draft power and hide to benefit the rural farmers.

This year's anniversary is aptly themed, "PCC at 30: Continuing the

legacy of service excellence and synergy", which aims to honor the agency's pillars and pioneers and to continue carrying on their legacy of service excellence.

Senator Cynthia A. Villar, chairperson of the Office of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food, and Agrarian Reform who

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# Editor's Word



We are already halfway through the year. Time appears to slip through our fingers, serving as a reminder of its impermanence. Within the dynamic world of the DA-PCC and its interactions with its stakeholders and the bigger society, a whirlwind of activities has taken place, influencing the Carabao Development Program (CDP) and leaving an indelible mark on the carabao industry. As we delve deeper into the stories in this issue of Bubalus, we discover a tapestry of innovation and advancement that seem to escape our conscious awareness.

In the spirit of unwavering service and dedication, the DA-PCC recently celebrated a momentous occasion: its 30th anniversary. This milestone commemorated thirty years of commitment to the CDP. With the theme "PCC at 30: Continuing the Legacy of Service Excellence and Synergy," it signifies the PCC's determination of stewarding the further development of the carabao industry and its stakeholders.

Other milestones are forthcoming. "CaraWOW! Radyo Eskwela sa Gatasang Kalabaw" is a joint project of the DA-PCC and the DA-Agricultural Training Institute that was recently launched in Tiaong, Quezon. On June 27, the inaugural episode will air, featuring 340 CALABARZON farmer-enrollees, a first for the region. It recognizes the significance of knowledge transmission over the airwaves, which remains one of our smallholder farmers' most reliable sources of information on recommended agricultural practices and technologies.

Likewise, with its launch in Tuburan, Cebu, the ALAB Karbawan project continues to promote rural empowerment and enterprise growth. In accordance with the PCC's dedication to partnership and collaboration, cooperatives in Isabela and Marinduque have also been entrusted with buffalos creating opportunities for livelihood and entrepreneurship. Through such alliances, we forge a more prosperous future in which the carabao industry thrives alongside our local communities.

As part of its commitment to R4D, the DA-PCC collaborates with KOICA to launch a project zeroing in on dairy herd improvement anchored on extension, recording and information systems, and genetics.

We must not also overlook the vital role of gender and development (GAD) as progress unfolds. GAD focals remain at the forefront of the CDP, championing inclusivity and empowering women. Their unwavering dedication guarantees that women's contributions and perspectives are valued and acknowledged, thereby enriching our collective journey.

As always, the Bubalus is filled with inspiring stories of our modern day heroes. Progressive dairy buffalo farmers in Talavera and Guimba, Nueva Ecija, for example, provided insightful observations that illustrate the transformative power of resilience and innovation. As beacons of hope, their stories inspire us to embrace progress and strive for excellence.

As we peruse the pages of this newsletter, let us enthusiastically embrace the CDP's marvels and complexities. Let's recommit to empowering farming communities, preserving our agricultural heritage, and shaping a prosperous future.

  
Dr. Eric P. Palacpac

## About the cover

More than milk production, farmers cooperatives assisted by DA-PCC across its network are now able to produce a myriad of products using carabao's milk, translated to more opportunities in carabao-based communities including significant increase in incomes.



Photo by: Rowena S. Galang

## Editorial Staff

ERIC P. PALACPAC  
ROWENA S. GALANG  
Editors

MA. CECILIA IRANG-MARIANO  
Managing Editor

MA. CECILIA IRANG-MARIANO  
RONALINE C. CANUTE  
DINE YVE D. DAGANOS  
Staff Writers

RONALINE C. CANUTE  
DINE YVE D. DAGANOS  
REI-MAR D. AGUINALDO  
Circulation

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BONNE ANDREW O. DOMINGO  
MAICA EUMIRA MARIETTE C. URMATAN

### Contributors

REI-MAR D. AGUINALDO  
Layout and Illustrations

CARO B. SALCES  
Editorial Adviser

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**Bubalus** is a quarterly publication published by the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) that gives its readers new updates and inspiring stories happening in the carabao industry.

Email us your comments, feedbacks, and suggestions at [kmd.pcc@gmail.com](mailto:kmd.pcc@gmail.com) or mail them to: The Editor, Bubalus Newsletter, Knowledge Management Division, Philippine Carabao Center National Headquarters and Gene Pool, Science City of Muñoz, 3120 Nueva Ecija. You may also call us at (044) 456 0731 to 35.



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# 'CaraWOW! Radyo Eskwela sa Gatasang Kalabaw' to be aired in CALABARZON

By **Jeremie Marinella S. Ladesma**

The Philippine Carabao Center at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (DA-PCC at UPLB), in partnership with the Agricultural Training Institute CALABARZON (ATI CALABARZON), launched on May 19 a School-on-the-Air (SOA) program dubbed "CaraWOW! Radyo Eskwela sa Gatasang Kalabaw" at Calungsod Integrated Farm, Tiaong, Quezon.

This first livestock SOA in the region, which will start airing on June 27, aims to deliver information on dairy buffalo production latest technologies and business enterprise opportunities.

The farmers are expected to learn about buffalo management (housing and management practices), nutrition

management (forage production and establishment, feeding and feed resources), health management and breeding (estrous cycle, heat detection, common diseases), milking (milking preparations, procedures, CMT), milk handling (storage, disinfection of equipment, milk quality testing), and basic financial management.

Senator Cynthia A. Villar, chairperson of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food, and Agrarian Reform, sent her virtual greeting and expressed her support to the program.

"The SOA program will disseminate information on dairy buffaloes and will serve as another venue to address the issues of malnutrition and for the local dairy industry to prosper," the Senator said.

On the other hand, the provincial veterinary offices from Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, and Quezon expressed their gratitude and support to ATI CALABARZON and DA-PCC for initiating the program.

They said it will allow local farmers to learn, share their knowledge and experiences, and contribute to strengthening the dairy industry in the country.

"At last, Region 4A has this opportunity. This is crucial for farmers' information and technology exchange. I hope that through the support of ATI and LGUs, the implementation of this program will be successful," said Dr. Eric Palacpac, chief of DA-PCC's Knowledge Management Division (KMD).

