

2010 Q1 Agri Performance

Livestock, poultry post gains; crops, fisheries shrink

The country's livestock and poultry subsectors posted one-half and two percent (%), respectively, during the first quarter of 2010, despite the prolonged dry spell due to El Niño phenomenon.

Overall, the Philippine agriculture contracted by 2.84% during the three-month period, according to the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (DA-BAS).

The crops and fisheries subsectors suffered most, contracting by 6.15% and 0.63%, respectively.

The production of palay and corn dipped by 11.4% to 3.49 million metric tons (MT) and 16.8% to 1.6 million MT, respectively.

At current prices, the total value of production amounted to P315.9 billion, 2.7% higher than last year's record, the BAS said.

Other crops, however, performed well like coconut (up by 1.8%), banana (1.3%), mango (3.1%), tobacco (9.7%), cabbage (3.6%), cassava (7%), tomato (7%), and onions (11.2%).

Agriculture Secretary Bernie G. Fondevilla said "the Department is now reviewing protocols on water management in dams and irrigation systems nationwide, along with an array of other measures, to mitigate the adverse effects of future dry spells on Philippine agriculture and fisheries."

Hence, the DA intends to put up more small water impounding projects and communal irri-

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Agriculture Secretary Bernie G. Fondevilla (3rd from right) cuts the ceremonial ribbon to open the 'Farmers' and Fisherfolk's Month' celebration at the DA Central Office in Quezon City, May 6, 2010, honoring the country's farmers, fishers and other stakeholders for their continuing efforts in modernizing Philippine agriculture, and for their contribution to nation-building. Joining him are (from left) Dir. Felix Valenzuela of DA-Livestock Dev't. Council, Dir. Tommy Ala of DA-RFU12, Marylou Fernando of Tropical Winery, DA Ass't. Sec. Eduardo Nolasco, Lourdes Labrador of Castillejos Agri-Farms, and Jill Floro of DA-Phil. Agribusiness Dev't. and Comm'l. Corp. (Pls read related stories on pages 6-7.)

Hybrid rice farmers defy El Niño, double their yield, incomes

While most farmers in other El Niño-hit provinces suffered with reduced harvests, those in Isabela and Cagayan were celebrating, particularly those who planted hybrid rice.

The reason: They were able to double their yield and hence their incomes, despite the dry spell due to El Niño.

Such feat was proudly reported to Agriculture Secretary Bernie G. Fondevilla by Dr. Frisco Malabanan, national coordinator of the DA's Ginintuang Masaganang Ani (GMA) Rice Program.

He said 68 Isabela and Cagayan farmers, who participated in the DA's hybrid rice techno-demo project, harvested an average of 164 cavans of palay, at 54 kilograms each per cavan, or about 8.86 metric tons (MT) per hectare (ha).

Some of them even harvested as much as 253 cavans, or 13.68 MT/ha.

Malabanan said the farmers used various hybrid rice varieties like *SL-8H*, *Jolly Rice*, *Bigante*, *Mestizo 1*, *PHB 71*, and *Rizalina 333*.

He added that their average yield was double than the average harvest of 4.4 MT/ha using inbred or certified seed varieties.

"This translates into an increase in profit of at least P30,000 per hectare from only P15,000," he added.

Farmers were able to sell their dried palay at an average of P14.00 per kilo, giving them a gross income of roughly P112,000, for those who harvested at least 8 MT/ha; and as much as P182,000, for those who got 13 MT/ha.

In all, during the 2009-2010 dry season, Malabanan said a total of 126,645 hectares were planted to hybrid rice nationwide. Attaining an average yield of six tons per hectare, such

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World 2010 rice prod'n may reach 710 M tons

World production of palay (paddy rice) may reach a record high of 710 million (M) tons this year, four percent (%) more than the 680 M tons in 2009, according to the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

While "highly tentative at this time of the year," the FAO said 90 percent or 643 M tons of the total forecast volume, 29 M tons more than in 2009, will come from Asia.

The recovery in paddy rice production will be import-driven, with Asian countries largely behind the increase in world rice imports in 2010.

Bangladesh, Iraq, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Philippines are expected to import more, FAO said, to offset drought and flood-induced production shortfalls.

Imports by European and Latin American countries are also set to increase. Rice im-

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DA to distribute imported goats to comm'l raisers

The Department of Agriculture is set to distribute 766 head of *Saanen* and *Anglo-Nubian* goats imported from Australia to commercial raisers to upgrade their local herd for dairy purposes.

Saanen goats are raised mainly for milk, while Anglo-Nubians are both for milk and meat. They can produce about two liters of milk daily compared with native breeds that have lower yields.

The goats were imported by the DA's National Agribusiness Corp. (NABCOR), as part of DA's

(Pls turn to p11)

Magsasaka, mangingisda:

Bayaning nagsisikap upang ang bayan ay may sapat na pagkain

Malugod na pagbati sa buong sambayanan sa pagdiriwang ng 'Buwan ng mga Magsasaka at Mangingisda' nitong buong buwan ng Mayo.

Ang ating bansa ngayong Mayo 2010 ay nagkaisa sa pagpapahayag ng kanilang damdamin kung sino ang dapat mamuno sa ating bayan.

Sa larangan ng agrikultura at pangisdaan, ang buwan ng Mayo ay mahalaga rin para sa ating mga magsasaka at mangingisda na kasama natin sa pagkakaisa sa patuloy na pagharap sa hamon dala ng pagbabago ng panahon.

Ang pagtutulungan at pagkakaisa ay kailangan upang makamit ang kasapatan sa pagkain, sa kabila ng pananalanta ng El Niño sa ating mga palayan, paghahayupan at pangisdaan.

Sa kabila ng pamiminsala sa kanilang palayan at pangisdaan dala ng El Niño, ang ating mga magsasaka at mangingisda ay nagpakatatag na harapin ang hamong ito.

Kanilang ipinakita at ipinadama ang tiwala sa aming pamamaraan upang sila ay patuloy na magsisikap at umasa na ito ay malalampasan.

Salamat sa mga teknolohiyang nakikibagay sa El Niño tulad ng pagtatanim ng mga drought-resistant crops, cloudseeding, pagpapagawa ng mga shallow tube wells na kanilang itinataguyod.

Sa larangan ng pangisdaan, ang 69 mariculture parks sa ating barangay ay makakatulong sa ating mga mangingisda. Ang bentahe ng




pangisdaan gamit ang mga fish cages ay kapaki-pakinabang.

Ang programang FIELDS na patuloy ang pagtulong sa ating mga magsasaka sa pamamagitan ng anim na ayuda—fertilizer, irrigation, infrastructure, education and extension, loans and credit, dryers at iba pang post harvest facilities at mga binhi—ay kanilang masasandigan upang lalong harapin ang anumang darating na kalagayan ng panahon.

Ngayong 2010, sa ilalim ng paksang "Magsasaka at Mangingisda, Samasamang Harapin ang Hamon ng Climate Change Gamit ang Makabagong Teknolohiya," ating ipinagdiriwang ang buwan ng Mayo bilang "Buwan ng Magsasaka at Mangingisda."

Ito ay pag-alaala sa ating mga bayaning buhay, ang ating mga magsasaka at mangingisda, na nagsisikap upang ang bayan ay may sapat na pagkain ngayon at sa darating na henerasyon.

Mabuhay ang mga mangingisda at magsasaka!


GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
Pangulo
Republika ng Pilipinas

'Tuloy ang aming tulong upang higit na lumaki ang kanilang ani at kita'

Buong-pusong pagbati sa mga mangingisda at magsasaka nitong "Buwan ng mga Magsasaka at Mangingisda."

