

Bubalus



Quarterly Newsletter of the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center

Vol. 3 No. 2 • 2020



FEATURES

Lockdown due to COVID-19 unlocks biz opportunities

By Charlene Joanino

Despite the lack of sales channels for carabao's milk due to the enhanced community quarantine following the

To page 23

SMC, DA-PCC collaborate in aide of dairy farmers amid COVID-19

By Ma. Cecilia Irang

Dairy farmers struggling to stay afloat amid the COVID-19 crisis due to lack of market channels need not worry anymore as the San Miguel Corporation (SMC) extends support by purchasing Php500,000 worth of carabao's milk products from farmers' cooperatives.

A survey conducted by the research team of DA-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) showed that dairy farmers encountered major setbacks in terms of limited access to markets following the two-month quarantine period, which resulted in almost 50% reduction of dairy farmers' income from their

To page 10

Editor's Word



The COVID-19 has caught everyone, worldwide, off guard.

But in the middle of socio-economic doldrums, uncertainties, and challenges brought about by this pandemic, the DA-PCC, has become even more determined and innovative in facilitating favorable changes in the lives of its stakeholders.

In this issue of Bubalus, we are happy to share with you highlights of meaningful activities that the agency has stewarded, in partnership with various government and private instrumentalities, in the face of the current public health situation.

Foremost are the ALPAS-COVID component projects namely Unlad Lahi Project (ULaP), Creating Opportunities through Value Innovations and Development (COVID) Project, Gatas, Isda, Gulay, at Karne (GIGK) Project, and CaraAralan Project. These projects are currently in full swing and have already benefitted thousands of individuals in various localities across the country.

A consolidating activity under the umbrella of the ALPAS COVID initiative is the milk feeding program to help boost the immune system and address malnutrition, which is also in support of RA 11037 (National Feeding Program Act). The DA-PCC has partnered with both the public and the private sectors to facilitate distribution of toned or flavored buffalo's milk to various beneficiaries (children, senior citizen, and even frontliners for COVID-related services) notably in Central and Northern Luzon, National Capital Region, Central Visayas, and Central Mindanao. The said program has also provided immediate markets for local dairy producers.

To further help the carabao industry stakeholders and the public in the midst of the pandemic, novel products (e.g., Milkybun and Milk Pops) and marketing strategies (via KADIWA Buffalo Milk on Wheels) were also launched by the agency. Partnership with Grameen Foundation to help digitize the DA-PCC's extension and advisory services (a first for the livestock sector) has also started. All these are proofs of the agency's culture of innovativeness and resilience especially in times of crisis.

We hope these activities and developments, as presented in this newsletter, can inspire and motivate everyone. Together, we can find workable solutions to COVID-19 challenges and emerge victorious.

I also enjoin everyone to be vigilant and practice quarantine-related protocols, as we adopt to the New Normal or New Reality.

Be safe, fit, and well-informed to help keep paranoia and anxiety at bay!


Dr/ Eric P. Palacpac

About the cover

"Milkybun" is one of the newly developed products by the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center amidst the community quarantine due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was developed to provide dairy farmers new business opportunities that will give them additional income while helping boost the immune system of the public against the virus.



(Photo by Jan Czarina Salas)

Editorial Staff

ERIC P. PALACPAC
ROWENA G. BUMANLAG
Editors

MA. CECILIA C. IRANG
Managing Editor

MA. CECILIA C. IRANG
CHARLENE S. JOANINO
CHRISSALYN L. MARCELO
Staff Writers

LEINEFE L. ATON
JESON C. CANDOLE
VICTOR S. GEROCHE
MARI JOAN A. NEFULDA
Contributors

CHRISSALYN L. MARCELO
Layout and Illustrations

CHARLENE S. JOANINO
Circulation

ARNEL N. DEL BARRIO
Editorial Adviser

Contents

- 3 DA-PCC celebrates Farmers' and Fisherfolks' Month
- 4 Buffalo's milk on wheels
BMW rolls out in select towns, cities across DA-PCC network
- 6 DA-PCC, DA-PCAF, NEFEDCCO tie up
for health awareness advocacy
- 7 DA-PCC, PLGU partner in Bohol-wide
milk feeding
- 8 Undernourished children to benefit
from milk feeding in Ilocos Norte
- 9 NE gov't pledges investment in dairy facilities
- 10 DA-PCC disperses dairy animals
in Ilocandia under ALAB Karbawan
- 12 Ruminants' clinic opens in Saranay
- 13 'Pag-asa': First FTET calf born in PH
- 14 DA-PCC strengthens EAS thru collaborative project
- 15 Women carapreneurs undergo skills training
on products dev't
- 16 Bukidnon farmer receives dairy buffaloes
from DA-PCC as start-up stock
- 17 'Bukidnon Dairy' eyes spot along
Northern Mindanao tourism hi-way
- 18 Co-op donates relief goods to indigent members,
families in Bantog, Asingan
- 18 Milk feeding aims to boost immunity of frontliners,
vulnerable sectors in Bukidnon against COVID-19
- 19 DA-PCC at LCSF provides carabao's milk to
frontliners, families amid COVID-19 threat
- 19 Bohol LGU partners with DA-PCC to mitigate
setbacks of lockdown to dairy farmers
- 20 DA-PCC ALPAS COVID-19 projects mitigate
impact of crisis on farmers

DA-PCC celebrates Farmers' and Fisherfolks' Month

By Charlene Joanino

The Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center conducted a roster of activities in recognition of the hardwork of Filipino farmers and fisherfolks last May 27-29 in San Jose City (SJC), Nueva Ecija.

"We honor our farmers and fisherfolks. Some say they are frontliners and are often referred to as backliners but for us they are the modern heroes of our time," DA-PCC Executive Director Dr. Arnel Del Barrio said.

He gave emphasis on their incomparable contribution in fighting hunger by continuously helping in food production for the masses even in the midst of the economic depression because of the pandemic.

The three-day event highlighted initiatives aligned with the DA's



PHOTO BY: ROWENA BUMANLAG

DA-PCC's Carabao Enterprise Development Section Head Mina Abella hands Milkybun and 200 ml toned carabao's milk to one of the children who benefitted from the agency's community milk feeding program in Brgy. F.E. Marcos, San Jose City.

"Ahon Lahat, Pagkaing Sapat (ALPAS) Kontra COVID-19". The program ensures a food-secure Philippines during the health emergency period.

Under it, DA-PCC's ALPAS COVID-19 projects were launched with the following activities: urban gardening and "Gulayan sa Barangay" efforts, introduction of Milka Krem's new dairy products (Milkybun and Milk Pops), simultaneous rolling out of Kadiwa milk on wheels across the DA-PCC regional network, Cara-Aralan Webinar Series, inauguration of the Ruminant Research Clinic in Saranay, SJC, forage grass planting, and awarding of carabaos for fattening to recipient farmers of Tayabo Agro-Entrepreneur Natures Innovators Movement (TANIM).

A community feeding program was also done by the agency where 500 children of Brgy. F.E. Marcos, SJC benefitted. They each received 200

ml-sachet of toned carabao's milk and Milkybun, a newly developed milk-based and nutrient-rich bread of DA-PCC's Milka Krem. The "Tahanan ng Damayang Kristiyano", a safe haven for abandoned children and elderly in SJC, were also given milk and milkybuns.

A memorandum of agreement was signed between DA-PCC and the City Government of San Jose being one of the pilot sites for the DA-PCC's ALPAS COVID-19 projects.

SJC Mayor Mario "Kokoy" Salvador urged the farmers to engage in the projects diligently with the aim of sustaining it. He emphasized that doing so motivates the government to continuously think of programs and projects that would benefit them.

To page 8

Buffalo's milk on wheels

BMW rolls out in select towns, cities across DA-PCC network

By Charlene Joanino

As an alternative to the lack of marketing outlets for dairy products due to the prevailing lockdown, the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) launched the Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita (Kadiwa) Buffalo Milk on Wheels (BMW). The mobile store ensures the availability and accessibility of buffalo's milk to more consumers while serving as a marketing facility for the dairy farmers' produce.