Meanwhile, Dr. Thelma Saludes, Center Director of PCC at UPLB, encouraged farmer students to show commitment in hopes that this training will aid in increasing the supply of milk in the region. The launch was attended by local farmer representatives and local government units in CALABARZON. **B**



# ALAB Karbawan project kick-starts in CEB

By **Leinefe L. Aton**

The Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center at Ubay Stock Farm (DA-PCC at USF) facilitated a training on dairy product development to some prospective processors who are members of one of its partner cooperatives – the First Consolidated Cooperative (FCC).

The activity, which was held at Tañon Seaboard in Tuburan, Cebu in May, aims to capacitate the group in producing quality dairy products made of buffalo's milk.

Currently, the co-op has an ongoing construction of a processing and products outlet called the Dairy Box. It is a component of the Accelerating Livelihood, and Assets Buildup or ALAB Karbawan Project implemented by DA-PCC and funded through the Office of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform, chaired by Senator Cynthia Villar. Along with it is the provision of 50 head buffaloes to qualified members.

“As early as now, we encourage the group to introduce dairy products to its target market even before the completion of the outlet. And

as a pre-requisite, they need to be trained on how to safely process it in compliance with the standards”, said Guillerma Abay-abay, Carabao-Based Enterprise Development (CBED) coordinator of DA-PCC at USF.

At least 15 participants were trained on how to process pasteurized fresh milk, flavored milk, pastillas de leche, white cheese, and milk cake.

“As part of the re-entry plan, the group sets a weekly schedule on processing dairy products to accommodate orders and to prepare for the upcoming town fiesta celebration in June”, according to Dr. Bernard Bacule, ALAB Karbawan coordinator of the center.

Abay-abay said that aside from imparting skills to the participants, the center hopes that the three-day training will inspire other farmers to participate in the dairy carabao program. When they see that there is a sure market for milk, they might be interested to milk their carabaos, contributing to the increase of milk produce in the locality. **B**

# DA-PCC at CSU awards addt'l buffaloes to Isabela co-op

By **Steven Marx B. Tangonan**

The Liga ng mga Barangay ng Isabela Multi-Purpose Cooperative (LBIMPC) received additional 21 dairy crossbred buffaloes from DA-PCC at CSU on May 12.

A total of 68 dairy buffaloes have been awarded to 30 farmer-beneficiaries of the LBIMPC under the Entrustment of Dairy Crossbred Buffaloes through the initiative of Vice Governor Faustino “Bojie” Dy III funded by the Office of Senator Cynthia Villar. The entrustment

## DA-PCC celebrates...

from page 1

served as keynote speaker, recognized PCC's service in improving the productivity of the carabaos as source of meat and milk, for nutritional support and to augment farm income.

The senator said that she will continue to support DA-PCC for the propagation and distribution of milking carabaos in all the PCC's regional centers and service areas.

Senator Villar asserted in RA 11037 otherwise known as 'Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act,' the demand and market for local liquid milk, via the Department of Education's milk feeding program.

In addition, her office channelled fund for the Carabao-based Business Improvement Network (CBIN) project under the banner program “Accelerating Livelihood and Assets Buildup (ALAB) Karbawan.”

“Milk security is still the challenge for PCC now and in the future. It should continue to champion locally produced





is part of the “Carabao-based Business Improvement Network (CBIN) or Accelerating Livelihood and Assets Buildup (ALAB) Karbawan” aiming to increase the dairy production in many parts of the country while giving farmers an additional and sustainable source of income through dairying.

Prior to the delivery or entrustment of the crossbred buffaloes to their respective farmer-beneficiaries the LBIMPC headed by its chairperson and manager, Edito P. Ballard and Helino B. Panganiban called for an assembly with their members. Also present during the assembly are the municipal administrator and municipal agriculturist of the Municipality of Echague, Dr. Matthew Joseph P. Alindada and Ferdinand P. Tejada who expressed their gratitude for the implementation of the project.

“The dairy crossbred buffaloes entrusted to our municipality offers

nothing but benefits farmers so we must take care of them for continuation of the project,” Tejada stated adding that the project will pave the way for the establishment of milk processing facilities in their municipality, enabling them produce more milk and soon to supply to their neighboring municipalities.

To better support the implementation of the project, the manager of LBIMPC, Helino B. Panganiban, plans to adopt strategies undertaken by other successful cooperatives. “We need to propose the enactment of an ordinance that will give an incentive to farmers engaged in dairying and an ordinance that will limit or regulate the slaughtering and selling of productive dairy crossbred buffaloes in

our municipality to maintain the dairy herd population,” Panganiban said.

Currently, the DA-PCC at CSU is implementing the Carabao-Based Business Improvement Network project in five provinces in Luzon, where six cooperatives have been entrusted with 356 crossbred buffaloes boosting further the dairy carabao value chain. **B**

carabao’s milk by making it available, accessible, and affordable to all,” Villar ended.

Meanwhile, Senior Undersecretary for Agriculture, Domingo Panganiban conveyed his gratitude to the agency for a job well done especially during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The record of achievements of the PCC inspires us to look upon it both as an inspiration and a source of strength in pursuing even more worthy goals in the future.” USec. Panganiban said.

The DA-PCC was established by virtue of Republic Act No. 7307 in 1992. The agency’s mission is to “conserve, propagate, and promote the carabao as a source of milk, meat, draft power, and hide to benefit rural farmers.” It began operations in 1993 with a small central office in Quezon City, supported by a small network of regional centers.

Later, in 1998, it established its national headquarters and gene pool facilities in the Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija. Currently, the DA-PCC has 12 regional centers spread out across the country

that collaborate to achieve its noble mission.

The agency’s milestones from 1998 to 2022 include, institutionalization of the carabao upgrading and enterprise development, adherence to international quality standards, assertion as a leading livestock institution, rationalization and strategic shift in program implementation, and shared value creation in carabao industry and digitalization of services.

During the weeklong celebration, the agency introduced new milestones, which include the launching of the Kardeli All-Day Breakfast Diner, a specialty restaurant which showcases carabao’s meat by offering pre-packed choice cuts, gourmet sausages, and quick meals and snacks; recognition of regional centers (DA-PCC at Visayas State University and DA-PCC at West Visayas State University) as newly certified under ISO 9001; inauguration of DA-Biotech DNA Sequencing Facility; and launching of milestones coffee table book and AVP and new corporate AVP.

