



Sen. Villar lauds DA-PhilRice on RCEF implementation



Senator Villar (on screen) commends DA-PhilRice for accomplishing its targets in 2020.

Sen. Cynthia A. Villar, chairperson of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, lauded DA-PhilRice for hitting 100% of its seed delivery target this dry season and reaching 94.96% distribution to farmers in partnership with DA-Regional Field offices and Local Government Units (LGUs) despite the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic.

During the annual review of the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF)- Seed and Extension Programs, Villar underscored the importance of distributing inbred rice seeds to farmers in over 50 provinces.

"It's a delight reading farmers' testimonies on the changes that RCEF brought to them—productive harvest and increased income. We should [continue] to move in haste and with a sense of urgency because these provisions are very important to our farmers," Villar said.

The RCEF-Seed Program delivered 1.7M bags of certified inbred seeds to 55 provinces since September 2020. About 1.5M were distributed through LGUs benefitting more than 600,000 farmers as of Feb. 28, 2021.

DA Secretary William D. Dar urged the Institute during the same review to strengthen its partnership with the provincial governments and LGUs in implementing the RCEF program.

Dar also emphasized the One-DA holistic approach of the department as key to modernize and industrialize Philippine agriculture.

"All strategies are being mobilized to make it possible that we take with us our rice farmers in our journey for development. We really want our farmers to improve their yield while lowering their production cost," he said.

Meanwhile, the current RCEF-Extension Program of PhilRice conducts blended learning approaches on Rice Specialist Training courses, Training of Trainers, Farmer Field Schools, Lakbay Palay, and PalayAralan in capacitating farmers and extension workers in rice production.

Supplementary materials for learning are also distributed such as magazines, videos, handouts, and brochures to almost 3M RCEF beneficiaries. 🍌

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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

“

There is a time for everything

The vibrance of the Solomonian phrase ‘there is a time for everything’ is probably best mused upon in March and April. In this stretch of collected moments – harvest season of rice and many fruits (somebody blogged at least 30) comes about; assorted summer festivities happen (still to be limited by the Corona virus despite the vaccination roll out); women and girls throughout the country and the world are celebrated for their tremendous contributions, leadership and achievements (March 8); and a national food

security summit (April 28-29) will be organized by the DA.

Particularly this year – the triple celebration of Panagyan Festival, Filipino Food Month, and the Quincentennial Commemoration of Victory in Humanity (in our case, the stories of the country's being part of the first circumnavigation of the world and also our victory at Mactan, among others) has been added to the summer festivities' menu via RiceUp Pilipinas.

In the lineup of this program, we're crowd-sourcing photos (non-competition) for must-see farms (Palaytanawin) in the Philippines. A kite-flying contest is also slated (April 16) within the expansive premises of the PhilRice CES farm.

Dubbed as *Saranggulay*, this activity is also a celebration of crop



Dr. John C. de Leon
Executive Director
DA-PhilRice

diversification in the context of our *Palayamanan*, *Palayamanan Plus*, and *PAG-AHON* projects, hence, the campaign tag *Bukid na may Gulay, Masagana at Makulay*.

Finally, this issue of our Newsletter will enable you (our valued readers) to catch up with many more news-worthy happenings this March and April. Truly the hot and dry season's here – everybody's busy. And we can only be always thankful that there is indeed time for everything. So ready, get set, read! 🌾

RICEUP PILIPINAS: HARVEST/FILIPINO FOOD FESTIVAL AND CELEBRATION OF VICTORY IN HUMANITY APRIL 21, 2021



Philippine Rice Research Institute
Central Experiment Station
Maligaya, Science City of Muñoz, 3119 Nueva Ecija



RICE MATTERS is the bi-monthly newsletter of the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Rice Research Institute that delivers information about the Institute's activities to its partners, and internal and external clients.

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DA expands “Adopt a Town” project



Secretary Dar says the project will enable small farm families to earn additional incomes from vegetable raising, as well as ensure household food security.

DA Secretary William D. Dar said the adoption of the implementation example set by DA-PhilRice under the Adopt a City or Town Project will strengthen our strategies to stabilize vegetable supplies and prices.

The Project seeks to promote and support massive vegetable gardening in public areas, idle private spaces and residential backyards; coordinate with partner agencies, companies, associations and consolidators willing to collaborate with and support DA; put together component activities like crop diversification; establish community food hubs, rice-vegetable techno demo, seeds and seedlings distribution; and provide innovative products and sustainable services

that will help vegetable farmers and barangay households to survive, reboot, and grow.