Naging puno sa pagsubok ang mga nakaraang taon para sa sektor ng agrikultura – mula sa pandaigdigang krisis sa pagkain noong 2008, hanggang sa pagbabago ng klima ng mundo na nadama natin sa paghagupit ng malalakas na bagyo noong huling bahagi ng 2009.

Ngayong 2010, ang kinakaharap naman natin ay matinding tagtuyot dulot ng El Niño.

Nguni't sa bawat pagkakataon na dumarating ang pagsubok, nangingibabaw ang kabutihan at biyaya ng Maykapal, at ang tunay na galing at sipag ng ating mga magsasaka at mangingisda.

Kaya naman kami sa Kagawaran ng Pagsasaka ay patuloy na itinaguyod ang pagdiriwang na ito taun-taon upang kilalanin ang kanilang mahalagang ambag sa ating pakikibaka sa mga hamong ito, kasabay na rin ng ating mga pagsisikap upang maibsan ang kahirapan at kakulangan sa pagkain.


Ito rin ang pagkakataon ng pamahalaan, sampu ng



mga pinuno at kawani ng Kagawaran ng Pagsasaka, na pagtibayin ang paghahandog ng tulong sa ating mga magsasaka at mangingisda upang higit na maparami ang kanilang produksyon at mapataas ang kita.

Kabilang na rito ang pagtuturo ng mga makabagong pamamaraan at teknolohiya sa ilalim ng programang FIELDS ng Pangulong Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Ginintuang Masaganang Ani at iba pang mga kaugnay na proyekto sa kanayunan ng Kagawaran.

Muli, mabunying pagsaludo sa ating minamahal na mga magsasaka at mangingisda. Mabuhay kayong lahat!


Atty. Bernie G. Fondevilla
Kalihim
Kagawaran ng Pagsasaka

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Koreans will soon enjoy RP mangoes

Filipinos will soon be able to taste Korean oranges, and Koreans will savor Philippine mangoes.

This will be realized within the year, as the Philippine government through the Department of Agriculture has allowed the import of Korean oranges, according to Director Larry Lacson, of the DA's Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI).

This is part of a fruit exchange between the Philippines and South Korea, as the latter has also allowed the entry of Philippine fruits, including carabao mango.

Lacson said the DA-BPI administrative order allowing Korean oranges into the country has already been signed.

"We're pursuing bilateral negotiations to finalize all the other details such as the allowable volume of import," he noted.

Philippine plant quarantine of

officials, he added, will soon visit Korea's Jeju Island, from where the special orange varieties are grown, to find out if the Korean fruits are handled clean, and safe from fruit pests.

Lacson said Jeju oranges taste better than other imported oranges, even better than the sweet Chinese Ponkan.

The Philippines exports bananas and tobacco to Korea. In 2008, banana and tobacco exports reached \$153.8 million and \$58.6 million, respectively.

Philippine bananas account for almost 100 percent of the Korean import market.

Philippine tobacco likewise corners a majority share, at 76%.

On the other hand, the top exports of Korea to the Philippines are electronic integrated circuits, which in 2008 totaled \$1.2 billion. *(Manila Standard Today)*



Agriculture Secretary Bernie G. Fondevilla (middle) signs the Memorandum of Agreement between the Philippines and Spain, where the latter is providing a grant worth P38.5 million to help farmers, fishers and their families in CALABARZON (Region 4-A) recover from the devastation wrought by typhoons 'Ondoy' and 'Pepeng' last year. Joining him are His Excellency Luis Arias Romero (right), Spanish Ambassador to Philippines, and Mr. Kazuyuki Tsurumi, Representative of the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization in the Philippines.

...and the Taiwanese, too

Taiwan now looms as the next export market for Philippine fresh mangoes, according to Director Lacson.

He said the Taiwanese government recently inquired on the measures or treatment on how the country controls mango pests and diseases.

Lacson said this means Taiwan is interested in importing fresh mangoes from the Philippines.

He added that the DA has been asking Taiwan to allow the import of Philippine fresh mangoes for more than five years now.

"We wrote them two months ago, asking about the market access of fresh mangoes to Taiwan," Lacson said.

And for the first time in more than five years, they replied last May 11, 2010, he added.

He said if the country's measures against local mango pests and diseases are sufficient and comply with their requirements, we will be allowed to export fresh mangoes immediately.

For his part, Roberto Amores, president of Philippine Mango Exporters Foundation, Inc., welcomed the development, saying: "We welcome every move for quarantine protocols for Philippine exports."



He said the most important thing for fresh mango exporters right now is finding new markets to improve our product's competitiveness in the international market.

Amores said main overseas markets for Philippine fresh mangoes are Japan and China, besides 50 other economies.

About 30,200 metric tons (MT) of fresh, processed and dried mangoes worth \$34.6 million were exported by the country in January to October last year, according to the DA's Bureau of Agricultural Statistics.

Last year, mango production decreased by 12.8% to 771,150 MT, from 884,010 MT in 2008, due to typhoons that hit the country in 2008 and 2009.

The country's major mango regional producers are Ilocos, Central Luzon and Western Visayas. *(BusinessWorld)*

Spain grants P39.5 M for typhoon victims

The Government of the Kingdom of Spain is providing the Philippines through the Department of Agriculture a grant worth \$857,740 (roughly P39.5 million, at \$1=P46), in response to the 'Flash Appeal' organized by the United Nations last year to assist farmers, fishers and their families adversely affected by massive floods spawned by super typhoons 'Ondoy' and 'Pepeng.'

On behalf of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and the Filipino people, Agriculture Secretary Bernie G. Fondevilla thanked the Spanish Government through its Ambassador to the Philippines Luis Arias Romero for their generosity and deep concern to helping Filipino farmer-victims, specifically in the

provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon, collectively known as CALABARZON or Region 4-A.

Secretary Fondevilla said the project grant will benefit 10,406 groups (6,948 vegetable farmers, 1,640 rural women and their families, and 1,818 fisherfolk and their families).

The project, which will be administered by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), will be used to provide affected farm families with technical assistance and farm and fishery inputs such as assorted vegetable seeds and garden tools; initial stock of chicken, goats and sows; and fishing gears, fingerlings, and seaweed seedlings.

Agri sector, farmers avail P131B LandBank loans

The Land Bank of the Phils. (LBP) has lent a total of P130.9 billion in the first quarter of 2010 to priority sectors that include small farmers and fishers, microenterprises and SMEs, agribusiness, agri-infrastructure, livelihood, environment-related projects, socialized housing, and schools and hospitals.

LBP President and CEO Gilda Pico said the P130.9B represents two-thirds (67.5%) of the banks' total loan portfolio of P193.9B during the first three months of 2010.

Of the P130.9B, P16.9B

went to small farmers and fisherfolk, and P20.1B to agribusiness enterprises.

The other loans went to:

- Agri-infrastructure projects of LGUs (P27.9B);
- Agri-related projects of government-owned and controlled corporations (P25.7B);
- Microenterprises and SMEs (P19.1B)
- Socialized housing, schools, and hospitals (P12.7B)
- Environmental-related projects (P4.4B)
- Livelihood loans (P4.1B). *(LandBank News)*

GGPC, Poyry Inc. and DP-Cleantech jumpstart \$140M biomass project

The contract signing between Global Green Power PLC Corporation (GGPC), Poyry Energy Inc., and DP-Cleantech last March 24, 2010 signifies a big leap in the biomass energy sector in the Philippines. GGPC aims to develop renewable energy in the Philippines by maximizing the economic potential of our country's agricultural wastes. These agricultural wastes shall be used for power generation that will provide economic and social impact to nearby communities, particularly to the farmer beneficiaries.