Moreover, six pillars and pioneers (Dr. Arnel Del Barrio, Dr. Annabelle Sarabia, Dr. Daniel Aquino, Dr. Zosimo Battad, Gloria Dela Cruz, and Grace Marjorie Recta) of the Carabao Development Program provided motivational insights to PCCeans and the agency’s new breed of leaders through the sharing platform dubbed as Knowledge-Talks or K-Talks.

Three outstanding employees who excelled in performing their duties were honored. They are Dr. Abraham Tandang, Science Research Specialist and Experimental Farm Manager of DA-PCC at UPLB as Outstanding Supervisor; Rebecca Ruby Gabriel, CBED Regional Coordinator of DA-PCC at CLU as Outstanding Development Officer; and Arnold Morales, DA-PCC at CSU’s dairy module in-charge as Outstanding Support Staff.

Likewise, the Knowledge Management Division (KMD) was recognized as 2022’s top performing unit and DA-PCC at Central Luzon State University (DA-PCC at CLSU) as top performing regional center. **B**

# Marinduque farmers co-op receives dairy buffaloes from DA-PCC

By Jeremie Marinella S. Ledesma

The DA-Philippine Carabao Center at University of the Philippines Los Baños (DA-PCC at UPLB) entrusted 37 female dairy buffaloes to the members of Marinduque Diocesan Development Cooperative (MDDCO) on May 16 at the Provincial Capitol Compound, Brgy. Bangbangalon, Boac, Marinduque.

“This project will strengthen and establish livelihood opportunities and acquire new technologies and information on dairy buffalo production. Along with this, the diligence and perseverance [of MDDCO] will catapult our farmers

and their families to prosperity,” said Governor Presbitero J. Velasco Jr. of the Province of Marinduque.

On the other hand, Jose Canaria, CBED coordinator of DA-PCC at UPLB, explained that the goal of the project is to aid farmers to develop their entrepreneurship skills and contribute to the development of the dairy industry in our country.

MDDCO chairperson Carlito Fabaleña expressed his gratitude to the Provincial Veterinary Office of Marinduque, DA-PCC, and Office of the Governor of Marinduque. He encouraged MDDCO members to work hard and make their livelihoods flourish.

DA-PCC at UPLB Center Director Thelma Saludes expressed her hope that the MDDCO will one day become successful carapreneurs and help increase milk supply in the country.

Said activity is a component of the project titled Carabao-based Business Improvement Network (CBIN), popularized as Accelerating Livelihood and Assets Buildup (ALAB Karbawan) of the DA-PCC. It was funded by the Office of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food, and Agrarian Reform Chairperson Senator Cynthia Villar, and is geared towards providing income opportunities to farmers and progressing the carabao dairy industry. **B**



# KOICA, DA-PCC partner for dairy herd and enterprise buildup project

By Maica Eumira Mariette C. Urmatan

The Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) and Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) held a project implementation kick-off meeting for the project titled “National Dairy Herd Improvement (NDHIP) and Enterprise Build-Up,” which has a project period of 2023 to 2027.

The project aims to establish a data capture, data processing and analysis,

and feedback system pertaining to the performance of dairy animals and herds. It also aims to adopt innovative and pertinent extension methods that will increase the adoption of suitable dairy technologies. Additionally, this will aid in enhancing carapreneurs’ production performance and

profitability. Consequently, it is anticipated that this collaboration will result in sustainable outcomes, including improved herd performance, increased profitability among dairy producers, and a progressive dairy industry.

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# Typical farmers no more

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**has gotten along in years, dreading sitting on the dirt road leading to the neighborhood.**

The group was particularly looking at the sooty and decrepit tarpaulin hanging on the frontage that says: “Welcome! Blessing and Grand Opening of Baclay Multi-Purpose Cooperative (BMPC)”. On the lower leftmost corner of the banner is an italicized announcement that says: We are accepting members...

Judging by the content of that banner, the house must have been a place for some modest business activities in the barrio sometime ago.

“This used to be Baclay’s [Multi-Purpose Cooperative] old office. We [DA-PCC] happened to stumble upon them here when we were trying to locate an old recipient of a bull from DA-PCC,” Fe Academia said. She is the carabao-based enterprise development coordinator of DA-PCC at Mindanao Livestock Production Complex (DA-PCC at MLPC) who ushered BMPC to carapreneurship.

The old BMPC office can be found in Ocampo St., Sto. Niño, in Tukuran, Zamboanga del Sur. Its new headquarters is located in barangay Baclay in the same town.

That banner was perched high up on that hut during BMPC’s grand event in 1993—a key moment that saw the beginning of transformed lives among the Zamboanguenos.

From only 33 members in 1993, the cooperative has grown to 10,000 members. It is rapidly improving not only in numbers but in social stature as well.

“It was difficult for us to grow the cooperative with only lending as a business. But when DA-PCC introduced us to dairying in 2019, it has been one big ride for us. It was not all roses but looking at where we are now and what we were able to accomplish for our families and our community, every challenge that we had to go through and overcome was all worth it,” Richard Hidalgo, the general manager of BMPC, said.

From hundreds of thousands, the cooperative is now worth millions of pesos or over PHP50 million in assets.

“The carabao is not recognized then as an animal that can be utilized for business much less for dairying. But because of DA-PCC and the cooperative taking a chance in carabao-based business, the carabao is now a revered animal here,” Richard added.

With that shift in mindset about the carabao, the fate of BMPC also changed. A complete opposite of their low-key start in that far-off barrio, BMPC now bustles with carabao-based ventures making it famed in the region as a multi-million peso carabao-based dairy cooperative.

BMPC served as the milk supplier for the DepEd’s national milk feeding program in eight Schools Division Offices (SDOs) in Zamboanga Peninsula and Region X in 2020 to 2022. This covered 150,000 schoolchildren benefitting from the program.

“We can process 44,000 200-ml sachets of milk a day. That’s about 150,000 sachets weekly. For our KaraBun production, we have previously served 37,000 buns covering only one SDO. This has increased to 92,000 for three SDOs,” Edmund Calvo, the production supervisor of BMPC, said.

BMPC’s participation in DepEd’s national milk feeding program has brought a myriad of benefits to the cooperative’s members.

Edmund said he witnessed how their members were previously unable to afford their children’s school expenses but are now providing them for their needs more than they thought they could ever manage.