Residents of San Jose City in Nueva Ecija had the first taste of BMW products as the city served as the pilot site for the initial rolling out of the mobile store last April 27.

"The Kadiwa BMW aims to address the problem of dairy farmers on processing and selling of milk, which became more prevalent at the onset of COVID-19 pandemic," Dr. Eufrocina Atabay, DA-PCC Scientist I and officer-in-charge of the Research and Development Division (RDD) who steers the Kadiwa BMW operations, said.

Aside from being aligned with the DA's Kadiwa, the BMW is DA-PCC's intervention under the project components Creating Opportunities through Value Innovations Development and Gatas, Isda, Gulay at Karne of the DA's "Ahon Lahat, Pagkaing Sapat Kontra COVID-19". Kadiwa ultimately aims to usher food security and accessibility in communities.

The Central Dairy Collecting and Processing Facility of DA-PCC processes the milk produce of farmers under the brand name Milka Krem. The BMW made available to consumers dairy products such as pasteurized milk, yoghurt-flavored drink, chocomilk, pastillas, kesong puti, and Milkybun.

During the initial rolling out of the BMW, some of the agency's RDD staff, scientists even, volunteered to man and oversee the store.

Behind the operations of the BMW is a team of marketing experts

composed of creative staff from the Planning and Information Management Division - Business Development and Commercialization Unit, Knowledge Management Division, NIZ Coordinating Unit, and various units of the RDD.

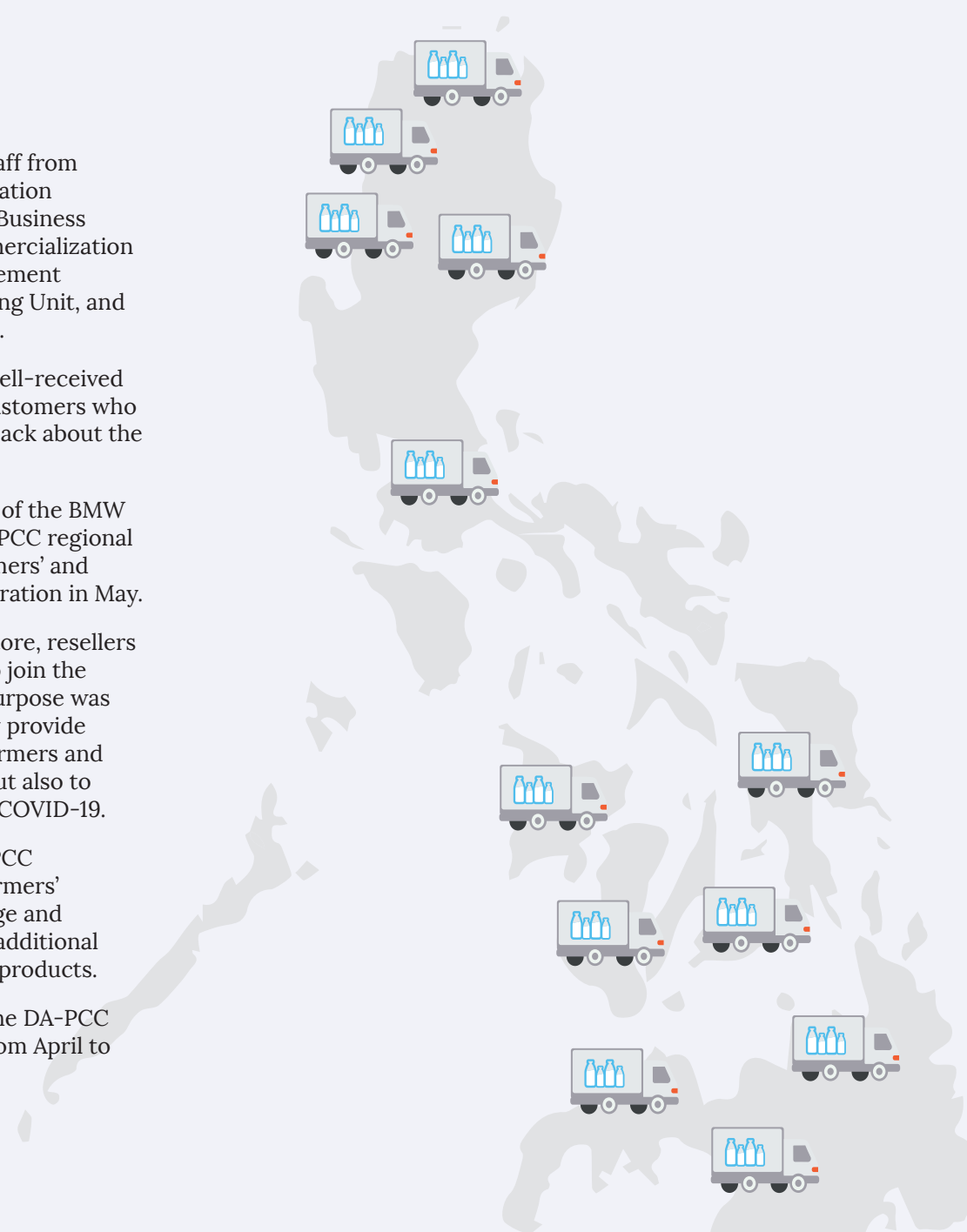
The Kadiwa BMW was well-received by new and returning customers who gave their positive feedback about the products.

Simultaneous launching of the BMW was held across the DA-PCC regional network during the Farmers' and Fisherfolks' Month celebration in May.

Aside from the mobile store, resellers were also encouraged to join the cause, whose primary purpose was not only to continuously provide a source of income to farmers and private entrepreneurs but also to boost immunity against COVID-19.

Dr. Atabay said the DA-PCC will eventually let the farmers' cooperatives fully manage and operate the BMW as an additional channel to market their products.

Here is an overview of the DA-PCC Kadiwa BMW roll-out from April to June:



- DA-PCC at Mariano Marcos State University**
Batac, Ilocos Norte

Total liters of milk sold: **697 L**
Total sales: **Php75,285.00**
Sites: **Piddig, Banna, Pagudpud, Dumalneg, Bacarra, Pagudpud**
- DA-PCC at Cagayan State University**
Tuguegarao City, Cagayan

Total liters of milk sold: **2,332.05 L**
Total sales: **Php225,148.75**
Site: **Tuguegarao City**
- DA-PCC at Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University**
Rosario, La Union

Total liters of milk sold: **2,592 L**
Total sales: **Php237,995.00**
Sites: **San Fernando City, San Juan, San Gabriel, and Balaoran**
- DA-PCC National Headquarters and Gene Pool**
Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija

Total liters of milk sold: **4,113.76 L**
Total sales: **Php693,184.60**
Sites: **San Jose City, Science City of Muñoz, Bongabon, Carranglan, Rizal, Llanera, Guimba, Pantabangan Talavera, and Cabiao**
- DA-PCC at Central Luzon State University**
Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija

Total liters of milk sold: **482 L**
Total sales: **Php77,236**
Sites: **Pampanga and Bulacan**
- DA-PCC at University of the Philippines-Los Baños**
Los Baños, Laguna

Total liters of milk sold: **215 L**
Total sales: **Php17,102.00**
Sites: **General Trias and Bacoor**
- DA-PCC at Visayas State University**
Baybay City, Leyte

Total liters of milk sold: **2,770.75 L**
Total sales: **Php213,854.00**
Sites: **Baybay City, Ormoc City, Maasin City, Mahaplag, Abuyog, Hilongos, Bato, Hindang, Biliran, Limasawa, and Mochoron South**
- DA-PCC at West Visayas State University**
Calinog, Iloilo

Total liters of milk sold: **428.56 L**
Total sales: **Php46,350.00**
Sites: **Iloilo City, New Lucena, Zarraga, Maasin, and San Miguel**
- DA-PCC at La Carlota Stock Farm**
La Granja, La Carlota City, Negros Occidental

Total liters of milk sold: **387 L**
Total sales: **Php40,525.00**
Sites: **Dumaguete City, Tanjay City, and Bais City**
- DA-PCC at Ubay Stock Farm**
Ubay, Bohol