Philippine Agricultural Development and Commercial Corpo-

ration (PADCC), the agency tasked to oversee the implementation of the Department of Agriculture's (DA) Biofuels Feedstock Program, is assisting GGPC to push the project move forward. PADCC is also working with Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) in identifying and consolidating marginal and unproductive lands suitable for growing biomass energy crops. This is to ensure GGPC that the source of raw materials for their biomass power plant will not compete with potential and existing food production area.

Mr. Marriz B. Agbon, President of PADCC, recalled during his speech the cooperation agreement inked in October 2008 between GGPC and PADCC. The agreement covers the consolidation of biomass residues and idle lands for the establishment of sustainable biomass energy plantation in Panay Island, Pangasinan, and Nueva Ecija.

"To date, we have identified and validated about 6,000 hectares of land in Iloilo province for the Global Power Panay Biomass Power Plant and about 10,000 hectares in Nueva Ecija.", Mr. Agbon reported. He affirmed that this initiative has the potential to create about 16,000 jobs that will be directly

involved in the plantation development only. This number of jobs excludes direct and indirect jobs that can be created in the power production side.

Mr. Agbon expressed the strong support of DA and PADCC to the biomass projects of GGPC. Through the collaborative efforts of the private, government and energy sector, problems on agricultural wastes disposal, climate change, and energy supply can be properly addressed.

New sub1 rice lines developed in less time

PhilRice and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) developed PSB Rc82-Sub1 lines through marker-assisted breeding approach making the transfer of submergence-tolerant gene (*sub1*) significantly less time-consuming.

Rice breeding typically takes 8 to 11 years to complete. However with DNA marker-assisted breeding, Loida M. Perez, lead author of the paper titled **PSB Rc82-Sub1: A New Submergence Tolerant Rice Cultivar Developed Through Marker-Assisted Breeding**, said that DNA marker-assisted breeding is estimated to save at least 3 to 6 years in the breeding process.

Perez explained that DNA markers are 'landmarks' that point plant breeders to a specific region of interest in the chromosome, thereby lessening the process."

PhilRice and IRRI identified four PSB Rc82-Sub1 materials. Initial morpho-agronomic traits such as grain quality revealed that the improved PSB Rc82-Sub1 materials were comparable to the original PSB Rc82 (non-*sub1*). All four lines had fixed *sub1* and were established in 2010 dry season at PhilRice Central Experiment Station to determine yield and yield-related parameters and to produce seed for evaluation and promotion in submergence or flash flood-prone areas in the country.

From an Indian rice variety FR13A, it was successfully transferred to IR64 via marker-assisted breeding at IRRI producing IR64-Sub1, which was recently registered as commercial variety by the National Seed Industry Council of the Philippines as NSIC Rc194 with a local name "Submarino 1" for the flood-prone ecosystems in the country. (DA-PhilRice)

Thai government turns over rice donation for RP typhoon victims

The Royal Thai Embassy and Team Thailand turned over some 520 metric tons (MT) or 10,400 bags of rice to the Philippine Government for distribution to the victims of typhoon Ondoy after the signing of the deed of rice donation between the two countries represented by Ambassador Kulkumut Singhara Na Ayudhaya and National Food Authority Administrator Jessup

P. Navarro.

The simple turnover ceremonies was held last May 4, 2010 in NFA warehouse, Visayas Avenue, Quezon City .

The rice donation was coursed under the Relief Operations of the East Asia Emergency Rice Reserve (EAERR) through the NFA.

The rice will then be turned over to the Department of Social Wel-

fare and Development for distribution to the victims of typhoon "Ondoy" in Metro Manila and selected provinces in Central and Southern Luzon.

This donation under the ASEAN framework is partially extended for the first time under the EAERR mechanism to assist the members of ASEAN countries at the time of calamity.

In addition to this donation, the Thai Government provided the bilateral contribution of 100,000 kilograms of Thai rice and 50,000 sets of medical kits donated by the Royal Thai Government to the Philippines on November 13, 2009.

The Royal Thai Government expressed its support to Philippine Government in its continuing rehabilitation efforts, as well as in its preparation and readiness in times of national disaster.

The EAERR is a regional cooperation scheme among ASEAN countries, China , Japan and the Republic of Korea (ASEAN+3 countries) aimed at strengthening food security and reducing poverty in East Asia .

Each member country pledges a certain volume of rice stocks for the EAERR which can be released to meet emergency rice requirements among the member countries.

The rice donation was pledged by Thailand's Prime Minister Abhisit Vijajiva to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo during the ASEAN+3 Summit held in Thailand last October 24, 2009. (NFA Public Affairs Department)



Thai Ambassador Kulkumut Singhara Na Ayudhaya (2nd from right) and National Food Authority (NFA) Administrator Jessup P. Navarro (2nd from left) sign the deed of donation for 520 metric tons or 10,400 bags of rice by the Royal Thai Government for distribution to typhoon "Ondoy" victims during the ceremonial signing and turn-over held at NFA warehouse along Visayas Avenue in Quezon City. The rice donation was coursed to the East Asia Emergency Rice Reserve (EAERR) through NFA. The rice will then be turned over to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) for distribution to typhoon "Ondoy" victims in Metro Manila and selected provinces in Central and Southern Luzon. Witnesses are Nathpong Viriyakupt (right), Group Captain - Air and Defense Attache for the Royal Thai Government and DSWD Asst. Secretary Ruel G. Lucentales (left) for the Philippine Government. (NFA Public Affairs Department)

WB expresses satisfaction with Mindanao anti-poverty program

Davao City — The World Bank (WB) has rated the anti-poverty program in Mindanao satisfactory.

This came after the WB team reported recently here the result of its month-long assessment of the Department of Agriculture's Mindanao Rural Development Program (DA-MRDP).

DA-MRDP is long term poverty alleviation program for Mindanao jointly funded by the World Bank, the national and local governments, and the project proponents. It covers 225 of the 420 towns across Mindanao.

WB said the program has performed well both in terms of achieving its development objectives and its implementation progress.

The evaluation was based on two development objectives: the increase of incomes of the benefited communities and the institutionalization of a decentralized agriculture and fisheries services delivery mechanism.

WB lead rural development specialist Carolina F. Geron said although the loan disbursement was slow, significant improvements have been achieved.

"The trajectory of loan disbursement targets is not yet in the path of the catch-up targets they (program management) set earlier but they have implemented various projects that lead to meet the program's objectives," Geron said.

"The program has also reported considerable improvements in the physical and financial performance of the project compared to the previous assessment in August 2009," she added.

Program director Lealyn A. Ramos said the good performance of the program can be alluded to the active participation and involvement of the local government units (LGUs).

To date, 164 towns has availed of and benefited from the infrastructure, livelihoods and environment projects of the program.

Now on its third year of implementation, MRDP has accomplished over P131 million worth of agricultural infrastructure of which close to 66 kilometers of farm-to-market roads have been established, 39 linear meters of bridge and four units of potable

water systems erected serving over a thousand households.

With the counterpart of beneficiaries, about P87.01M-worth of various agri-based livelihoods were created benefiting mostly women and Indigenous Peoples and P42M had been invested for environmental conservation and protection.

For rural infrastructure (RI), Northern Mindanao (region 10) leads the implementation which has completed projects amounting to P53.15M, on-going sub-projects P58.28M. Caraga region (region 13) placed second having implemented a total of P31.08M-worth of projects. Followed by regions 12, 11, 9 and ARMM, respectively.

RI implements projects such as farm to market roads, irrigation systems, single lane bridges, and postharvest facilities.

For the Community Fund for Agricultural Development (CFAD), the livelihood component, ARMM leads in the implementation which utilized 92% of its released funds to date, followed by regions 13 and 10 both disbursed 75% of its released funds. Region 12 comes in fourth and regions 11 and 9 were ranked fifth and sixth respectively.