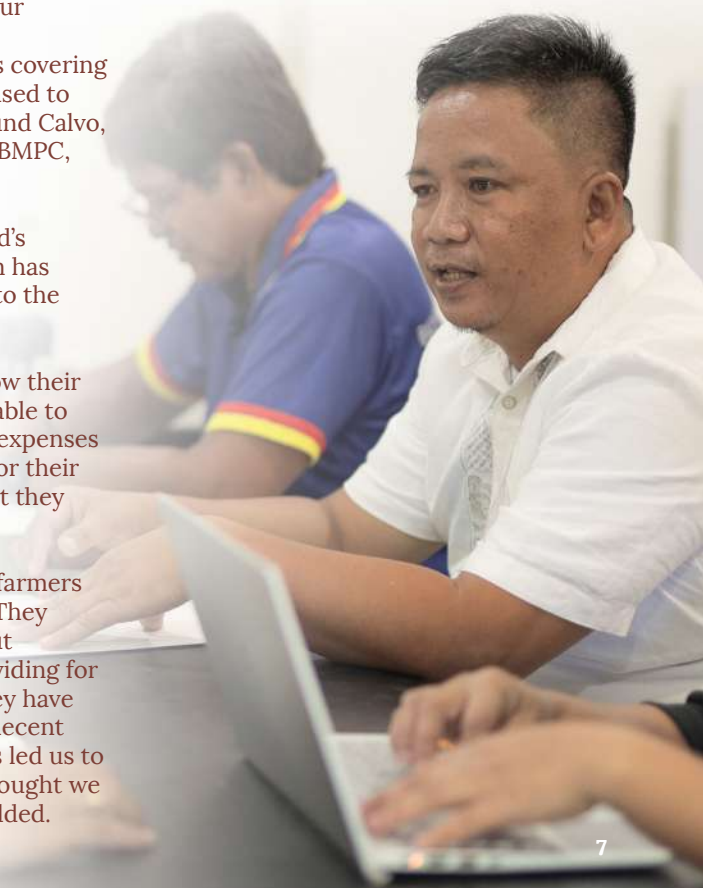
“We’d like to believe that our farmers are typical farmers no more. They are no longer ‘just farmers’ but carapreneurs. More than providing for their children’s education, they have also built for their families a decent shelter. Our dairy venture has led us to experience the life that we thought we could never have,” Edmund added.

The cooperative was able to generate employment in Tukuran and adjacent towns with the increased requirement for milk and KaraBun production personnel. BMPC is currently maintaining 140 employees and providing practicum for the youth who want to earn money while studying on a part-time basis. This was especially so during the pandemic when high schoolers have more free time because of modular learning.

“We desire for inclusive progress where our members and employees will both succeed. As stewards of this opportunity, we commit to continued success by giving this project our best,” Richard said.

His statement still rings true with “Dalan sa kalambuan, sa kaugma’ng haruhay!”, the theme that was written on that banner hanging by the old BMPC office hut in 1993. Translated, it means: “Road to Success Toward a Better Future.”

From that small beginning in Ocampo St., BMPC has traveled bigger roads and its three-decade journey has finally led to a season of harvest. Today, its vision is set on charting a road toward modeling successful carapreneurship in the region. Those who have already benefited from the harvest all agree: it’s a trip worth taking. **B**



# DA-PCC, Mindoro SUC ink collab on carabao conservation

By Ma. Cecilia Irang-Mariano

The DA-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) has forged partnership with Occidental Mindoro State College (OMSC) in a bid to expand its research and conservation efforts by including native animal protection in its priorities.

In a simple ceremony held during DA-PCC's 30th anniversary celebration on March 31, DA-PCC OIC Executive Director Dr. Caro B. Salces signed a memorandum of agreement with SUC President III Dr. Elbert C. Edaniol for the implementation of the five-year project titled "Establishment of the Mindoro Carabao Conservation and Nucleus Farm in Occidental Mindoro State College".

Said initiative marks a significant milestone in the advancement of sustainable development and animal conservation efforts of the institution. The DA-PCC and OMSC have agreed to share their respective expertise and resources for the project, which will be a part of the Research Laboratory for Endangered Species in Mindoro Biodiversity Rescue and Conservation Center.

As stipulated in the MOA, among the responsibilities of DA-PCC include the provision of at least five initial carabao stocks that will be utilized for research and development, extension and production purposes, and capacity building in the form of technical training, seminars, and consultancy to OMSC; and conduct of research and development endeavors in collaboration with OMSC and close monitoring in the operation of the project as a basis for further development, assistance, and partnerships.

The OMSC, on the other hand, will procure at least five additional carabaos; provide buildings, logistics, facilities and equipment needed for the operation of the project; and designate a coordinator who will spearhead the implementation of the project in close coordination with DA-PCC.

According to Dr. Danilda Duran, Scientist II and DA-PCC's facilitator for the project, once the animal housing is constructed, DA-PCC will provide the carabaos for breeding, reproduction, and conservation research. **B**

## KOICA, DA-PCC partner...

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Dr. Caro B. Salces, DA-PCC's OIC Executive Director, underscored the need to enhance the capabilities of extension professionals and carapreneurs in dairy herd improvement management practices in order to sustain the project.

In response, KOICA Philippines Country Director Kim Eunsub stated, "Today, as we conduct this project implementation survey, we launch another partnership. I anticipate a fruitful and productive collaboration with all of you. May this partnership contribute to the improvement of our smallholder farmers' quality of life."

Moreover, various topics under the NDHI project implementation were presented during the meeting, including the preliminary survey results by Dr. Seo Kangseok, the proposed NDHIP project revision by Dr. Battad, and the NDHIP framework and system development by Dr. Ester B. Flores, the head of DA-PCC Animal Breeding and Genomics Section.

After the meeting, the DA-PCC team accompanied KOICA delegates to the project sites in Nueva Ecija with data collection activity on the next day for additional project sites in Pangasinan and Pampanga.

The PCC NDHIP implementation survey was conducted on April 12-19. **B**





# DA-PCC, DA-BAR conduct inception meeting for various projects

By Aubrey Vista P. Manalo



Effective and lasting partnership is built on active communication and synergistic vision toward achieving a common goal.

Dr. Marvin A. Villanueva, Scientist I, OIC of the Research and Development Division, emphasized on this during the inception meeting for the implementation of DA-BAR and DA-PCC collaborative projects, held at the DA-PCC National Headquarters.