Total liters of milk sold: **130 L**
Total sales: **Php19,350.00**
Site: **Ubay**
- DA-PCC at University of Southern Mindanao**
Kabacan, North Cotabato

Total liters of milk sold: **4,535 L**
Total sales: **Php408,060.00**
Sites: **Kabacan, Kidapawan, Carmen, Pikit, Miang, Kabacan, Makilala, Matalam, Tulunan, Sto. Niño, Surallah, and Esperanza**
- DA-PCC at Central Mindanao University**
Maramag, Bukidnon

Total liters of milk sold: **164 L**
Total sales: **Php18,775.00**
Sites: **Don Carlos, Valencia City, and Maramag**
- DA-PCC at Mindanao Livestock Production Complex**
Kalawit, Zamboanga Del Norte

Total liters of milk sold: **1,801.71 L**
Total sales: **Php175,660.00**
Sites: **Dumalinao, Labangan, Pagadian, Tukuran, Zamboanga City, and Dapitan City**

DA-PCC, DA-PCAF, NEFEDCCO tie up for health awareness advocacy

By Ma. Cecilia Irang



PHOTO BY ROWENA BUMANLAG

Aside from alleviating malnutrition among children, market for dairy farmers' produce was also guaranteed under the joint undertaking of the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries (DA-PCAF), DA-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC), and Nueva Ecija Federation of Dairy Carabao Cooperatives (NEFEDCCO).

This was following the signing of a memorandum of agreement among the three parties, which aims to advocate for health awareness in response to the unprecedented challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The DA-PCAF, headed by OIC-Executive Director Dr. Liza Battad, closely coordinated with NEFEDCCO and the local government unit of Talavera in identifying the recipients for the milk feeding program. It identified 46 beneficiaries in areas with high incidence of malnutrition among children. Other factors such as the feeding center's proximity to the source of pasteurized milk and availability of cooling facilities were considered in the selection.

This initiative is DA-PCAF's effort to contribute to the DA's mandate of ensuring food availability and sufficiency and providing income to farmers and fisherfolks.

Under the partnership, NEFEDCCO has a sure market for its milk produce as the DA-PCAF procured Php100,000 worth of carabao's milk (a total of 300 L) to be used in a milk feeding program for three months, which will benefit 46 malnourished children (3-5 years old) from the select barangays of Talavera in Nueva Ecija.

The undertaking seeks to become an advocacy program worthy of emulation by other local government units with milk producers and disadvantaged children.

The DA-PCC, meanwhile, assists NEFEDCCO in the implementation of the project through its National Impact Zone that covers the province of Nueva Ecija under its Carabao Development Program. It also supports the federation in milk analysis and other relevant technical services that will ensure the quality of carabao's milk product through the DA-PCC's Carabao Enterprise Development Section.

This effort aims to encourage carabao-based cooperatives across the DA-PCC network to become members of the agricultural and fishery councils as advisory bodies of the DA.

The milk feeding started last June 1 and will end in August. NEFEDCCO and DA-PCC, in coordination with LGU-Talavera, will continuously monitor and provide feedback to DA-PCAF regarding the implementation status of the advocacy project.

DA-PCC, PLGU partner in Bohol-wide milk feeding

By Leinefe Aton



PHOTO BY MARITES CABAÑERO

Some 5,130 undernourished children are expected to benefit from the recently launched provincewide community milk feeding program in Bohol.

The initial delivery of 200 ml toned milk to five municipalities on May 6, 2020 launched the partnership between the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center at Ubay Stock Farm (DA-PCC at USF) and Bohol Provincial Local Government Unit (PLGU) for the said program.

"Bohol Governor Arthur Yap approved the Php6 million-worth program to help dairy farmers market their milk produce even in the time of pandemic. While aiming for this, we also want to boost the immunity of those belonging in the vulnerable sectors," Dr. Stella Marie Lapiz, the provincial veterinarian of Bohol, said.

Prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis, the Office of the Provincial Veterinarian crafted the Agricultural Rural Transformation (ART) program through the dairy production project.

The ART detailed the major strategies and activities to ensure that there would be enough supply of locally produced milk to meet the requirement of the Department of Education (DepEd) under RA 11037 or the National Feeding Program Act.

The supposed implementation of the national milk feeding program was, however, indefinitely deferred due to the pandemic but production support services such as artificial insemination (AI) will continue.

Farmers who will be participating in the ART program will be enrolled in a database to ensure that they will comply to the directive of Governor Yap on boosting local milk production.

She added the PLGU intends to use the fund for milk importation to help local farmers instead of patronizing imported produce.

Meanwhile, DA-PCC at USF facilitates and monitors the production of quality milk, ensures

"Initially nakasugod na gayud sa San Miguel. Nag actual nag enrollment sa mga additional na kabaw sa mga farmers. Naabtan man ta sa COVID mao to medyo ni hinay para pagtabok sa pikas nga lungsod peru despite adto nakasugod naman lagi padayon me sa A.I ug enrollment. For San Miguel alone naka enroll ta ug 160 ka mga kabaw for dairy (We started enrolling additional farmers' carabaos in San Miguel. Travelling to the municipalities, however, became restricted because of COVID but we were still able to enroll 160 head of carabaos for dairy in San Miguel alone.)"

Dr. Stella Marie Lapiz
Provincial Veterinarian, Bohol

To next page

Undernourished children to benefit from milk feeding in Ilocos Norte

By Mari Joan Nefulda

More than 500 undernourished children have started to benefit from a milk feeding program in Ilocos Norte, which will run for 120 days from April 27 to August 25.

Said program was made possible through Gov. Matthew Marcos Manotoc with the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center at Mariano Marcos State University (DA-PCC at MMSU) as the supplier of chocolate-flavored milk to the provincial government.

This feeding program is initiated by the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (PDRRMC) and Provincial Nutrition Council (PNC), which resolves to

feed undernourished children with Nutribun and pasteurized chocomilk during the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

According to the PDRRMC and PNC, this project is part of the service package under “Nutrition in Emergencies” where attention to feeding malnourished children during the COVID-19 pandemic is deemed essential and relevant to improve their nutritional status and to boost their immune system.

The DA-PCC at MMSU is thankful to the provincial government because this initiative provides for a sure market for the milk produce of dairy carabao raisers in Ilocos

Twenty-one municipalities and two cities with a total of 533 beneficiaries will benefit from this program. For 120 days, a weekly supply of 3,731 100 ml packs of chocomilk will be dispatched to the beneficiaries.

Norte. This will mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic to their livelihood.



PHOTO BY: ROWENA BUMANLAG

From page 3

DA-PCC celebrates Farmers’ and Fisherfolks’ Month

The said projects are the Unlad Lahi Project (ULaP), which aims to increase milk and meat production and provide livelihood for displaced farmers; Creating Opportunities Through Value Innovations and Development (COVID) project that enhances food productivity, availability,

accessibility, and sustainability through applicable technologies; Gatas, Isda, Gulay, at Karne (GIGK) project, which will enhance food and feed production, availability and sustainability of supply; and Cara-Aralan project, which sustains access to information, education, and communication of farmers,

carapreneurs, and carabao industry stakeholders.

In 1998, the month of May was declared as Farmers’ and Fisherfolks’ Month under Presidential Proclamation No. 33.

From page 7

DA-PCC, PLGU

that milk products adhere to food safety and standards, and assists the delivery to beneficiaries.

The community feeding program, which is hoped to culminate in August 2020 and will run for 60

days, is co-implemented by the Bohol Provincial Education Center and Provincial Nutrition Council. The participating municipalities include the following: Pres. Carlos P. Garcia, Talibon, Bien Unido, Getafe, Buenavista, Ubay, San

Miguel, Sagbayan, Danao, Pilar, Alicia, Guindulman, Baclayon, Sevilla, Balilihan, Carmen, and Cortes.

Milk will be sourced out from the Bohol Dairy Cooperative (BODACO).

NE gov’t pledges investment in dairy facilities

By Charlene Joanino

Soon, local dairy farmers’ produce in Nueva Ecja (NE) province will easily find their way to customers with a recent investment support from the NE provincial government to improve the milk processing facility and expand market for carabao’s milk and dairy products.