CFAD employs community driven development approach where the peoples organization themselves identify and implement their project with the help of the LGUs. (Sherwin B. Manual)

Small farm dams eyed in Mindanao

As part of its goal in helping farmers achieve sustainable agriculture, the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Unit 10 (DA-RFU 10) in coordination with local governments, has developed the Small Farm Reservoir (SFR) project that will help farmers become good producers of commercially grown vegetables like eggplants, string beans, okra, pechay and bitter melon (ampalaya), which are all considered High Value Commercial Crops (HVCC).

The SFR project is funded under the Ginintuang Masaganang Ani-HVCC Program with P146,000 allocated to finance 23 sites where the small reservoirs will be established.



One of the greenhouse projects constructed in 10 dioceses in the country was inaugurated and turned-over by the DA to the Diocese of Sorsogon. The project with funding support from the NABCOR will benefit landless farmers. Photo shows Sorsogon Bishop Arturo M. Bastes officiating the blessing. (Inset) Bishop Bastes welcoming Sec. Yap while DA Bicol Reg'l Executive Director Marilyn V. Sta Catalina and RTD for Research Edgar Madrid look on. (jennissnida/raymond adversario jr)

DA turns over P10M-greenhouse veggie proj to the Diocese of Sorsogon

Former Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap and Sorsogon Bishop Arturo M. Bastes led other government and non-government organization officials in the Blessing and Turn-over Ceremonies of the P10-million Greenhouse Vegetable Gardening Project within the House of Clergy compound in the Diocese of Sorsogon, in Bibincahan, Sorsogon City.

The 17 sets of greenhouses project, envisioned to help augment income potential of farmers, employ greenhouse and

organic farming technologies, is a partnership of the Department of Agriculture through its High Value Commercial Crops (DA-HVCC) Program and the National AgriBusiness Corporation (NABCOR) and Diocese's social apostolate arm, the Sorsogon Social Action Foundation, Inc. (SSAFI).

The project, approved during the term of Secretary Yap, directs SSAFI to oversee the management of the 17 greenhouses installed at the site.

According to Bishop Bastes the production and income from the project shall be shared with the selected 20 landless farmer-beneficiaries.

"This project is a manifestation of an effective partnership and cooperation between the state and the church", Bastes pointed out.

On his part, Yap, said that during his term in the DA he has approved at least ten (10) similar projects in 10 dioceses in the entire country.

"Through this project, landless farmer-beneficiaries will be trained with appropriate production management practices, integrated pest management, effective use of micro-organisms, vermiculture and greenhouse maintenance", he added. (RFU 5)

Farmers' and Fisherfolk's Month 2010

The Department of Agriculture once again leads the nation in celebrating Farmers' and Fisherfolk's Month to honor their invaluable contribution to Philippine agriculture and nation-building.

Representing almost half of the national labor force, they are our countryside heroes who have consistently contributed to sustaining the growth of the country's agriculture and fishery sectors, and the Philippine economy, in general.

This year's theme – "Magsasaka at mangingisda, sama-samang harapin ang hamon ng climate change gamit ang makabagong teknolohiya" – is very timely as the nation urgently needs to respond to the vulnerabilities posed by climate change.

The Department of Agriculture alone cannot address the adverse effects of climate change, but rather needs the strong and sustained support of other stakeholders, such as local governments, the private sector, academe, and more importantly farmers' and fishers' groups.

Hence, the men and women of the DA Family salute our beloved farmers and fisherfolk for their efforts and hardwork, for braving the heat and the storms, and for their continued partnership with government and other stakeholders in feeding the entire nation.



BFAR names new fisherfolk director

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, an agency under the Department of Agriculture paid tribute to the country's fishermen by designating Ronald Pagcalinawan, a fisherfolk leader from Mindoro Occidental, as the national Fisherfolk Director along with 16 others as Regional Fisherfolk Directors of BFAR for the whole month of May.

Pagcalinawan was officially sworn in as the 6th National fisherfolk director by Agriculture Secretary Bernie G. Fondevilla during the opening of the Farmers' and Fisherfolk's Month at the DA in Quezon City.

Fondevilla said that despite the harsh difficulties brought about by the impact of climate change to our farmers and fishermen, they continue to work

hard to provide the food for the population.

"Kaya naman kami sa Kagawaran ng Pagsasaka ay patuloy na itinaguyod ang pagdiriwang na ito taun-taon upang kilalanin ang kanilang mahalagang ambag sa ating pakikibaka sa mga hamong ito, kasabay na rin ng ating mga pagsisikap maibsan ang kahirapan at kakulangan sa pagkain", Fondevilla said.

BFAR national director Malcolm I. Sarmiento, Jr. said that the Mangingisdang Direktor program, now on its sixth (6th) year of implementation, aims to provide the fisherfolk leaders a glimpse of the government's regular operations by trading places with the regular directors.

The undertaking is one of the key programs initiated by former

Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap in empowering the fisherfolk, the guidelines of which are spelled out in DA Special Order No. 88 s. 2005 and BFAR FOO No. 80 s. 2005.

Sarmiento said that under the program, the fisherfolk directors will perform all the routine functions of the regular directors, except those involving financial and policy-related matters, while the latter also undertakes immersion in the coastal communities.

"This way, both parties will have a better understanding of each others' positions and hopefully promote closer collaboration and stronger ties between the government and its stakeholders", Sarmiento added.

An active FARMC leader based in Region 4B, Pagcalinawan has been a Regional Fisherfolk Director in

BFAR Region 4B in 2008. This May, he will sit as the BFAR national fisherfolk director to administer the functions of 16 other BFAR regional offices headed by the following regional fisherfolk directors: Absolon Buenafe, Jr., Cordillera Administrative Region; Gavina P. Tumbaga, Region 1; Sixto N. Trinidad, Region 2; Romeo M. Sunga, Region 3; Sonny S. San Jose, Region 4A; Antonio F. dela Torre, Region 4B; Roman B. Diones, Region 5; Hernani T. Tingson, Region 6; Wilfredo M. Reyes, Sr., Region 7; Beverlito G. Montalban, Region 8; Antonio M. Duran, Region 9; Fernando S. Ocaba, Region 10; Camilo H. de los Trayco, Region 11; Brahim M. Kunsu, Region 12; Leonilo G. Vaz, Caraga Region; and Abdul Rahman T. Barazan, Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao.

Agricultural inquiries through texting gaining popularity among farmers

PHILRICE, Nueva Ecija—Agricultural inquiries through text messages are now gaining popularity among farmers, helping them cope with the latest farm technologies that lead to increased crop yields.

According to a study, the Farmers' Text Center (FTC) based at the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) shows that it has enhanced the delivery of agricultural information to farmers and extension workers.

Stoix Nebin Pascua, lead author of the paper entitled, "Enhancing Knowledge Networking through Short Messaging Service: The Farmers' Text Center Experience of the Open Academy for Philippine Agriculture (Opapa)," said the results show the importance of short-messaging service (SMS) in the delivery of agriculture information.

Pascua said the increasing trend in SMS received yearly implies the great potential of wireless technology in enhancing knowledge exchange between and among the experts, extension workers, farmers and other stakeholders despite physical distance.

"Using their own or borrowed cellular phones, farmers and extension workers just text their queries or requests for information on rice production problem to the PhilRice's Farmers' Text Center at 0920-911-1398 at P1 per text only for all networks," Pascua said.

From only 2,879 SMS received in 2006, text queries jumped to 13,267 in 2007 while an 86.37-percent increase was marked for 2007, and 2008. In 2008 and 2009, SMS totaled 24,727 and 31,738, respectively.

From 11 text messages during its launch in August 2004, FTC now receives an average of about 3,000 messages a month this year.

For four years since 2006, varieties and seeds ranked first as the most-asked topic,

followed by integrated pest and nutrient management.