Dr. Lilian P. Villamor discussed the project on Enhancement of Cattle and Goat Breeds Cryopreservation Protocols in Support of the Conservation and Management of Animal Genetic Resources. It aims to: (1) optimize cryopreservation protocols of commercial and native cattle and goats to be implemented in the National Livestock Cryobank; (2) secure conservation of animal genetic resources from diverse breeds of cattle and goat in the Philippines that have economic importance and are resilient to adverse environmental effects; and (3) have sources of cryopreserved semen from commercial and native breeds for future use and access by co-ops. This project aims to enhance the protocol for the breed-specific cryopreservation of bovine and caprine semen.

In addition, Dr. Villamor presented another project titled “Optimization of

Swine breeds cryopreservation protocols in support of animal genetic resources conservation and management”. It aims to (1) optimize cryopreservation protocols of commercial and native pigs to be implemented in the national livestock cryobank, and (2) secure conservation of animal genetic resources from diverse breeds of pigs in the Philippines that have economic significance and resilience. The project is a breed-specific protocol for the cryopreservation of boar semen.

Ms. Mary Rose D. Uy-De Guia presented the project “Development of Probiotics with Moringa Extract as Feed Supplement for the Health and Production Performance of Water Buffaloes (*Bubalus bubalis*)”, which aims to (1) Isolate different lactic acid bacterial species that can be evaluated and used as probiotics; and (2) Develop probiotics (live microbial supplement) that can be tested on newly weaned calves. This technology facilitates the genetic enhancement and production of water buffalo. This project’s outcome will be used to create a commercially available probiotic product for farmers, animal scientists, veterinarians, and livestock stakeholders.

In addition, Dr. Phoebe Lyndia T. Llantada discussed the project “Field validation of the fermented total mixed ration (FTMR) using banana by-products (*Musa sapientum*) and water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) as alternative fodders for dairy buffaloes”, which aims

to (1) develop fermented total mixed rations (FTMRs) for dairy buffaloes, (2) establish partnership or collaboration with DA-BAR, DA-PCC, cooperatives, and dairy farmers, and (3) develop cost and benefit analysis of producing and feeding of FTMR in ruminants. The study will develop protocols for feed technology through the use and recycling of alternative fodders in order to improve meat and milk production and increase farmer income. Additionally, this project will innovate RDE protocol and generate information regarding the nutritional value, feeding, animal performance, and economic advantage of alternative fodder utilization.

Dr. Caro B. Salces, OIC Executive Director of DA-PCC, along with representatives from DA-BAR, Randy O. Valerio, owner of RO Valerio Farm, and other key units, attended the open forum that followed the presentation of the projects. Glacelle Alyne Malinao, a member of DA-BAR’s technical staff, challenged the researchers in this forum to complete the one-year research project assigned to them. In his concluding remarks, Dr. Salces thanked all the facilitators and representatives who attended the inception meeting. He also thanked DA-PCC’s partner agency-DA-BAR and the farmers’ group representative. **B**

# GAD focals step up in gender mainstreaming

By **Ronaline C. Canute**

The DA-PCC GAD Focal Point System Members (GFPS) undergo training-workshop on Gender and Development (GAD), Gender Mainstreaming (GM), Gender Analysis (GA), and orientation on the GM Evaluation Framework (GMEF), May 10-12, at the DA-PCC headquarters.

The final output of said workshop was a GAD Plan and Budget (GPB) that was developed by the participants. Relatedly, a discussion on how to accomplish the GAD Accomplishment Report (GAD AR) was one of the workshop outputs.

May Angelica A. Saludez, Senior GAD Specialist from the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), served as the resource speaker for the activity. The participants finished 10 sessions, which include gender mainstreaming, GA and GA tools,

enhanced GMEF, policy entry points, enabling mechanism entry points, program/project/activity entry points, how to begin GM, planning and achieving GM, and preparing GPB/GAD AR.

In one workshop session, the participants were tasked to evaluate the agency's PAPs using GMEF, a tool to measure the extent of the gender mainstreaming efforts of organizations, both national government agencies (NGAs) and local government units (LGUs). It will also assist the GFPS members to measure gains and successes, as well as pinpoint areas for improvement in the way GAD perspective is mainstreamed in the organization.

Moreover, the activity taught the participants on how to integrate the GAD mandate and gender issues into the annual GAD plan and budget.

Under Republic Act 9710, known as Magna Carta of Women, all agencies, offices, bureaus, SUCs, GOCCs, LGUs, and other government instrumentalities shall formulate their annual GAD plans, programs, and budgets within the context of their mandates. Following the conduct of a gender audit, gender analysis, and/or review of sex-disaggregated data, each agency or LGU shall develop its GAD plans, programs, and budget in response to the gender gaps or issues faced by their women and men employees, as well as their clients and constituencies.

Dr. Caro B. Salces, DA-PCC's OIC-Executive Director, challenged the GFPS members to gear up for a higher gender mainstreaming performance level in the year to come.

The DA-PCC is annually conducting GAD-related activities for its employees, such as gender mainstreaming assessments and training advocacy on gender sensitivity. **B**



# DA-PCC introduces NEO program

By **Angelo L. Cortado**

The DA-PCC's New Employee Orientation Program, or NEO, was launched last April 4 at Eusebio Hall. It is a learning platform that was designed for new employees, teaching them not only on basic workplace decorum, but to also embrace their purpose as members of the DA-PCC family.

Dr. Caro B. Salces, PCC's OIC Executive Director, encouraged NEO participants to discover their respective narratives within the organization because it will help them understand the meaning and importance of service. He also highlighted DA-PCC's evolution over the years from a research project to a renowned R&D organization with national and international collaborations. The pioneers and pillars, as well as the employees who worked tirelessly to help the agency achieve its goals, are responsible for this success, he said.

Zadieshar G. Sanchez, OIC of the Planning and Information Management Division (PIMD), emphasized the qualities and standard decorum that all PCC employees should possess. Dr. Excel Rio S. Maylem, senior science research specialist and unit head of

the Reproduction and Physiology Section, spoke about her inspiring path to success. Her experiences and journey demonstrate the importance of believing in yourself and your ability to achieve your goals.

Joshua Villanueva of the Administrative and Finance Management Division (AFMD) provided an overview of the carabao industry, focusing on its four main products: milk, meat, hide, and draft power. He explained that the Carabao Development Program (CDP) is made up of three major components: the Genetic Improvement Program (GIP), Research for Development (R4D), and Carabao-Based Enterprise Development (CBED).