Governor Aurelio “Oyie” Umali made the commitment during a conversation with DA-PCC Executive Director Dr. Arnel Del Barrio at Milka Krem in the Science City of Muñoz last May 22.

In his visit to the DA-PCC headquarters, Gov. Umali said he will personally make this happen as he recognizes that carabao-based livelihood is a crucial component

of farming in NE. His office plans to procure equipment, put up a processing facility and marketing outlet.

According to him, this initiative supports the province’s aim to officially become the “Dairy Buffalo Capital of the Philippines”.

He added that marketing of dairy products produced in NE should expand to the Metro Manila market considering that carabao’s milk is a highly valued commodity. While this is obtaining, he said schools in the province should carry carabao’s milk as a must-drink beverage among schoolchildren.

Meanwhile, Dr. Del Barrio said DA-

PCC will show the same enthusiasm as the Governor in pursuing its mandate and in rendering its services. “We are happy to support his administration and accept his challenge in continuing our efforts to help local dairy farmers in NE,” he said.

Also present during the visit were 2nd District Board Member Joseph Ortiz, who is an avid customer of Milka Krem dairy products, and former Board Member Rommel Padilla.

At present, there are about 50 farmer-cooperatives assisted by the DA-PCC in NE, which is also the National Impact Zone for carabao-based enterprise development.

DA-PCC at MMSU disperses dairy animals in Ilocandia under ALAB Karbawan

By Mari Joan Nefulda

The DA-PCC at Mariano Marcos State University (DA-PCC at MMSU) awarded 10 dairy buffaloes and one breeding bull to Nueva Segovia Consortium of Cooperatives (NSCC) in Caoayan, Ilocos Sur last June 25.

Said activity is a component of the Carabao-based Business Improvement Network project called “Accelerating Livelihood and Assets Buildup” or ALAB Karbawan. This provincewide development project is sponsored by the Office of Senator Cynthia Villar, which aims to support

carabao value chain stakeholders, particularly carabao keepers.

The animal entrustment followed after the blessing of the newly constructed animal housing facility that can accommodate at least 40 animals. The construction of the Php2 million-worth facility, which is the co-op’s counterpart for the project, was made possible through the leadership of its Chief Executive Officer Dr. Divina C. Quemi.

The NSCC is one of the successful

cooperatives in Ilocos Sur operating various enterprises related to agriculture, hotels, and restaurants. It also offers various programs and services on agro-enterprise and marketing, training, tourism, and financial and social aspects.

Aside from NSCC, the Northern Ilocos Sur Agricultural Cooperative (NISAC) in barangay Baclig, Cabugao, Ilocos Sur, which received 16 female dairy buffaloes in November last year, is also a conduit cooperative under ALAB Karbawan.



Select members of Nueva Segovia Consortium of Cooperatives (NSCC) receive dairy buffaloes and one breeding bull as part of the Carabao-based Business Improvement Network (CBIN) project called ALAB Karbawan.

From page 1

SMC, DA-PCC collaborate...

earnings prior to the pandemic.

Upon learning about the dairy farmers’ plight on excess milk, the SMC committed to buy from dairy farmers’ cooperatives directly hit by this health crisis.

“By buying their excess milk, we are hoping to help not only our farmers stay in business but also get these produce to food banks and communities, addressing the growing food insecurity facing the poorest families,” SMC president and chief operating officer Ramon Ang said in a press statement last May 30.

The SMC coordinated with DA-PCC in Nueva Ecija (NE) to put forward this initiative and identify dairy farmers’ cooperatives in NE where SMC could buy excess carabao’s milk from. The province of NE is

known for being one of the leading producers of carabao’s milk in the country with more than 1.8 million liters of milk production in 2019 based on the data from DA-PCC.

After a joint meeting between the DA-PCC and SMC held last June 3, they were able to identify four cooperatives with valid licenses to operate from Food and Drugs Administration, which included the Nueva Ecija Federation of Dairy Carabao Cooperatives, Catalanacan Multipurpose Cooperative Inc., Eastern Primary Multipurpose Cooperative, and Pulong Buli Multipurpose Cooperative.

The SMC through San Miguel Foundation Inc. (SMFI) provided Php500,000 for the purchase of 25,000 sachets (Php20 per 200-ml sachet) of toned carabao’s milk, a processed product from the farmers’

milk produce.

The DA-PCC, on the other hand, assisted the farmers’ cooperatives and its designated FDA-registered milk processing plant in the transport of the required number of sachets of toned carabao’s milk to its beneficiaries.

SMC, with the help of DA-PCC and dairy co-ops, began the distribution of carabao’s milk to 25,000 beneficiaries—primarily members of the vulnerable sector (children, the elderly, and frontliners)—of hard-hit communities in Pampanga, Bulacan, Navotas, Manila, Malabon, Cavite, Quezon City, San Juan, and Mandaluyong.

The initiative is part of SMC’s ongoing efforts to help the agriculture industry and provide basic nutritional support to

disadvantaged families and communities, as the country grapples with the impact of the ongoing pandemic on the economy and on people’s welfare.

Carabao’s milk is known to be healthy and nutritious, which can help boost the body’s immunity against COVID-19. It is lower in cholesterol and higher in calcium, protein, phosphorus, magnesium, potassium and energy according to the studies conducted by DA-PCC. Because of this, it’s described as “the most complete food”, and is even used in local government health programs to prevent malnutrition.

“This pandemic has really disrupted the daily source of income of dairy value chain players. That’s why the initiative of SMC is very timely. It came at the right time when dairy farmers needed it most. We are

glad that in these trying times we have a national company like SMC that initiated to buy excess milk from farmers to help them ensure a sustainable income amid this crisis,” DA-PCC Executive Director Dr. Arnel Del Barrio said.

The project, which is being undertaken by the SMFI, will also have long-term and sustainable benefits for the farmers.

According to Mina Abella, DA-PCC’s head of Carabao Enterprise Development Section, the SMC has brought into the Phase 2 of the project its packaging arm, San Miguel Yamamura Packaging Corp. (SMYPC), to utilize its technical expertise for research and development (R&D) assistance to DA-PCC for the sterilization of milk and link with possible toll manufacturers.

In a press statement of President Ang last June 16, the SMC’s technical assistance will help DA-PCC to develop ways to extend the shelf-life of carabao’s milk to three to six months, way beyond the current seven days. Extended shelf life will eliminate spoilage, thus, providing carabao farmers a wider market, and even higher output and more sustainable livelihood.

This collaborative R&D effort will benefit recipients of DA-PCC’s feeding program in partnership with the Department of Education and Department of Social Welfare and Development. With extended shelf life, the sterilized milk can reach children and schools in remote areas with no storage facilities.

Ruminants' clinic opens in Saranay

By Charlene Joanino



(from left) SJC City Agriculturist Violeta Vargas, DA-PCC Executive Director Dr. Arnel Del Barrio, City Veterinarian Dr. Rustan Patacsil, and DA-PCC Deputy Executive Director Dr. Caro Salces spearhead the ribbon cutting for the newly launched Ruminant Research Clinic.

Farmers can now have their livestock animals checked anytime with the opening recently of the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) Ruminant Research Clinic (RRC) at the Livestock Biotechnology Research and Animal Facility (LBRAF) compound in Saranay, San Jose City (SJC).

It was launched in May and had accommodated its first farmer-clients in SJC with provision of animal-health services and forage planting materials last July 6. The RRC is open on weekdays.

This is part of the DA-PCC's efforts on the DA's "Ahon Lahat, Pagkaing Sapat Kontra COVID-19" particularly through the agency's Unlad Lahi

Project (ULaP). The said project not only aims to help further production of milk and meat but also to help displaced farmers recover from loss of income.

"Our veterinarians will be on duty at the RRC, ready to provide technical support and animal health-related services to farmers in need," said Dr. Eufrocina Atabay, DA-PCC scientist and officer-in-charge of the Research and Development Division.

According to Dr. Randolph Tolentino, DA-PCC farm supervisor, the RRC will tend to carabaos, cows, sheep, and goats. Its services include consultation, diagnosis, treatment and preventive medical services, and surgery, among others.