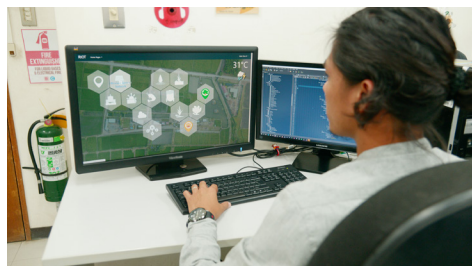
Sec. Dar re-issued the guidelines on Jan. 21 and directed all bureaus, attached agencies, and corporations to implement the project following the success of the DA-PhilRice's PAG-AHON (*sa Palay at Gulay - may Ani, Hanapbuhay, Oportunidad at Nutrisyon*) Project in Lupao, Nueva Ecija last year on massive *gulayan sa barangay*.

PAG-AHON Project Coordinator Roel R. Suralta stressed the need to ensure food security in Lupao and help stabilize food and vegetable supplies and prices in metropolitan areas. 🍌

RiceLytics - Data science for good governance

A proposed data analytic model called RiceLytics will soon enable DA-PhilRice to determine the state of the country's rice industry, monitor and evaluate its RCEF programs, and characterize the Filipino farmers.

Upon its completion in 2022, “RiceLytics will enable online users to obtain data on rice area, production, yield per hectare, self-sufficiency, consumption, and



future performance requirements at national, regional, provincial, and city/municipal levels,” proponent Nehemiah L. Caballong said.

Batac station turns 22



SRO emphasizes that the Batac station exists for the development of appropriate rice technologies for rainfed areas

Former DA-PhilRice Executive Director Santiago R. Obien (SRO) urged Batac staff to “continuously lift the burdens of the poor farmers” during the station's 22nd anniversary celebration.

Obien, who served as the Institute's first director in 1986-2000, said that the station's success depends on whether it had managed to raise the harvest and income of the rice farmers. As stipulated in the Institute's strategic plan, the station is expected to improve yield in rainfed areas by 0.5t/ha and reduce palay production cost from P12/kg to P8/kg by 2022.

Established on Feb. 5, 1999 as the Drought-prone Agriculture Research Center of DA-PhilRice, the station has developed technologies for rice and rice-based crops in rainfed areas such as water harvesting, low-cost drip irrigation system, hydro water pump, and modified dry direct seeding technology. (Deejay Jimenez)

Such data are largely obtainable at present through published briefers, infographics, books and slide presentations.

The Department of Science and Technology - Philippine Council for Industry, Energy, and Emerging Technology Research and Development under its Good Governance through Data Science and Decision Support System (GODDESS) program is funding the project. 🍌

Quality Rice. Quality Life.

Farmers modernize farming skills



Laguna farmers are trained on Minus-One-Element Technique (MOET).

Farmers in the areas of coverage of our stations are gaining new knowledge on rice production technologies.

In Agusan, 130 farmers have graduated from the RCEF Farmer Field School-PalayCheck System, an integrated crop management and production guide, which also promotes experiential group learning that presents best technologies and practices as KeyChecks.

In Laguna, farmers were educated on Minus-One-Element Technique (MOET), a nutrient management technology developed by

Los Baños station, production of high-quality inbred seeds, and farm mechanization.

The Rice Business Innovations System (RiceBIS) community members in Negros joined the station's launching of PalayAralan, an informational learning activity.

"The PalayAralan refreshed us in addressing our problems on pests and diseases in our fields. In the next planting season, we hope to effectively apply our acquired knowledge," participant Irene Magaro said. (Precious Mae C. Gabato)

Isabela station eyes ISO 9001 certification



Our branch station in Isabela is eyeing an International Organization for Standardization 9001 (ISO 9001) Quality Management System (QMS) certification to affirm the station's quality product and processes and its credibility as a public service provider.

Hazel Jane M. Orge, Integrated Management Systems and Services Office (IMSSO) head, has briefed sectoral coordinators and staff on certification requirements and preparation. (Aileen Shaye C. Fontanilla)

Women in the rice sector recognized



The celebration of the National Women's Month in March provides a reflection on the contributions of women in government service, especially in research and development.

With the theme, "We Make Change Work for Women," DA- PhilRice

conducted webinars on Magna Carta of Women, Anti-Sexual Harassment Law, Anti-Bastos Bill, gender sensitivity/statistics/analysis, and training on rice production technologies and financial management for women farmers. Videos and stories on the importance

and contributions of women in the rice industry as farmers, scientists, and researchers were also posted on the Institute's Facebook page.