Meanwhile, Cherry Pearl Rivera, AFMD accountant, answered questions from employees about tax, service contracts, and their tax obligations.

Dr. Ester B. Flores, PCC national GIP coordinator and Scientist I, discussed the GIP's goal and major activities, which are aimed at improving the genetic potential of native carabaos and purebred water buffaloes through appropriate and advanced selection and breeding protocols.

R4D, according to Dr. Eufrocina P. Atabay, Scientist II, is an important component of the agency's CDP, which aims to provide science-based solutions to help address the most pressing issues affecting the carabao industry and its stakeholders.

Joel F. Cabading, national CBED program coordinator, presented the CBED Program, which is to promote the economic benefits of carabao such as livelihood opportunities.

Estella P. Valiente of the Socio-Economics and Policy Section also presented two major CBED projects, the Carabao-based Business Improvement Network (CBIN) and Coconut-Carabao Development Project (CCDP), also known as Accelerating Livelihood and Assets Buildup or ALAB Karbawan, which aim to build strong carabao-based enterprise value chains to promote the creation of livelihood for farmers, increase the income of coconut farmers, and boost the dairy sector.

Alvin David, head of the PIMD-Planning Section, shared about the agency's foreign-assisted projects, specifically KOICA and US PL480, which aim to increase the productivity of the country's smallholder farmers through capability development.

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# Champion farmer in NE shares success story in dairying

By **Bonne Andrew D. Domingo**



In another episode of Cara-Aralan Webinar Series, Michael R. Pascual, owner of MCCR Pascual Dairy Farm from Minabuyok, Talavera, Nueva Ecija shared his success story in buffalo dairying during the webinar episode, “May Magandang Bukas sa Paggagatas-Kwento at Kwenta ng Tagumpay ng MCCR Pascual Dairy Farm.”

Although dairying was far from the business he started, Pascual tried it in 2007 because of financial struggles. He doubted himself at first because of lack of skills and experience. Driven by his desire to continue dairying and establish a career, he attended training and seminars of the DA-PCC and adopted its recommended practices and technologies.

Pascual shared his knowledge and skills in silage making, feeding milk replacer to calves, monitoring buffaloes in estrus, and milk quality screening using california mastitis test. He also emphasized the proper procedures in hand milking to ensure the quality of milk, along with other best practices and technologies in enhancing dairy production.

His hardwork paid off, as he achieved financial stability, and was able to support the education of his children, renovated their farm and house, and bought vehicles and appliances.

In the future, he wants his farm to

be accredited by the Agricultural Training Institute as a Learning Site for Agriculture.

He concluded his presentation by encouraging everyone to venture into dairy farming because of its benefits and stability.

“Inaanyayahan ko po kayo na subukan niyo po ang negosyong matatag, ang pag-aalaga ng gatasang kalabaw dahil kung livestock lang ang pag-uusapan, dito na kayo dahil marami nang binagong buhay ang paggagatang kalabaw, hindi lang ako kundi ang napakaraming mamamayang Pilipino.” **B**

**MICHAEL PASCUAL**  
Owner  
MCCR Pascual Dairy Farm



## DA-PCC introduces NEO...

**From page 12**

of the Knowledge Management Division, discussed the key elements and constraints of the carabao industry value chain, as well as how the agency can capitalize on opportunities that arise from them.

Farm Superintendent II Dr. Cyril P. Baltazar discussed about farm management, forage and pasture management, feed supplementation, housing and other facilities, minimum space requirement, animal houses, and herd management. Likewise, Pauline Maramag of the Business Development and Commercialization Unit presented the iREB Client Dashboard, which

she said helps the agency monitor the performance of enrolled farmer-clients and their dairy buffalo herds.

Meanwhile, Minda R. Diloy's presentation stated that the agency has maintained its ISO certification status over the years, demonstrating its commitment to providing quality products and services to its stakeholders, protecting the environment, and ensuring the safety of its employees.

As part of the learning event, employees are expected to take an examination. **B**

# New episode of Cara-Aralan Webinar Series features integrated dairy farming champ in Guimba, NE

By Tracy Antonette D. Baysa

Lodivico Guieb Sr., a dairy buffalo farmer, shared his inspiring account of success during today's webinar episode "Kwento at Kwenta ng Tagumpay ni Lodivico"—a true "lodi" story that anyone who ventures in this business might take inspo from.

"Guieb Dairy Farm" ventures into integrated farming and animal production. Said farm has been an Agricultural Training Institute accredited Learning Site for Agriculture (LSA) since 2019, which provides him a platform to share his technical know-how on dairying and animal raising

with interested individuals who want to learn or go into the same agriculture enterprise.

While he is caught up in his daily routine of managing his buffaloes, he makes sure to expand his business by tying up with organizations such as Ideal Visa Consultancy, Luzern International Manpower Service Corporation, and Tarlac Agricultural University. With these partnerships, he is aiming to also expand his reach in demonstrating the benefits of dairy buffalo production and hopefully inspire more to join the program.

His success in dairying has afforded him and his family financial stability, education for his children, social recognition for his expert knowledge in dairy buffalo production, and a chance to help practicum students in animal and dairy science.

"Gusto ko na kapag may mga trainees, dito sana sa bansa natin nila i-apply ang mga natutunan nila para tumaas pa sana ang lokal na produksyon ng gatas. Kaya lagi ko sila ini-encourage na tumulong sila sa pagpapalago ng kabuhayang salig sa gatasang kalabaw," said Lodivico.

This, he said, is his lifelong advocacy—to be a catalyst of change in his community with the dairy buffalo as a social commodity. **B**

"Gusto ko na kapag may mga trainees, dito sana sa bansa natin nila i-apply ang mga natutunan nila para tumaas pa sana ang lokal na produksyon ng gatas. Kaya lagi ko sila ini-encourage na tumulong sila sa pagpapalago ng kabuhayang salig sa gatasang kalabaw."

**LODIVICO GUIEB SR.**  
Carapreneur



## Topics



ANIMAL REPRODUCTION



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For interested participants, follow our Facebook page DA-Philippine Carabao Center to be notified with the schedule of webinar activities including the Zoom link and pre-registration form.