This he shared during an orientation of 12 participants about the facility and the services it offers.

The RRC team visited the farms of some participants and administered free deworming, vitamin

supplementation, and pregnancy detection to the animals.

Also present in the event were DA-PCC's Scientist Dr. Peregrino Duran, National Impact Zone Coordinator Wilma Del Rosario, Biosafety and Environment Section Officer-in-Charge Dr. Marvin Villanueva, and other staff.

The RRC was launched as part of the DA-PCC's celebration of Farmers' and Fisherfolks' Month. DA-PCC Executive Director Dr. Arnel Del Barrio, Deputy Executive Director Dr. Caro Salces, SJC City Agriculturist Violeta Vargas, Dr. Atabay, and SJC Veterinarian Dr. Rustan Patacsil led the ribbon cutting ceremonies.

"We are thankful to DA-PCC for this project. This clinic will benefit San Jose farmers and also those from other places in Central Luzon," Dr. Patacsil said during the launching.



'Pag-asa': First FTET calf born in PH

By Charlene Joanino

The Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) marks another milestone with the birth of the first cattle calf from fixed-time embryo transfer (FTET) technology last April 24 at the Philippine Carabao Center National Headquarters and Gene Pool in the Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija.

The PCC's Reproduction and Physiology Section (RPS), which led the FTET activities, named the 33-kg male calf "Pag-asa", which means "hope".

"Pag-asa's birth signals the localization of ET technology and represents the successful use of reproductive technology for enhanced dairy production," said Dr. Eufrocina Atabay, one of the lead researchers of the PCC-RPS team.

The FTET is widely known as MOET or multiple ovulation embryo transfer, a multi-step procedure that involves donor superovulation, embryo collection, recipient animal synchronization, and embryo transfer.

Dr. Atabay said it took them several trials to refine the FTET protocol in cattle.

Pag-asa is borne out of locally produced cattle embryos following super ovulation of donor cows and transfer of embryos to surrogate cows in July last year.

Its birth marked the team's headway on FTET using sexed embryos that is seen to advance the preferential birth of female calves for the purpose of dairying.

Dr. Atabay said ET technology will enable production of embryos

locally which costs lower than imported ones.

She noted that their efforts on ET technology are in support of the project titled "Establishment of Dairy Cattle Foundation Breeder Herd Thru ET Using Imported Pedigreed Frozen Embryos".

The said initiative is a joint project of the DA-PCC, Department of Science and Technology - Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic, and Natural Resources Research and Development, and National Dairy Authority (NDA).

Dr. Eufrocina and Dr. Edwin Atabay, both PCC Scientists I, together with Dr. Carlito dela Cruz, project research assistant, led the conduct of the project in coordination with NDA project leader Dr. Jaime Lopez.

DA-PCC strengthens EAS thru collaborative project

By Charlene Joanino



PHOTO SOURCE: GRAMEEN FOUNDATION

In pursuing its vision of modernizing and improving further its extension and advisory service (EAS) delivery to its clientele, the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) through its Knowledge Management Division (KMD) has entered into a technical consultancy services contract with Grameen Foundation to work on the Phase 1 of a 30-month project titled “Consulting Services for Extension and Advisory Services Information System (EASIS)”.

The Phase 1 of the project, which started last March 9, involves identification of scope of work and learning modules development.

Activities include focused group discussions, desk research, human-centered design exercises, learning needs, and resource assessment, which will inform the content of the five learning videos and design of the ICT-based EAS solutions.

Phase 2 will involve solution development and implementation such as creation of second set of learning videos, development and roll-out of content delivery and quick response tools, and training of trainers.

Phase 3 will involve farmer profiling, complementary text messaging extension service, and monitoring and evaluation.

“We are excited to engage with Grameen Foundation because for a long time we wanted to digitize DA-PCC’s extension services using ICT tools, and this will be made possible through this project,” said Dr. Eric Palacpac, DA-PCC Knowledge Management Division chief, who spearheaded the project’s conceptualization.

Grameen Foundation provides technical assistance on smart-farming solutions geared toward the “evolution of digital technology for agriculture.” Christine Violago, Grameen Foundation’s country manager for the Philippines, serves as Project Leader for the EASIS project.

In general, the EASIS aims to enhance the dairy production management capacity of local dairy buffalo farmers in Nueva Ecija (the pilot site) through information and communications technology (ICT)-enabled EAS modality. The modality is envisioned to provide two main functionalities: (1) a content delivery tool or CDT (learning videos) and (2) a quick response tool or QRT (mobile application for timely interaction or two-way communication between the field extension technicians or knowledge brokers and the DA-PCC national headquarters).

Women carapreneurs undergo skills training on products dev’t

By Ma. Cecilia Irang



PHOTO BY: SARAH ANGELICA BAUTISTA

Sixteen women carapreneurs (carabao raisers and entrepreneurs) from different cooperatives and associations participated in a training on “Baking and Pastries Making” conducted by the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center at Cagayan State University (DA-PCC at CSU) last May 12.

The trainees were divided into two groups to ensure that social distancing measures are observed in the training hall in compliance with the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) guidelines amid coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Group A was led by Melchora Macarubbo, Board of Directors member of Integrated Farmer’s Cooperative (IFC) while Group B was headed by Precy Sibal, processor of IFC.

Klidel Fae Rellin, a licensed chemist whose hobby is baking, was tapped as the resource person for the said training.

Prior to hands-on training, Rellin provided lectures on the correct

mixing and measuring technique for a particular ingredient to guarantee better baking results and demonstrated the baking process.

Rellin taught the particular recipes of four different products such as chocolate chips cookies, hot milk cake, milk cake, and vanilla sponge cake, all products were later on processed by each group. A taste test, led by DA-PCC at CSU Center Director Franklin Rellin, was conducted afterwards. Among the four recipes, hot milk cake emerged as the “Product of Choice”.

“This training will motivate women to engage in activities that will harness their full potentials and hone their entrepreneurship ability,” Director Rellin said.

The training was part of the Gender and Development activities of the center.

(with reports from Aileen Bulusan)

The training was conducted to provide additional source of livelihood to participants through processing of products using carabao’s milk as one of the ingredients.

Bukidnon farmer receives dairy buffaloes from DA-PCC as start-up stock



By Jeson Candole

Rendon Carangcarang, an active member of MUSBUDA in Don Carlos, Bukidnon, proudly shows off two of the dairy buffaloes that he received from DA-PCC at CMU under its "paiwi" program.

The Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center at Central Mindanao University (DA-PCC at CMU) awarded Rendon Carangcarang additional three pregnant dairy buffaloes under a paiwi program last May 28 at the Municipal Hall of Don Carlos, Bukidnon.

Carangcarang is one of the active members of Muleta Side Buffalo Association (MUSBUDA) of San Francisco, Don Carlos, Bukidnon since 2017.

According to Dr. Elena Paraguas, carabao-based enterprise development coordinator of DA-PCC at CMU, the DA-PCC already entrusted Carangcarang three buffaloes last January 9, as a start for him to venture in this industry. Hence, a total of seven buffaloes are

presently in his farm.

Dr. Paraguas also mentioned in her opening message during the awarding that this entrustment was part of the preparation for the milk feeding program, which created a higher demand for locally produced milk.

Carangcarang shared his optimism that buffalo dairying is one of the solutions to poverty alleviation and found out that this is an essential venture to have an additional income.

Currently, Carangcarang already earned Php20,000-Php30,000 a month from the sales of 450 liters of milk. This has enabled him to finance the educational needs of his children, pay all of his debts to the nearby stores, and provide and satisfy their

"I am thankful for the unending assistance and support from DA-PCC. I also appreciate the fact that through it, I have found a sustainable source of income." -Rendon Carangcarang

daily needs.

"Repeatedly, we, at LGU will campaign in the community to persuade farmers to increase milk production and encourage more farmers to engage in dairying," said Engr. Merlyn Los Baños, municipal agriculturist of Don Carlos.

Los Baños conveyed how the dairy farmers can meaningfully contribute to address the problem in malnutrition and the unavailability of supply of the locally produced milk in their municipality.