Internationally, the United Nations announced the International Women's Day on March 8 as "Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world."

"The theme celebrates the tremendous efforts by women and girls around the world in shaping a more equal future and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic," the UN announced.

DA-PhilRice's Management Committee is composed of 47 members, 22 of whom are women. (Mervelyn O. Tomas)

Farm management activities centralized



Farm Service Center will be operationalized at our Central Experiment Station (CES) starting this June 1 to centralize our farm operations and manage our expanding farm machinery and facilities.

Under the new setup, the Physical Plant (PPD) and Rice Engineering and Mechanization Divisions (REMD) will jointly oversee the center in implementing scheduled farm activities.

Executive Director John C. de Leon said that the joint supervision will enable PPD to ensure the serviceability of farm machines and

equipment, and REMD to strategize, plan, and prepare for workload distribution.

A three-year budget shall be allocated for additional machinery and equipment currently used and managed by PPD.

The centralization is consistent with the provisions of the Agriculture and Farm Mechanization Law (Republic Act No. 10601), which promotes the development and adoption of modern, appropriate and cost-effective and environmentally safe agricultural and fisheries machinery and equipment. 🌱

Smart rice technologies to air in Caraga Region

About 3,000 farmers in Caraga Region are expected to “climate-proof” their farms with the learnings they will get from a school-on-the-air (SOA) program on climate change adaptation.

The program will be aired in five provinces starting this May and will broadcast PhilRice-developed contents translated in the Visayan language.



The SOA will be pursued in partnership with the DA-Caraga Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Service, Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center 13, and regional farmcasters.

One-DA policy, RCEF updates for Quezon solon



Los Baños Branch Director Rhemilyn Z. Relado-Sevilla (center) received a certificate of appreciation from 1st District Quezon Representative Wilfrido Mark M. Enverga (right) for presenting the station’s Rice Agricultural Interventions and Plans during her visit to the province on March 4. Also in photo is DA-Regional Executive Director Officer-in-Charge Vilma M. Dimaculangan.

Midsayap Station-WMSU partnership



Dr. Maria Carla A. Ochotorena (center), president of the Western Mindanao State University (WMSU), expressed strong partnership with DA-PhilRice as she receives a bag of Pinoy Rice as token from PhilRice Midsayap Branch Director Sailila E. Abdula during a courtesy call. The Institute has a satellite office in WMSU campus, San Ramon, Zamboanga City.



AWARDEES

GANTIMPALA AGAD AWARDEES (JAN-FEB 2021)



LOVELY S. ESPIRITU (BICOL)
EXCELLENCE AWARD



JERRY D. BATCAGAN (ISABELA)
INNOVATIVE STAFF AWARD



AILEEN SHAYE C. FONTANILLA (ISABELA)
MOST RELIABLE



JOILLIE NICOLE B. LACBAYAN (ISABELA)
MOST RELIABLE



ALCEL BEATRIZ ATANACIO (CES-RCFSD)
MODELONG MANGGAGAWA



MARICAR B. CASTILLO (CES-RCFSD)
MOST DEPENDABLE STAFF



XENIA PORTIA S. FUENTES (CES-RCFSD)
HUWARANG KAWANI



CATHERINE S. TABUNAN (CES-CPD)
MOST RELIABLE



RIZA G. ABILGOS- RAMOS (CES-RCFSD)
MOST NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS AWARD

- **RiceBIS- Isabela Team**
Reliable Team Award
- **RCEF Bicol Unit**
Most Outstanding Unit
- **RCEF Negros Unit**
Special Award for Most Number of Bags Delivered

DESIGNATION

- **Engr. Leo C. Javier (Isabela)** designated as Director of DA's Expanded Inbred Rice Program

DETAIL

- **Imelda A. Arida (CES-SED)** detailed as Special Technical Assistant to the DA Secretary

CONGRATULATIONS TO:



Joy Bartolome A. Duldulao
Officer-in-Charge
Isabela Station



Hazel Jane M. Orge
Officer-in-Charge
Batac Station



Dionrill C. Noja
Manager
CMU Field Office



Dr. Reynaldo C. Castro
Batac Branch Director (Retired)
Thank you for your dedicated service!