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Webinar Series



## Binibini contestants in NE showcase carabao costumes, celebrate PH culture

By Ma. Cecilia Irang-Mariano

Several candidates of Binibining Talavera flaunted their creativity and cultural pride by featuring the carabao in their costumes during the town's Festival Costume Competition.

The candidates, representing various barangays in Talavera, Nueva Ecija, wore colorful and intricate costumes that highlighted the beauty and diversity of the town. More than 10 of which showcased their creativity and passion for their heritage by incorporating carabaos into their costumes.

Some wore headpieces that resembled the carabao's horns, while others wore costumes that were decorated with images of the animal. Some even had miniature carabaos with them, adding a touch of authenticity to their costumes. The carabao, also known as the Philippine water buffalo, is an important symbol of strength, resilience, and hard work in the country's agricultural industry.

Meanwhile, four of these candidates made it to the Top 5 of the Binibining Talavera 2023 Festival Costume Competition. **B**



## A 'full' carabao makes for a 'fulfilled' farmer

By Dine Yve D. Daganos

**"Don't be stingy with your carabaos' food, let them eat contently but not excessively."**

This was Jeffrey Cueco's customary practice when it comes to his carabao's diet. With this practice, his buffalo named Maricar, garnered the Best Dairy Buffalo award for purebred senior cow category during the National Carabao Conference held on November 15-16 last year at the

Philippine Carabao Center National Headquarters in the Science City of Muñoz.

Jeffrey, 38, grew up in the coastal city of Baybay in Barangay Sta. Cruz where fishing and farming are the common means of livelihood. It was his father Gregorio Cueco, 67, also a farmer, who enticed him to venture in dairying. Sometime in 2017, his father left Jeffrey two carabaos to tend while he stayed in Dapitan to take a short course on therapeutic massage. Jeffrey has since learned so much about raising dairy carabaos.

### Taking risks

At first, Jeffrey was not too involved in their carabao farm until his father started the dairy business. Sold for PHP70 per liter, Jeffrey did not expect to make that much amount from selling carabao's milk. From then on, he became a full-fledged carapreneur and started developing their farm. At present, Jeffrey and his father take turns tending 15 carabaos housed in their farm comprising of 4 bulls and 11 female buffaloes, 14 of these are owned by Jeffrey and his father while one belongs to their cooperative.

Jeffrey eventually hired two workers to help them in the farm while he was away working as a quarantine officer under the Department of Agriculture during the day. But since Jeffrey does not want to lose touch with the farm chores, he makes time to feed and care for the buffaloes after work or during weekends.

Jeffrey also rented two separate lots by the riverbanks—one for their milking parlor, and another for grazing the carabaos and planting grasses such as Napier and corn.





Like every other entrepreneur, Jeffrey was met with a few setbacks along his dairy venture. Just like the rest of the country, the inflation on commodities is crippling to both entrepreneurs and customers. For example, from PHP700-800, Jeffrey said the price of feeds increased to PHP1000-1,200 per kilo. For this reason, Jeffrey, sometimes resorted to protein-rich legumes as alternative to meet his carabaos' nutritional needs. Adding to this is the cost for hiring staff and the rental fee for their farm area. Nonetheless, Jeffrey remains confident with his investments.

"It also takes generous investment when you want good dairy production and good milk quality. But less worry, because we somehow recover our expenses when our carabaos start producing milk again. That is why I am eager to increase our carabao milk production by adding more carabaos in the farm," Jeffrey said.

#### **Good practices in dairying**

Unlike other livestock raisers, Jeffrey generously feeds his carabaos

especially during and just after pregnancy.

"Their diet includes corn stalks when the crop is in season. I mix it with molasses, corn bran, and salt," he said.

"At 8 o'clock in the morning, I'll take them by the riverbanks where they bathe and refresh themselves especially during summer. Sometimes they would also feed on the grasses growing by the riverside. At 1 o'clock, we take them back to the parlor," he said.

Mae, Anne, Thaleya, Sheena, Jane, Bea, and Queenie—you would think they are quite the common names for charming ladies, but these were names that Jeffrey and his staff chose for some of their female buffaloes. Well, it sure does go with how Jeffrey takes precious care for the animals like his prized possessions. As evidenced by the plump and healthy shape of the buffaloes, they receive quite the amount of attention and maintenance.

Apart from their daily milk collection of 15 to 19 liters from their four milking buffaloes, Jeffrey also makes money by selling carabao manure as vermicompost which is sold for PHP15 per kilo. For plain manure, it costs PHP160 per sack. They also sell some of their young bulls to potential buyers in their locality.

Jeffrey is determined to expand his dairy venture and purchase additional buffaloes to increase his carabao milk production. He also plans on improving the housing for the animals and have them relocated in a farther area by the river where they would be safe from flooding during the rainy season.

"Dairying has so much to offer so I am looking forward to expanding our farm and our dairy buffalo herd to increase our dairy milk sales," he said.

"I am glad to serve as an inspiration to other farmers in my locality and to venture in the dairy industry as source of stable income. I want to show them that despite not having my own farmland, I am still able to earn profitably from dairying," Jeffrey further enthused. **B**



# Dream big, start small: A story of young dairy farmer in Pampanga

By Mikee A. Antonio

**R**abbi D. Manlapaz is an overseas Filipino worker (OFW) who works as a medical technician in New Zealand, and his sister, Camille D. Manlapaz was given the chance to travel to Europe.

Rabbi was motivated by the world's top dairy exporter, which gained a reputation for supplying high-quality dairy products around the world with its temperate climate, cutting-edge equipment, modern agriculture technologies, and quality graded-pasture dairy system. Rabbi worked there for eight years and believes that their farm has potential and could offer opportunities in their community. Using his free time, he conducted various consultations with dairy processors in the Philippines and New Zealand.

When the COVID-19 pandemic broke out in 2022, Rabbi and his wife Jeth Mercado Manlapaz decided to take a holiday in December and spend time with his relatives in the Philippines. Instead of bringing the traditional "pasalubong," he bought forage/silage chopper, which can cut dry and fresh grass, corn stalks, rice straws, and other agricultural detritus, simplifying and speeding up the preparation of buffalo feeds.

Manlapaz housed two Aeta families who periodically helped with animal husbandry and the development of fruit-bearing crops in their farm.