The study also revealed that farmers text the FTC more frequently than the extension workers from 2006 to 2008. Farmers said they use SMS because it is cheap, easy to use and mobile.

Results also showed that "Thank you" and congratulatory messages received from the texters were important feedbacks in determining whether FTC satisfies and responds to the needs of the clients.

The paper, adjudged as best paper during the 23rd National Rice Research and Development Conference and 40th Scientific Conference and Anniversary of the Crop Science Society of the Philippines, was co-authored with Ronan Zagado, Olive Rose Asis, Oliver Domingo, and Jennylene Maloles.

Zagado, former program director of Opapa, said inadequate access to new rice-production technologies is a major constraint to increased rice productivity.

"The delivery of agricultural information is difficult and trying as the Philippine agricultural extension system is fragmented and dispersed owing to the Devolution of Powers Act, not to mention the archipelagic geography of the country," Zagado said.

He added that the county is also limited with the number of agricultural extension workers—only about 25,000 nationwide—who need to reach out to the country's over 2.5 million farmers.

Gloria Diata, from Oriental Mindoro, said she is grateful for the technological tips sent by the FTC and hopes that the project will continue to reach and help more farmers.

Sanny Huelva of Masbate was able to increase his farm yield through the said project and said, "Thank you for sending technology updates, I had a good harvest."

Win P50K, design new PhilRice logo

PhilRice is turning 25 this year, and we'd like you to celebrate with us.

Join PhilRice's logo making contest, and win P 50,000, one sack of premium Mestizo rice and an all-expense paid trip to the PhilRice Central Experiment Station! Send your entries by September 30, 2010.

Mechanics:

1. The contest is open to all Filipinos nationwide.
2. The Contest forms part of the celebration of PhilRice's 25th Anniversary on November 5, 2010.
3. The design of the logo should be in accordance with PhilRice's Corporate Strategic Plan with the following key goals: Attained and sustained rice self-sufficiency; Reduced incidence of poverty & malnutrition; Achieved competitiveness in agricultural S&T. It should be able to communicate a progressive, empowered, and sustainable rice industry.
4. Entries should be emailed to riceawareness@gmail.com with the subject "PhilRice logo contest." Participants should write their complete name, address, contact details and explanation of their work in the body of their email.
5. Participants can send as many entries as they like.
6. Only digital entries are accepted. The raw file of the artwork should be drawn/illustrated in A4 size preferably in Corel Draw or Adobe Illustrator. Submit the file in the following formats: 1) Flat jpeg format, minimum 300 pixels 2) Original raw file. Filename is your name and artwork title. Example: [jillcruz_logo.jpeg](#), [jillcruz_logo.cdr](#)
7. By entering the competition, the participants declare that the logo submitted is their original work, have not been submitted to any other competition, and does not infringe on any third party's existing copyrights. All entries automatically become the property of PhilRice.
8. PhilRice will have exclusive rights to the winning logo design, publish it on its websites, and in other media and corporate materials such as letterheads and envelopes. PhilRice reserves the right to further refine or make improvements and alterations on the final artwork of the winning entry.
9. The winner will be announced at the PhilRice website www.philrice.gov.ph and will be notified through email and phone call.
10. Contest schedules are as follows: a. Deadline of Submission of Entries – September 30, 2010. Entries sent beyond this date will no longer be considered. b. Announcement of the winning entry – October 15, 2010 c. Unveiling of the new logo – November 5, 2010
11. The decision of the judges is final, executory, and non-appealable. Judging will be based on the following criteria: a. Creativity-30% b. Originality-20% c. Relevance to the strategic plan-50%
12. The winner gets a certificate, cash prize of P50,000.00, one sack of graded Mestizo Rice, and an all-expense paid trip to the PhilRice Central Experiment Station in Nueva Ecija for the awarding ceremony on November 5, 2010.

For more information, email riceawareness@gmail.com or text 0908-895-7796.

FTC is one of the project components of Opapa, a coalition of various government agencies that aims to explore ICT applications in Philippine agriculture with PhilRice as the lead agency.

Operating from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mondays to Fridays, FTC aims to answer queries of farmers and other clients on rice and rice-based farm productions, send technology updates to farmers and other clients, and link farmers and

clients to markets through text messaging.

To receive free rice tips, register to the Farmers' Text Center by typing REG (space) name, age, address, occupation and send to 0920-9111398.

To send your message, just type your question and send it to the same number. MMS or photos and videos can also be sent through 0939-5099698 or e-mail at farmerstext@gmail.com.

BFAR to build P25M feed mill in Tacloban; mariculture zones expected to benefit

The government will spend P25 million to build a feed mill to boost production in mariculture zones in Eastern Visayas.

The facility, which will be the first in the region, will rise within the regional complex of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in Barangay Diit, Tacloban City, said BFAR Regional Director Juan D. Albaladejo.

"We will employ a new feed production technology coming from Denmark," he said. Construction of the facility will start early next year.

Mr. Albaladejo said the facility will meet the growing demand for aqua feeds in existing mariculture zones. The feed mill will have the capacity to produce three metric tons of feeds every hour.

There are nearly 6,000 hectares of mariculture parks with about 500 fish cages worth over P200 million in the region. The mariculture zones are located in Calbayog City in Basesy and Sta. Rita both in Samar; Tacloban City, Ormoc City, Babatngon and Merida in Leyte; Biliran and

Naval in Biliran; San Jose and Laoang in Northern Samar; Liloan in Southern Leyte and Quinapondan in Eastern Samar.

"Operators are having a problem with buying feeds because there's no local producer. There's an added transport cost," Mr. Albaladejo said.

Excess fish catch in the region that are spoiled may be used as raw materials for the feed mill. "Because of lack of storage and cooling facilities in Northern Samar, some of the fish catch has been wasted. Those are good raw materials for the feed mill," Mr. Albaladejo told *BusinessWorld*.

Root crops can also be a source of raw materials. A laboratory was recently established to process crops into powder for aqua feed processing.

For cassava alone, about 80% of cassava production in the country is used by feed millers as ingredients for animals and aqua feeds.

One of the highlights of the project is the use of containers for easy transferring for future expansion and changes, Mr.

Albaladejo said.

The region's BFAR office has been promoting mariculture zones since 2003.

The mariculture areas are designed to produce fishes through sea cage culture such as *bangus*, *siganid*, grouper, red snapper, seaweed farming, aquasilviculture, mussel culture, oyster culture, sea-ranching of

lobsters and sea horses in coral reefs and sea grass areas. Each mariculture zone or park is a contiguous area measuring from 100 hectares to 400 hectares or more encompassing the coastal waters of several barangays. It is run by groups chaired by local government units in partnership with BFAR. (*BusinessWorld*)

Marginal fisherfolk in Bataan find hope in CPAR blue crab



Photo courtesy of DA-BAR

BPI to extend P18M financial aid to small farmers

The Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) and the Kapisanan ng Magsasaka, Mangingisda at Manggagawa ng Pilipinas, (KaMMMPi), a farmer's organization, recently forged an agreement which aims to help increase the productivity of their identified farmer-beneficiaries.

The agreement mandates the BPI to extend financial assistance to small farmers for them to operate their own seed bank that will supply certified seeds of rice to other farmers via equal exchange or barter basis or direct sales.

The seedbank will also provide farmers easy access to high quality seeds.

In a report to Agriculture Secretary Bernie G. Fondevilla, BPI Director Larry R. Lacson said that the partnership is geared towards promoting the livelihood and welfare of small farmers, particularly in the rain-fed areas,

whose only source of income is from palay planting and farm labor.

According to Lacson, this will improve genetic materials and increase crop yields by at least 20 percent.