Carlo Magno Abellanosa, chairman of MUSBUDA, said in an interview that carabao raising is indeed a beneficial venture and DA-PCC's program helped him and his co-farmers improve their living.

"The association was fortunate enough due to the continuous support from DA-PCC, which contributes significantly towards successful ventures in dairying. Likewise, their programs, have contributed to the health and nutrition of small-hold dairy farmers and their families as well as milk consumers," Abellanosa shared.

'Bukidnon Dairy' eyes spot along Northern Mindanao tourism hi-way



By Jeson Candole

Some of the products available at Bukidnon Dairy, a carabao-based products outlet of the DA-PCC at CMU located in Maramag, Bukidnon.

Soon, "Bukidnon Dairy", a carabao-based products outlet of the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center at Central Mindanao University (DA-PCC at CMU), which was previously named Buffalo's Milk Sales Outlet, will be an accredited tourism spot in Maramag, Bukidnon upon compliance to accreditation standards of the regional Department of Tourism (DOT).

This was following a "Tourism Awareness and Stakeholder's Forum on Department of Tourism's Proper Accreditation" at The Margarett Business Hotel, Maramag, Bukidnon last March 3.

Said forum aims to prepare the tourism and business establishments about the salient features and the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of RA 9593 or The Tourism Act of 2009 including matters pertaining to business licensing procedures.

"Bukidnon Dairy", recognized as one of the tourist destinations in Northern Mindanao, was renamed as such and launched on September 14, 2019 during the celebration

of the 5th National Carabao Conference hosted by DA-PCC at CMU and co-hosted by the Central Mindanao University.

DA-PCC at CMU Center Director Dr. Lowell Paraguas sets his hopes high that the outlet will pass accreditation standards to gain advantage on mainstreaming its products.

"Getting a DOT accreditation will further improve our products and service delivery to delight our customers coming from different places," Dr. Paraguas said.

In the forum, it was mentioned that establishments accredited by DOT as tourism site will be prioritized on DOT training programs, issued a certification and DOT identification card for bonafide employees and included in the bi-annual publication of all accredited tourism establishments and frontliners for Region X.

The Municipality of Maramag is dubbed as the "Tourism Highway of Northern Mindanao".

This, according to Oscar Navacilla,

public information officer, benefits nearby provinces both economically and socially.

Thus, Maramag Mayor Jose Joel Doromal said potential tourism sites should get ready and upgrade their service delivery in preparation for the influx of more visitors once they get DOT accreditation.

Beverly Tagpongot, tourism operations officer II of DOT-Region X, said getting certified by the DOT means compliance to the minimum standards to operate a tourism facility.

Tagpongot shared that the DOT's goal is to develop an environmentally and socially responsible tourism industry that delivers more widely distributed income and employment opportunities.

Meanwhile, Rico Libre, tourism operations officer II of DOT-Region X, said the Province of Bukidnon's Tourism Program is categorized into the following types: Recreational, Cultural, Religious/Faith, Medical/Health, Adventure, and Farm.

Co-op donates relief goods to indigent members, families in Bantog, Asingan

By Ma. Cecilia Irang

Amid the COVID-19 outbreak, people come together in solidarity to help one another. For its part, the Bantog Samahang Nayon Multi-Purpose Cooperative (BSNMPC) donated relief goods to indigent co-op members and families particularly at Sitio Cabaruan in barangay Bantog, Asingan, Pangasinan.

Each pack of relief goods, consisting of 2 kg of rice, 1/2 sugar, and 25 g of coffee, were distributed last March 26. This act of kindness benefited more than 50 families in the said area.

Pacita Aquino, BSNMPC quality assurance officer, said the co-op also started conducting its community-based milk feeding program to benefit senior citizens and schoolchildren in hopes of boosting their immune systems.

The BSNMPC is one of the assisted dairy cooperatives of the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center at Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University in Rosario, La Union.



Milk feeding aims to boost immunity of frontliners, vulnerable sectors in Bukidnon against COVID-19

By Jeson Candole

The Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center at Central Mindanao University (DA-PCC at CMU) distributed carabao's milk to senior citizens, pregnant women, children and frontliners (PNP, BFP, DOH and other LGU officials) to boost their body immunity against COVID-19.

The center started distributing 200 ml of pasteurized carabao's milk to each of the beneficiaries from March to April 2020.

DA-PCC at CMU Center Director Dr. Lowell Paraguas said helping each other overcome the negative impacts of this pandemic within our means will go a long way.

Irah Jae Oledan, Nurse II at LGU-Maramag, said the kindness of DA-PCC boost their morale to continue working on the front lines despite the risks of being exposed to the virus.

"We commend and appreciate DA-PCC's effort. This gesture only shows how much our efforts are valued and we feel even more inspired and fulfilled at work," Oledan added.

Valencia City Police Executive Master Sergeant Deogracias Villarin Gulayan, who is assigned as a team leader in a checkpoint placed between the Valencia and Maramag border, expressed his words of gratitude to the DA-PCC at CMU center director for the initiative.

"I hope that other agencies of the government will do the same because in this time of crisis, we need all the help to keep going," PEMS Gulayan said.

Meanwhile, DA-PCC at CMU Carabao-based Enterprise Development Coordinator Dr. Elena Paraguas said this activity also coincides with the agency's celebration of its 27th anniversary.

"Instead of having a big festivity, we decided to extend our services, with social distancing measures, to the communities that we serve. We hope that by doing this, we contribute to ending this pandemic the best way we know how. In this situation, I believe that simple acts of kindness somehow strengthen each one of us," Dr. Paraguas said.

DA-PCC at LCSF provides carabao's milk to frontliners, families amid COVID-19 threat

By Victor Geroche

The Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center at La Carlota Stock Farm (DA-PCC at LCSF) together with the San Julio Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Cooperative (SJARBC) provided flavored carabao's milk to border checkpoints in Tanjay City, Negros Oriental.

Throughout the course of the

enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) in Tanjay City, around 400 frontliners and 1,000 families belonging to the vulnerable sectors are expected to receive ready-to-drink milk.

DA-PCC at LCSF and SJARBC will continue to provide 330 ml of milk

per individual and 1 L per family until the ECQ is lifted.

DA-PCC at LCSF Center Director Ariel Abaquita said this is the center's symbolic salute to the men and women who are working selflessly on the front lines to fight off the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bohol LGU partners with DA-PCC to mitigate setbacks of lockdown to dairy farmers

By Leinefe Aton

"*Karong panahona, magtinabangay gyud ta* [In this (COVID-19) time, we really need to help each other]," Mayor Constantino Reyes of the municipality of Ubay said during an interview about the LGU's efforts to fight against COVID-19.

Reyes underscored how partnership has helped the municipality carry out its responsibility to its constituents during the community quarantine (CQ) period in response to COVID-19. Thru a 50:50 counterpart, the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center at Ubay Stock Farm (DA-PCC at USF) and the municipality aided a total of Php1.6 million-worth of toned carabao's milk included in the latter's relief packs to more than 20,000 households in Ubay. The milk was sourced from Bohol Dairy Cooperative (BODACO).

"*Ang kining gatas, immune-booster na no* (Milk is an immune-booster)," Mayor Reyes said.

"*Problema, og di nato paliton ang*

ilang gatas, maundang intawon pod ang ilang panginabuhian nga mao pu'y ilang gisaligan intawon sa ilang inadlaw-adlaw nga pagkaon, pang gasto, duna pa sila'y anak nga nangiskwela (The problem is if we don't buy their milk, they won't have a source of income where most of their daily needs depend on including financing for their children's education)," he added.

Also included in the LGU's relief pack are 6 kg of rice, six pieces of canned sardines, 1 dozen eggs, three packs of noodles, three sachets of milk, three sachets of powdered chocolate drink, and one whole piece of dressed chicken.

Although Bohol has no confirmed positive COVID-19 cases yet, the province was placed under CQ on March 16, 2020 by virtue of Executive Order (EO) No. 08. This restricts travels to and from Bohol, prohibits the operation of non-essential businesses and tourism sites, and directs people to stay at home for the time being.