As a result, the Manlapaz family was inspired to provide long-term employment to indigenous Aeta families in Porac, Pampanga. Rabbi is keen to expand their buffalo farm and teach real farming techniques

to Aeta families so that they can become self-sufficient. When the Pampanga provincial government publicly awards certifications of their ancestral territory in 2022, Rabbi's ambitious project will benefit more Aeta households. He devotes his time to additional dairy research, as well as discussions with Porac City administration and meetings with the municipal mayor.

In addition to their laudable goal of assisting indigenous people, Rabbi knew that he must also make their farm lucrative to sustainably create more jobs. Rabbi believes that it is important to adopt the necessary upgrades to elevate their dairy farm operations from traditional farming to modern but cost-effective procedure to meet the changing expectations of their consumers.



**Because he sees a lot of potential in dairy farming and product processing in the Philippines, Manlapaz envisioned forming an association to create jobs and help other local dairy producers in their area. He then formally established his farm, naming it Manlapaz-David Dairy Farm (MDDF) in honor of his family, in January 2023. Visualizing Pampanga as the Dairy Capital of Region III, and MDDF as a multiplier farm increasing the herd inventory, he knew that strong coordination with other dairy farms is required to ensure the region's continuing supply of dairy milk.**

Rabbi enlisted the help of Nile D. David, an animal science consultant who specializes in delivering healthcare instruction. Buffalo nutrition also includes deworming and administration of proper multivitamins. He also teaches the program for sustainable buffalo feeding and additionally provides service on artificial insemination. He also sought help from DA-PCC through Dr. Ericson N. Dela Cruz, Regional Center Director of DA-PCC at Central Luzon State University (CLSU). The center committed to provide technical support to the farm in terms of dairy buffalo entrepreneurship as well as on product processing and proper milk handling training. In the same year, DA-PCC at CLSU held trainings on processing pasteurized milk, chocolate milk, kesong puti, and pastillas, coffee milk, and ice cream. Also part of the training was on

hygienic milk handling. Manlapaz and his team saw the potential of selling these products and started their own dairy business, branding it "PUKLO," with the logo inspired by carabao horn and teat, which tells the story: "Nature has her own way of turning grass into abundant, delicious, and nutritious milk."

MDDF believes that to sustain the farm, they needed innovation in the proper breeding and management of their buffalo herd, investment in the acquisition of efficient machinery, construction of dairy-related infrastructure, improvement of the distribution process, competitive pricing, staying informed and updated about the dairy buffalo industry, and continually learning applicable modern dairy farming skills.

As a result, nothing is impossible with the consistent and dependable support of the local government of Porac, led by Municipal Mayor Jaime V. Capil and Vice Mayor Francis Laurence C. Tamayo, as well as the consistent support and guidance of DA-PCC at CLSU.

Rabbi said their efforts are in honor of their parents, Rey and Josefina Manlapaz. **B**



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## DA-PCC NETWORK

### DA-PCC AT MARIANO MARCOS STATE UNIVERSITY

Batac City, Ilocos Norte  
Mobile No.: (+63) 919.224.9062  
Email: [pcc-mmsu@pcc.gov.ph](mailto:pcc-mmsu@pcc.gov.ph)

### DA-PCC AT CAGAYAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Tuguegarao City, Cagayan  
Telephone No.: (+63) (078) 377.9315  
Email: [pccpiat07@yahoo.com](mailto:pccpiat07@yahoo.com)

### DA-PCC AT DON MARIANO MARCOS MEMORIAL STATE UNIVERSITY

Rosario, La Union  
Mobile No.: (+63) 920.982.9666  
Email: [pcc-dmmsu@pcc.gov.ph](mailto:pcc-dmmsu@pcc.gov.ph)

### DA-PCC AT CENTRAL LUZON STATE UNIVERSITY

Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija  
Telephone No.: (+63) (044) 940 3061  
Mobile No.: (+63) 968.853.5754  
Email: [pcc-clsu@pcc.gov.ph](mailto:pcc-clsu@pcc.gov.ph)

### DA-PCC AT UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES AT LOS BAÑOS

Los Baños, Laguna  
Telephone No.: (049) 536.2729  
Email: [pcc-uplb@pcc.gov.ph](mailto:pcc-uplb@pcc.gov.ph)

### DA-PCC AT VISAYAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Baybay City, Leyte  
Mobile No.: (+63) 908.895.2461  
Email: [pcc-vsu@pcc.gov.ph](mailto:pcc-vsu@pcc.gov.ph)

### DA-PCC NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS AND GENE POOL

Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija  
Telephone No.: (+63) (044) 456.0734  
Email: [oed@pcc.gov.ph](mailto:oed@pcc.gov.ph)

### DA-PCC AT WEST VISAYAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Calinog, Iloilo  
Telephone No.: (+63) (033) 323.4781  
Mobile No.: (+63) 999.991.6115  
(+63) 928.945.7760  
Email: [pccwvsu@yahoo.com](mailto:pccwvsu@yahoo.com)

### DA-PCC AT LA CARLOTA STOCK FARM

La Granja, La Carlota City, Negros Occidental  
Mobile No.: (+63) 919.006.8392  
Email: [pccclcsf@yahoo.com](mailto:pccclcsf@yahoo.com)

### DA-PCC AT UBAY STOCK FARM

Ubay, Bohol  
Mobile No.: (+63) 997.111.7680 | (+63) 945.119.3998 |  
(+63) 966.330.2214  
Email: [pcc-usf@pcc.gov.ph](mailto:pcc-usf@pcc.gov.ph)

### DA-PCC AT MINDANAO LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION CENTER

Kalawit, Zamboanga del Norte  
Mobile No.: (+63) 912.784.4668 | (+63) 935.387.9652  
Email: [pcc\\_mlpc09@yahoo.com](mailto:pcc_mlpc09@yahoo.com) | [pcc-mlpc@pcc.gov.ph](mailto:pcc-mlpc@pcc.gov.ph)

### DA-PCC AT CENTRAL MINDANAO UNIVERSITY

Maramag, Bukidnon  
Mobile No.: (+63) 939.916.9719 |  
(+63) 966.645.6292  
Email: [pccmusuan@yahoo.com](mailto:pccmusuan@yahoo.com)

### DA-PCC AT UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MINDANAO

Kabacan, North Cotabato  
Mobile No.: (+63) 919.397.0872 |  
(+63) 920.621.9722  
Email: [usm\\_pcc@yahoo.com](mailto:usm_pcc@yahoo.com)

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