The project, which will be initially implemented in Region 1, has a total cost of Php18 million and will run for two years. BPI targets to procure a total of 3,600 bags of high quality seeds to be distributed by KaMMMPi to their identified farmer-beneficiaries.

The project will enable at least 75 percent of farmers in Ilocos Sur who are ordinary seed users to use certified seeds.

BPI will conduct a series of lectures and workshops to enhance the technical capability of seed growers in the adoption of technological advancements in certified seeds production. (*DA-BPI Planning*)

Blue crab, scientifically known as *Portunus pelagicus* or "alimasag" in local dialect is a major seafood among Filipinos. It is deliciously served in various dishes from ordinary diners to the finest restaurants here and abroad.

Given the demand for it, it is considered a potential money-earning industry for the fisheries sector and an important source of income for the marginal fisherfolk.

Blue crabs are abundant in Pampanga, Bulacan, and Bataan in Luzon. In fact, some areas in Bataan greatly depend on blue crab as source of livelihood like Brgy. Sibacan in Balanga wherein 40 percent of the population relies on catching blue crab to sustain their daily needs.

However, due to lack of information and appropriate technologies in catching blue crab, fisherfolk in the area remain impoverished and are left behind in terms of appropriate methods of fishing.

Recognizing the potentials of blue crab for major fishery production, the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR), in collaboration with the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in Region 3 and the local government unit of Bataan, embarked on a project that would help marginalized blue crab catchers increase their income through environment-friendly fishing techniques.

The project titled, "Community-based Participatory Action Research (CPAR) in Blue Crab Fishing Using Gillnets for the Marginal Fisherfolk of Bataan" is headed by Lilian C. Garcia, manager of the Regional Fisheries Research and Development Center (RFRDC) in Region 3.

According to Garcia, there are two ways of catching blue crab. Fisherfolk in Balanga, Bataan use bare hands to manually catch blue crab during low tide, this method is locally known as "pangangapa." Another method

(Pls turn to p9)

Study shows Filipino farmers' socio-econ status is improving

There is a steady improvement in the social and economic status among Filipino rice farmers and their household for the last decade, according to a study conducted by the SocioEconomic Division (SED) of PhilRice.

The study *Changing image of the Filipino rice farmer*, led by Divina Gracia Vergara, focused on trends transpiring in rice-based farm households and rice lands, and among farmer operators in 33 provinces for the last ten years.

"This intensive study captures the farmers' image from 1996 to 2007," she said.

The study shows that the rice-based farm household income is increasing as gross household income raised from P68,974.85 in 1996-1997 to P127,799.95 in 2006-2007. The finding is also consistent with the result showing that almost 60 percent of the households are above poverty level (57 percent) in the 2006-2007.

Furthermore, the share of non-farming activities as a source of income had steadily been increasing as the study found that rice and rice-based farmers are now engaged in other businesses such as rubber production, wood craft, welding, and work overseas.

"This finding implies an important question. The question in the long run will be about the presence of household members who are willing to pursue rice farming in the future or dependence of rice farm households on hired labor for the management of their farms," Vergara said.

Aside from the improving household and increasing income, Vergara also learned that the number of farmers owning rice land had been increasing by 10 percent for the last 10 years.

Moreover, there is also an increase in farmers' yields regardless of season from 3.30 t/ha to 3.72 t/ha during the wet season and 3.37 t/ha to 3.94 t/ha during the dry season.

Across the three survey rounds, most villages are located in irrigated areas and results show that irrigation is expanding from 60 to 66 percent.

Current trend revealed by the study also suggests that highly educated persons are venturing

into rice farming although the majority is modestly educated or with elementary education only. There is a 2 percent increase in the number of farmers with at least college education venturing into rice farming.

In terms of organizing farmers, however, results show that more than 50 percent of the respondents are not affiliated with rice or rice-based organizations. Most of them have not also undergone training since 2004.

Noting that half of the farmer-respondents have been farming for 20 years, Vergara also said that farmers' households are benefiting from the technologies and services that are being provided by the government.

Despite the interventions, however, average yields gained during dry and wet seasons are still below the experimental and on-farm trial yields, which is 7 to 9 t/ha.

Gaining insight from the study, Vergara and her co-authors recommended that training should be sustained to continuously update farmers' knowledge.

She also stressed the need of the government to encourage farmers to form or join organizations as through organization, farmers can pool resources and have easier access to government incentives.

She also suggested the expansion of irrigation areas as this creates "more favorable environment for rice farming in particular and agriculture in general."

To attract more people to be involved in rice production, Vergara proposed that technologies lessening the drudgery of rice farming should continually be developed.

"It is important that the government continue to monitor the rice-based farm household to determine or approximate the impact of their interventions. This will also give them enough knowledge on the direction of the policies that they would improve the countryside," Vergara concluded.

DA-PhilRice is a government-owned and -controlled corporation that aims at developing high-yielding and cost-reducing technologies so farmers can produce enough rice for all Filipinos. (DA-PhilRice)



Department of Agriculture (DA) Undersecretary for Policy, Planning, Research, and Regulation Segfredo Serrano awards to Climate Change Commissioner Naderev Saño a token of appreciation for his lecture entitled *Planting the Seeds of Change: The Philippines and the Climate Change Challenge* held on May 26, 2010 at the DA Central Office in Diliman, Quezon City. The lecture-forum, which aims to equip the DA employees with the right information on climate change and how to mitigate its impact, is under the five-year Umbrella Capacity Development Program for DA executives and professional staff implemented by the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) in cooperation with the Ateneo School of Government (AsoG), the University of Asia and the Pacific School of Management (UA&P SMN), and the UPecon Foundation.

Marginal fisherfolk ... (from p8)

is through the use of gillnets or "panyo."

By using bare hands or "pangangapa", fisherfolk catch 2-3 kgs in a day while using gillnets allows them to catch 6-8 kgs a day. The project therefore, recommends the use of gillnets to increase the monthly volume of catch of the marginal fisherfolk.

Meanwhile, Gladys Resubal and Gaudelia Calinao, experts from the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPA) of Bataan and the Office of City Agriculturist (OCA) in Balanga have been working with the project to provide technical assistance to fisherfolk-cooperators. They impart with them appropriate fishing technology using gillnets.

Although the project was implemented only in November 2009, Garcia proudly said that, some positive changes in the lives of the fisher-cooperators have already been evident. First, the daily catch increased from 2-3 kgs to 6-8 kgs a day. Second, the project has led to the strengthening of the fisherfolk association "Samahan ng mga Maliliit na Mangingisda ni Apo

San Rafael". Third, the campaign against illegal fishing is intensified through the "Proyekto Natin, Bantay Natin Program," a parallel program from the local government unit where members of the fisherfolk association become devoted stewards for the protection and conservation of the marine resources of the community.

Another highlight of the project is that, the relationships among fisherfolk have strengthened through the "buddy-buddy" system, an approach where fisherfolk fish with a chosen buddy and share gasoline or any agreed expenses incurred during the fishing activity.

On the other hand, the Samahan ng mga Maliliit na Mangingisda ni Apo San Rafael is also a big help to its members by providing financial assistance or loans through the funds generated from their daily contributions.

According to Benjie Manuel, president of the association, they started with 20 members only but it dramatically increased when other fisherfolk in the community learned about the good things that have happened to the project. (DA-BAR)

Climate experts aim to build food security in the face of climate change

Climate and agricultural researchers, policy makers, donors, and development agencies, both governmental and non-governmental, from all over the world have met in Nairobi for a one-day conference, 'Building Food Security in the Face of Climate Change'.

The conference was an important part of a big international Mega Programme on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS).

The programme's secretariat is based at LIFE- Faculty of Life Sciences at University of Copenhagen.

Climate change represents an immediate and unprecedented threat to the food security of hundreds of millions of people

who depend on small-scale agriculture and natural resource management for their livelihoods.