"The initiative would help secure the income of dairy farmers while helping boost the immunity of people during the CQ."

Guillerma Abay-abay, Carabao-based Enterprise Development (CBED) coordinator of DA-PCC at USF

DA-PCC ALPAS COVID-19 projects mitigate impact of crisis on farmers

By Charlene Joanino

The Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) ushers sustainable carabao-based livelihoods to vulnerable communities through projects aligned with the DA's "Ahon Lahat, Pagkaing Sapat Kontra COVID-19" (ALPAS COVID-19) efforts.

This in line with its objective of mitigating the impact of the health crisis among its assisted farmers.

ALPAS COVID-19 aims to ensure food security, availability, and accessibility through various value innovations and development. DA-PCC implements this in four project components: Creating Opportunities Through Value Innovations and Development (COVID), Unlad Lahi Project (ULaP), Gatas, Isda, Gulay, at Karne (GIGK), and Cara-Aralan.

The projects were launched last May 28 in San Jose City, Nueva Ecija during the DA-PCC's celebration of Farmers' and Fisherfolks' month. Initiatives related to these components are now obtaining across the DA-PCC network.



COVID PROJECT

Under the COVID project component, technologies and innovations on food production, processing, and value-adding are rolled out while the far-reaching socio-economic effects of the pandemic to carapreneurs are documented.

Related to innovation is the creation of two new commercially available Milka Krem products—Milkybun and Milk Pops, both packed with nutrient-rich carabao's milk.

The Milkybun was particularly showcased in nearby localities as a relief good in DA-PCC's community feeding program. As of June, a total of 3,260 Milkybuns were distributed along with 200 ml toned carabao's milk to select children to help boost their immunity against COVID-19.

The beneficiaries were from the

Science City of Muñoz; Brgy. Concepcion, Sto. Domingo; Brgy. F.E. Marcos and the "Tahanan ng Damayang Kristiyano", a home for the aged, in San Jose City.

Another activity under the project was to introduce technologies to farmers.

In Luzon and Visayas, these included demonstrations on the production of urea-molasses treated rice straw, silage, and urea-molasses mineral block. Hands-on trainings on milk collection, milk processing, machine operation and quality testing, baking and pastries making, "cara-desal" making, artificial insemination and pregnancy diagnosis in large ruminants were also conducted. Simultaneous activities related to these topics were conducted in Nueva Ecija, Ilocos Norte, Cagayan, Isabela, Iloilo, Antique and Bohol.

In Mindanao, a total 4,505.65 liters of milk were purchased by the agency from its select assisted cooperatives in Bukidnon utilized for community feeding.

Meanwhile, in South Cotabato, members of the Highland Agricultural Credit Cooperative (HACC) underwent social preparation and technical training in buffalo production and management systems.

In Zamboanga del Norte, a bull handlers' training and orientation for select residents of LGU-Gutalac and artificial insemination and pregnancy diagnosis in Kalawit were conducted. A dairy processing facility and marketing outlets were established in Dapitan and Tukuran. Said efforts are part of the Accelerating Livelihood and Assets Build up or ALAB-Karbawan under the DA-PCC's Carabao-based Business Improvement Network (CBIN).



GIGK PROJECT

The GIGK project aims to create livelihood opportunities as source of income in areas that are economically strained by the pandemic. Specifically, the project espouses urban agriculture and village-based mixed farming systems.

A major activity under the GIGK project is the simultaneous launching of "Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita Buffalo Milk on Wheels (BMW)" mobile store at the DA-PCC regional centers last May.

The Kadiwa BMW brings carabao's milk and dairy products more accessible to local consumers whose access to nutritious foods were limited by the health situation. The products carried by the mobile store are made with carabao's milk produced by DA-PCC-assisted dairy farmers.

Rolling out of the Kadiwa BMW complemented the simultaneous milk supplementation activities conducted by the DA-PCC in partnership with local government units, cooperatives, and other stakeholders.

Between May and June, a total of 84,055 li of milk was distributed to some 96,690 frontliners, children, senior citizens and other members of the vulnerable sector.

Various efforts to promote vegetables production were done. Such are the "Gulayan sa Barangay", "Gulayan in Drums" and similar planting activities in the following sites: San Jose City, Nueva Ecija; Ilocos Norte; Piat, Cagayan; Ubay, Bohol; Baybay City, Leyte; and Maramag, Bukidnon.

Seeds of okra, eggplant, cucumber, malabar spinach (alugbati), tomato, squash, water spinach (kangkong), pechay, monggo, sweet potato vines, sweet corn seeds sorghum, bitter gourd (ampalaya), string beans, patola, taro, and chili peppers were distributed to farmers for free.

Complementing this effort was the provision of organic fertilizer and carabao manure to Sindangan Crossbred Buffalo Raisers Association (SinCroBuRA) in Zamboanga del Norte and Brgy.

Gabas, Baybay City, Leyte.

In Bohol, a training and seminar on vegetable gardening, in collaboration with the DA-Bohol Experimental Station and Soil Water and Research and Demonstration Station, were conducted. It was participated by members of the Lomangog Women's Association, barangay health workers, and Lomangog Farmers' Association. Assistance was also provided in the land preparation of about 10.6 ha for forage and vegetable production. There is also an ongoing land preparation for the establishment of two crop-forage model farms.

Another partnership was with the DA-XII on the distribution of vegetable seeds to DA-PCC employees and select partner farmers in region XII.

Logistics and transport support to carabao-based enterprise activities of the Rosario Livestock and Agriculture Farming Cooperative, select DA-PCC at VSU-assisted farmers, and Bohol Dairy Cooperative (BODACO) were done such as assistance on milk processing, pick-up and delivery of milk products to the market as well as for milk feeding initiatives.

To next page

The project ensures a food secure Philippines especially in this time of global health crisis.

DA-PCC ALPAS-COVID...

A total of 32 milk cans, 410.70 kg of molasses, and 25 bags of feeds were given to the Muleta-Side Buffalo Dairy Association (MUSBUDA), Dologon Kisanday Buffalo Dairy Association (DOKIBUDA), and Don Carlos Buffalo Dairy Farmers Association (DCBDA) last May-June.



Focused not only on increasing milk and meat production, the ULaP is also geared towards helping displaced farmers by creating jobs and providing them livelihood.

Aligned with ULaP, the Ruminant Research Clinic was launched in May in San Jose City, Nueva Ecija. The facility caters to the technical and veterinary needs of farmers and ruminant (carabao, cattle, goat, sheep) owners.

More than 100 carabaos for fattening, either for dairying or for breeding purposes, were entrusted to farmers. Its beneficiaries are dairy farmers from Pigcawayan, President Roxas, Makilala, Mlang, and Aleosan, North Cotabato; Sta. Maria, Davao del Sur; Dinalupihan, Bataan; Lomangog, Ubay, and Getafe, Bohol; Las Castellana, Bayawan City, Bais City, Tanjay City, and Hinobaan, Negros Occidental; and Panay, South Cotabato. The Tayabo Agro-Entrepreneur Natures Innovators Movement, Calinog Farmers Agriculture Cooperative, HACC, Carangcarang Dairy Farm and the province of Bataan were also entrusted with carabaos.

Equipment and supplies such as brush cutters, feed concentrates, four power sprayers, forage

choppers, AI supplies, urea-molasses mineral block, and molasses were given to select cooperatives and associations assisted by DA-PCC regional centers.

The beneficiaries are farmers from Region II, Caraga region, Cotabato, Misamis Occidental, Bohol (Lomangog, Ubay, and Getafe), and Kalilangan, Bukidnon. Local government units in Zamboanga Peninsula received AI supplies.

Logistic support for the provision of liquid nitrogen was done in Quezon, Camarines Sur, Magallanes, Cavite, and Laguna areas.

Service incentives were given to AI technicians assisted by the DA-PCC at VSU since June.

Water system support was provided to three dairy farmer clusters covered by DA-PCC at USF. The center also assisted Bohol Provincial Local Government Unit in the implementation of Agricultural Rural Transformation (ART) in dairy production in terms of animal registration, breeding, and animal health-related services.