At the same time, agriculture and forestry also contributes to climate change, by intensifying greenhouse gas emissions and altering the land surface.

To facilitate new research on the interactions between climate change, agriculture, natural resource management and food security, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the Earth System Science Partnership (ESSP) have initiated a Mega Programme on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS). CCAFS will create unique possibilities in the

search for solutions to climate change and food security problems.

Climate Change Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) is a large-scale ten-year research initiative which, from its start in 2010, will seek solutions to how to adapt the world's agricultural areas to a different climate with new conditions for production and agriculture and help reduce agriculture's emission of greenhouse gases.

The Secretariat for CCAFS is placed at LIFE — Faculty of Life Sciences at University of Copenhagen. CCAFS will primarily focus on three regions: South Asia, West Africa and East Africa. (*science daily*)

Gov't to raise ethanol output to help mills

INDIA - India, the world's biggest consumer of sugar, is planning to increase ethanol production to protect mills from falling prices of the sweetener as the country expects a bumper crop next year, the Minister of Agriculture, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Sharad Pawar said.

"Instead of producing other products, the industry should make more of ethanol," Mr Pawar said in an interview. "If they produce more ethanol and get a good price, farmers will also get a good price for their sugarcane."

The government in 2007 made the sale of ethanol-blended petrol compulsory to help sugar mills cope with a slump in prices of the sweetener caused by a record harvest. Higher sales of the fuel next year may help makers of the sweetener supplement their earnings.

A panel of ministers last month asked refiners to buy ethanol from sugar mills at Rs 27 a litre for six months compared with Rs 21.5 earlier. The price will need approval of the cabinet.

The government has provided loans of Rs 300 crore to sugar mills in the past three years to build additional annual ethanol production capacity of 365 million litres, according to the agriculture ministry.

The current capacity in the country is about 1.8 billion litres. (*the bioenergy site*)

Broccoli component limits breast cancer stem cells, study finds



A component derived from broccoli could help prevent or treat breast cancer by targeting cancer stem cells — the small number of cells that fuel a tumor's growth — according to a new study from researchers at the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center. The study tested sulforaphane, a component of broccoli and broccoli sprouts, in both mice and cell cultures.

Researchers found sulforaphane targeted and killed the cancer stem cells and prevented new tumors from growing.

Sulforaphane has been studied previously for its effects on cancer, but study only shows its benefit is in inhibiting the breast cancer stem cells.

This new insight suggests the potential of sulforaphane or broccoli extract to prevent or treat cancer by targeting the critical cancer stem cells.

Current chemotherapies do not work against cancer stem cells, which is why cancer recurs and spreads.

Researchers believe that eliminating the cancer stem cells is key to controlling can-

cer. In the current study, researchers took mice with breast cancer and injected varying concentrations of sulforaphane from the broccoli extract.

Researchers then used several established methods to assess the number of cancer stem cells in the tumors.

These measures showed a marked decrease in the cancer stem cell population after treatment with sulforaphane, with little effect on the normal cells.

Further, cancer cells from mice treated with sulforaphane

were unable to generate new tumors.

The researchers then tested sulforaphane on human breast cancer cell cultures in the lab, finding similar decreases in the cancer stem cells.

This research suggests a potential new treatment that could be combined with other compounds to target breast cancer stem cells.

Developing treatments that effectively target the cancer stem cell population is essential for improving outcomes. (*science daily*)

High-quality beef: Start cattle on corn, finish on co-products, researchers find

The traditional practice of finishing cattle on corn may not be the only way to achieve high marbling, a desirable characteristic of quality beef.

Researchers at the University of Illinois have discovered that high-quality beef and big per-head profits can be achieved by starting early-weaned cattle on corn and finishing them on a diet high in co-products.

For the study, heifers from the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center were weaned at an average age of 77 days and fed a high-corn ration for the next 146 days to initiate marbling. Then the cattle were divided into four

groups: pasture-fed; high starch; intermediate starch; and low starch. The cattle remained on these treatments for 73 days. Then, all cattle were fed the intermediate-starch diet for the remainder of the finishing period.

Before being divided into the four treatment groups, the calves were ultrasounded to determine marbling.

The ultrasounds revealed that marbling was initiated with the early corn diet. The cattle were ultrasounded again at the completion of the 73-day treatment period.

The cattle on pasture had significantly lower marbling. But

there were no differences in the cattle fed varying levels of starch.

These results remained constant through harvest with pasture-fed cattle receiving lower marbling scores and fewer cattle grading low-choice. The cattle fed varying levels of starch had no difference in marbling scores. However, there were differences in profit per head.

At the overall profitability, there was a little money lost on the high-starch group, the pasture-fed cattle barely made any money, but the intermediate- and the low-starch groups showed a big swing. There's about a \$45 difference between the high-starch and intermediate-starch treatment groups, and low starch was comparable to intermediate. (*science daily*)

Livestock and poultry ... (from p1)

gation systems that will serve as alternative water sources when major irrigation dams dry up during El Niño episodes.

The DA will likewise stock up on drought-resistant seeds and will spearhead initiatives to protect watersheds or reforest denuded ones, in coordination with other concerned agencies.

"We need to look at our watersheds to make sure that they are protected, and those already denuded we could embark with other government agencies to reforest them," Fondevilla said.

Palay, Corn Performance

"The dry spell caused by El Niño pulled down the total area harvested and yield in major rice producing regions of Cagayan Valley, Western Visayas, Northern Mindanao and SOCCSKSARGEN," the BAS said.

Meanwhile, yellow corn production was also adversely affected, as total area harvested contracted in Cagayan Valley, SOCCSKSARGEN, Western Visayas, Northern Mindanao and Cordillera Administrative Region, BAS added.

Sugarcane production also dipped by 10.9%, to about 10 million MT, during the first quarter.

Commercial and municipal fisheries posted production declines of 3.5% and 0.15%, respectively, but aquaculture ma-

World 2010 rice ... (from p1)

ports of Africa may decline, FAO added.

The expansion in world rice trade in 2010 is forecast to be met by larger exports from China, Myanmar, Thailand, the United States, and Pakistan.

On the other hand, a reduction of domestic supplies and, in the case of India, the maintenance of export restrictions, is expected to depress shipments from that country, but also from Brazil and Uruguay.

Global consumption in 2010 is forecast to increase by 2.1 percent to 454 M tons of milled rice. Of these, 388 M tons are expected to be consumed as food, six M tons more than in 2009.

Meanwhile, international rice prices are weakening due to sluggish world import demand. (FAO-Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific)

May 2010

naged to grow by 0.36%.

The impact of the dry spell on agricultural production would have been worse had the DA failed to retool its budget in the previous years to enable Philippine farms to meet the twin challenges of climate change and global trade.

It allocated 86% of its 2010 P47-billion budget to various infrastructure projects that include construction and rehabilitation of irrigation systems, construction of farm-to-market roads, and provision needed postharvest facilities such as flatbed dryers, corn drying centrals, fishports, and storage warehouses; provision of market linkages; and strengthening of regulatory and disease eradication capabilities.

Hybrid rice ... (from p1)

hectarage has contributed 760,000 MT of palay to total national production

For the forthcoming 2010 wet cropping season, the DA intends to plant a total of 96,888 hectares to hybrid rice, Malabanan said.

However, as a recovery plan to offset production losses brought about by El Niño, an additional 64,170 hectares will be planted to hybrid rice in Central Luzon, Western Visayas, the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) and in Mindanao.

Hence, this brings the total area planted to hybrid rice to about 161,000 hectares, for this main cropping season.

"With more hybrid rice areas and greater cooperation from LGUs and the private sector, the rice industry can look forward to achieving the palay production target of 17 million MT or more for crop year 2010," Malabanan said.

He said the DA aims to increase areas planted to hybrid rice to at least 600,000 to 800,000 hectares in 2013.

Malabanan said the DA, under the GMA Rice Program, currently grants subsidy for the purchase of hybrid rice seeds, and teaches farmers how to optimize yields using hybrid seeds.

These initiatives are done by the DA's Regional Field Units (DA-RFUs) and the National Irrigation Administration (DA-NIA), in collaboration with the local government units (LGUs), farmers groups and private seed



Agriculture Secretary Bernie G. Fondevilla (5th from left) poses with officers of the Phil. Ass'n. of Free-range Poultry Advocates, Inc., led by its president, Tina Morados (4th from left). The group raises 'organic' chicken for meat and eggs. The other officers are: Atty. Kenneth Cheng of Bounty Fresh Foods, vice president; Roderick Teng (Freshtori Farm), secretary; Pablito Villegas (Villegas Hobby Farm), treasurer; and Dr. Mikael Crisologo (free-range poultry practitioner), trustee.

Organic poultry farmers seek DA's help

The Philippine Association of Free-range Poultry Advocates, Inc. is seeking help from the Department of Agriculture to govern the country's fledgling free-range poultry industry, which to date has 100 farms nationwide, said its president Lina Morados.

The group is particularly requesting the DA to help establish standards for free-range breeding, feeds, growing period, breeder sources, and labelling of free-range poultry products.

Morados operates the Pamora Farm in Pidigan, Abra, in partnership with a French

entrepreneur.

She said the cost of imported breeders from Sasso, Hubbard and other suppliers is high, and this makes organic chicken breeding and production costly.

She has been in operation for 10 years, producing 2,000 chicken monthly, which she sells to restaurants and hotels that serve organic meat chicken.

Recently, she also put up a chicken dressing plant.

She said free-range chicken are fed with natural food and herbal products. They grow to two kilos or more in 81 days. (Manila Bulletin)

DA to distribute ... (from p1)

dairy goat development program.

Four hundred of the imported goats will be distributed to qualified commercial raisers in the Visayas and Mindanao, and the rest in Luzon, according to DA-Region 7 (Central Visayas) livestock coordinator Joel Elumba.

In a report to Agriculture Secretary Bernie Fondevilla, Elumba said the initial beneficiaries of the imported goats include existing commercial goat raisers who are members of local goat raisers' associations.

The goats will be given to them as loans, with each module consisting of nine does and one buck.

The qualified recipients are required to take part in a project briefing and undergo a goat-raising training seminar, Elumba said.

BAFPS and GMA Corn honors 2009 Outstanding Quality Corn Farmers

Being always open to new farming technologies and picking up from the lessons and experiences of other productive corn farmers have primarily guided Mr. Jaime L. Calumpit to be awarded the country's 2009 Most Outstanding Quality Corn Farmer.

The outstanding corn farmer from Ifugao province and seven regional outstanding quality corn farmers were honored during the 4th National Aflatoxin Conference held last April 29, 2010 in Bohol province.

For two succeeding years since the search started, the Cordillera Autonomous Region (CAR) has consistently bagged the national award, which pays tribute to productive corn farmers who have not only attained high yields but have managed to produce quality corn grains with zero or very low aflatoxin levels.

The annual search is in keeping with the imperative of DA to make the corn industry globally competitive through the Philippine National Standard (PNS) Code of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for corn.

GMA-Corn National Program Coordinator and DA Asst. Sec. Dennis B. Araullo and Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standard (BAFPS) Di-

rector Gilbert E. Layese led the recognition and awarding rites for Mr. Calumpit and the regional outstanding quality corn farmers, namely; Maximo R. Rabanal (DA-RFU 1), Felicisima G. de los Santos (DA-RFU 2), Indalencio S. Supan (DA-RFU 3), Renato J. Alcantara (DA-RFU 4-A), Adelaida V. Paulite (DA-RFU 5), Eleuterio P. Fanilag (DA-RFU 9), and Grace E. Buenaflor (DA-RFU 12).

The National awardee received a plaque of recognition and a cash prize of P75,000.00 while each of the regional winners also received a plaque and a cash award of P40,000.00 from Asst. Sec. Araullo and Director Layese. They were assisted by DA-RFU VII Regional Executive Director Ricardo D. Oblena, Regional Technical Director for Operations Angel C. Enriquez, and Dr. Candido B. Damo and Edna T. Begino of the National Technical Working Group on Corn Quality Management, who spearheaded the process of selecting the winners.

BAFPS Director Layese announced that starting in 2010, the search for most outstanding quality corn farmer will be included as one of the categories in the annual GAWAD SAKA Awards. (DA-RAFID 7)



2009 National Most Outstanding Quality Corn farmer, Jaime L. Calumpit (4th from left) of Ifugao province received his plaque and cash prize from Asst. Secretary and GMA Corn Program national Director Dennis Araullo and BAFPS Director Gilbert Layese. Others in photo are (L-R) DA-RFU 7 Regional Technical Director Angel C. Enriquez, Regional Executive Director Ricardo D. Oblena, National Corn RTWG members Dr. Candido Damo and Edna Begino. (G.Dagala, DA-RAFID 7)

Area-wide conferences, national forum on water to be held in June

Agriculture secretary Bernie G. Fondevilla ordered the DA Management Committee (ManCom) members, through a memo dated May 18, 2010, to conduct a series of area-wide conferences and national forum on "Charting Our Water Future: A Multi-Stockholder Policy and Program Dialogue" through the National Agricultural and Fishery Council (NAFC) and the Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM) in partnership with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Representatives from national government agencies, including those from the local government units, civil society organizations and private sector-led agricultural and fishery councils will participate in these area-wide conferences and national forum. The fora will serve as the venue for building a shared understanding of the water-related challenges and constraints facing the agriculture and fisheries sector, and impacting on food security, productivity and market competitiveness.

Moreover, the fora will serve as the window that will open opportunities by which stakeholders can be encouraged to adapt Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) practices and initiatives, especially in the area of efficient water use, demand management and watershed protection.

Likewise, with such convergence of knowledgeable persons, they will be in a better

position to draw up policies and innovative instruments that will govern water security programs relevant to the protection and the future of agriculture and fisheries in the country.

The following is the schedule of the national forum and area-wide conferences this June 2010:

- Visayas (Regions 6, 7 and 8), June 2-3 in Bohol
- Northern Mindanao (Regions 9, 10 and CARAGA), June 7-8 in Cagayan de Oro
- Southern Mindanao (Regions 11, 12 and ARMM), June 10-11 in Cagayan de Oro
- Northern and Central Luzon (CAR, Regions 1, 2 and 3), June 15-16 in Pampanga
- Southern Luzon (NCR, CALABARZON, Bicol), June 17-18 in Pampanga

• National Forum is tentatively scheduled on June 24 in Manila

In line with the directive of the Secretary, all heads of DA bureaus, services, GMA program directorates, attached agencies and corporations are enjoined to attend the national forum. They are also tasked to submit inputs, such as water-related policies that need to be discussed, amended and/or strengthened; issues, gaps and other concerns that need to be addressed, which will serve as inputs to the national forum specifically in drafting policy statements and/or development of program/projects to be launched to ensure water security for agriculture and fisheries.



Agriculture Secretary Bernie G. Fondevilla (2nd from left) signs a memorandum of agreement which seeks to improve agromet forecasting capability, with (L-R) DA-BSWM Director Silvino Q. Tejada, Department of Science and Technology Secretary Estrella F. Alabastro, and Engr. Catalino L. Davis of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA). Under the agreement, the government agencies will jointly implement the upgrading of agromet stations, data sharing and training program for observers and users of data more importantly to the agriculture sector.