A total of 52 recipients of carabaos under ALAB-Karbawan in Dapitan and Polanco in Zamboanga del Norte and Tukuran and Dumalinao in Zamboanga del Sur had their carabaos undergo pregnancy detection using ultrasound, artificial insemination, deworming, and uterine flushing. The animals were also supplemented with vitamins.



The project utilizes e-learning, digitized IEC's and training materials

in sustaining access to information, education, and communication of farmers and carabao industry stakeholders. It also promotes the DA-PCC's ALPAS COVID projects.

The DA-PCC Knowledge Management Division hosted a webinar series entitled "Wastong Pangangalaga ng Kalabaw". Its pilot topic on Calving Management was launched on May 29 and it was rebroadcasted. The webinar on best practices in breeding and artificial insemination was broadcasted in June. The participants are from the Philippines and abroad.

On the side, the DA-PCC at USF facilitated face-to-face orientations and mentoring activities based on the webinars for AI technicians. The center also used modules for trainings in Cebuano language. They are also in the process of developing promotional video materials about dairying for millennials.

DA-PCC at VSU officer-in-charge Arn Granda engaged in a radio program at DYSI Super Radio Iloilo 1323 KHz as guest to promote the CVIN program of the agency in the province of Antique.

Every Friday, "The PCC Hour" updates on DA-ALPAS project and Carabao Development Program of the agency was aired over DXMU FM 88.9 and ushered by the DA-PCC at CMU. Meanwhile DA-PCC at USM airs news and updates of DA-PCC's project in South Cotabato over Radyo Bandera 98.1 FM.

The DA-PCC continues to implement the DA-PCC ALPAS COVID-19 projects all over the Philippines. More initiatives are set to be conducted in the coming months that are sure to benefit not just farmers and stakeholders in the carabao industry but also the general public.

Lockdown due to COVID-19...

outbreak of COVID-19, the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC) found a way to overturn the crisis.

The unsold milk produce from select farmers' cooperatives was collected and developed by the Carabao Enterprise Development Section (CEDS) into nutrient-rich products labeled as Milkybun and Milk Pops under the brand name of Milka Krem.

"With the directive of our Executive Director Dr. Arnel Del Barrio, our objective was to develop milk-based products with long shelf life. We specifically made products that could be equated to a glass of carabao's milk for our community feeding program," Mina Abella, head of DA-PCC CEDS, said.

She added these products have so far gained loyal patrons who want to stay healthy during the emergency health crisis.

Both products were launched in San Jose City, Nueva Ecija during the celebration of the Farmers' and Fisherfolks' Month last May 28.

About 500 pieces of Milkybun and 200 ml toned carabao's milk in sachets were distributed to children in Brgy. FE Marcos, San Jose City, to help improve their nutrition. Other beneficiaries of the community feeding were 60 abandoned children and elderly housed at the "Tahanan ng Damayang Kristiyano" also in San Jose City.

Following this initiative, 2,400 children in the adjacent town of Science City of Muñoz each received Milkybun and 200 ml toned carabao's milk.

"While helping our farmers market their produce even amidst the pandemic, we are also glad to be an instrument of boosting the immunity of our consumers against the virus," Abella added.

The community feeding programs were conducted in partnership with the recipient towns' local government units.

The making of milky treats

By the end of March, the DA-PCC CEDS came up with the Milk Pops, which are sweet, soft, and chewy flavored pastillas balls. A pack of this candy-like treat contains 10 pieces of 4-gram balls. It has six flavors: melon, honeydew, strawberry, chocolate, mango, and blueberry.

In the same period, the CEDS released the Milkybun, an improved version of nutri-bun. At the onset of developing the bun, the initial concept was simply to come up with a "pandesal" with carabao's milk.

Abella said the Milkybun is a unique product on its own because it is enriched with carabao's milk. The DA-PCC tapped a local bakery to mass produce the bun for the feeding program and for commercialization.

According to DA-PCC Food Technologist Teresita Baltazar, Milkybun is rich with 250 calories apiece while a 40-gram pack of Milk Pops has 170 calories.

Calorie content is a source of energy needed to sustain bodily functions.

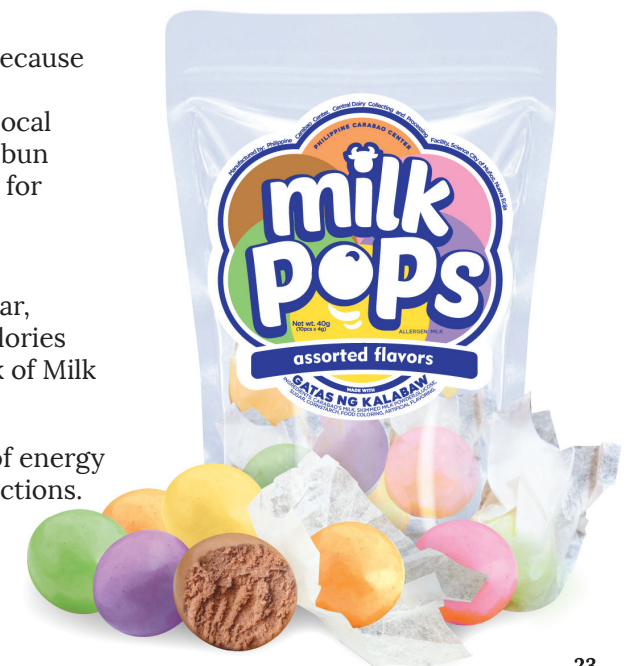
Aside from this nutrition, carabao's milk is also rich in magnesium, potassium, calcium, and phosphorus.

The Milkybun is now available at the Milka Krem store in the Science City of Muñoz at Php10 per piece or Php60 per pack of six. The Milkybun can also be purchased from the DA-PCC's Kadiwa Buffalo Milk on Wheels, rolling out in Nueva Ecija.

Future initiatives

"With the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, the Milkybun is an alternative to hot meals of the Department of Social Welfare and Development and Department of Education for community feeding," Abella said.

She said DA-PCC plans to cascade the technology to its assisted farmers' cooperatives. This way, she said, farmers will be able to generate more income especially when the products become staple in government-led community feedings.





ALPAS SA COVID-19

AHON LAHAT, PAGKAING SAPAT KONTRA COVID-19



ULaP

UNLAD LAHI PROJECT

Components

Provision of animals, incentives and/or technical and veterinary services to displaced farmers and carabao owners • Incentives to VBAITs • Crop-forage integrated system for both food and feed production with technical, mechanization and market support

Objectives

Increase milk and meat production, job creation and providing livelihood for displaced farmers

Beneficiaries

Displaced farmers, village-based AI technicians (VBAITs), carabao owners



COVID

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH
VALUE INNOVATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

Components

Rolling out of technologies and innovations on food production, processing, and value-adding • Impact assessment on the effects of COVID-19 to carapreneurs

Objectives

- Enhance food productivity, availability, accessibility and sustainability through applicable technologies and value innovations
- Create livelihood opportunities thru value adding interventions to provide income for farmers affected by COVID-19 crisis

Beneficiaries

Carabao owners, farmers' cooperatives, village-based technicians, and other stakeholders



GIGK

GATAS, ISDA, GULAY AT KARNE

Components

Clustered Vegetable and Livestock-Forage Production • Establishment of aquaponics in partnership with BFAR • Market assistance • Logistical support/farm mechanization assistance

Objectives

- Promote integrated urban agriculture or mixed farming system in the villages
- Create livelihood opportunities as source of income in areas affected by COVID-19
- Enhance food and feed production, availability and sustainability of supply
- Ensure the value chain approach

Beneficiaries

Farmer's cooperatives, associations or groups



CARA-ARALAN

Components

e-learning or webinars focused on farm solutions • Learning modules in video format • Digitized IEC and training materials • Multimedia promotions related to COVID, ULaP, GIGK, etc. • Communication support services

Objectives

- Sustain access to information, education, and communication (IEC) by farmers, carapreneurs, and other carabao industry value chain actors
- Contribute to capacity development of farmers, carapreneurs, and other carabao industry value chain actors

Beneficiaries

Carapreneurs in impact zones, cooperatives, associations or groups, other value chain players