Prudent guard returns bag to right owner



DA-PhilRice Executive Director John C. de Leon (left) commended security guard Angelito R. Batocabe (in white uniform) for returning a lost bag to its rightful owner on March 16.

The owner accidentally dropped the bag while on a motorcycle ride en route to Cabanatuan City. Batocabe was already off-duty when he answered the owner's mobile phone call left inside the bag. Security Detachment Commander Roger S. Manzano and Nicolas T. Lucero (in photo) also saluted Batocabe for his prudence in not giving in to an earlier false claimant.

Surigao Rice Techno Demo and Training Center up soon



The Sangguniang Bayan of San Miguel, Surigao del Sur passed a resolution authorizing a tripartite agreement on the establishment of an Integrated Rice Techno Demo and Training Center in the municipality. The agreement involves DA-PhilRice Agusan, Surigao del Sur State University (SSDSU), and Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation. Meeting above are (from left) SSDSU Pres. Dr. Baceledes R. Estal, Vice Mayor Rolmar F. Basalan, and Agusan Branch Director Dr. Caesar Joventino M. Tado.

Bicol, UEP to renew partnership



Bicol station manager Victoria C. Lapitan (3rd from left) and staff called on University of Eastern Philippines (UEP) Pres. Cherry I. Ultra (2nd from left) on March 5. Bicol and UEP in Catarman, Northern Samar are to review an existing memorandum of agreement on their R&D collaboration.

2ND QUARTER DA-PHILRICE EVENTS

APRIL 2021

- 5-21 2021 Quincentennial Commemorations in the Philippines
- 4-17 RCEF Training of Trainers (ToT) on the Production of High-Quality Inbred Rice and Seeds and Farm Mechanization (Negros)

6-8 Lakbay Palay

- 6 Thanksgiving Ceremony for RCEF Seed Program Partner-LGUs in Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro (Los Baños)

- 6 2nd Development Sector Meeting
2nd Research Management Team Meeting (Bicol)

- 7 RCEF Techno Demo Palay Sikatan Field Walk in Brgy. Kakawit, Lucban, Quezon (Los Baños)

- 7 2nd GASS Sector Meeting (CES)

- 8 RCEF Palay Sikatan Field Walk in Brgy. San Vicente, Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro (Los Baños)

- 12-16 1st Batch RCEF Farmer Field School (Oas, Albay) (Bicol)

- 14 RCEF Palay Sikatan Field Walk in Brgy. Calumpang, Liliw, Laguna (Los Baños)

- 19-23 Pest and Nutrient Management Course (Bicol)

- 22 RCEF Palay Sikatan Field Walk in Brgy. Pamplona, General Nakar, Quezon (Los Baños)

- (April-May) Continuation of 2021 Dry Season RCEF FFS in RiceBIS Phase II and Expansion Sites (Negros)

- (TBA) Review of Matured Technologies in Preparation for the Production of Knowledge Products (English and Ilocano) through Technology Bulletins, Leaflets, and Video Presentations (Batac)

- (TBA) Training on Advanced Gender Sensitivity Tools for Project Leaders (Los Baños)

- (TBA) LOA Renewal of Mobile One-Stop Information Shop (OSIS) in Laguna State Polytechnic University-Siniloan (Los Baños)

- (TBA) Farmers' Field Walk on Sites Demonstrating Minus-One-Element Technique, Leaf Color Chart, and Rice Crop Manager (Los Baños)

- (TBA) RCEF ToT on Pest and Nutrient Management (Los Baños)

- (TBA) Lakbay Palay (Midsayap)

- (TBA) Launching of Rice Business Innovations System (RiceBIS) FFS for Batch III Farmers (Midsayap)

MAY 2021

- 3-7 Palay Aralan for 3S (Three provinces in Samar), Seminar, Exhibit and OSIS (Bicol)

- 4 15th Mancom meeting (CES)

- 26 Thanksgiving ceremony for RCEF-Seed Program Partner-LGUs/ Techno Demo Palay Sikatan Field Walk (Los Baños)

- (TBA) Seminars on Scientific Journal Publication and Statistical Analysis for R&D Staff (Batac)

JUNE 2021

- 7 3rd Research Management Team Meeting

- 8 3rd Development Sector Meeting

- 9 3rd GASS Sector Meeting

- 16 Data Processing, Report Writing, and Research and Development Review (Bicol)

- 21-25 Research Midyear Review

- 28 Quarterly Reporting (Negros)

- (TBA) 1st Batch of RCEF FFS (under RiceBIS Phase 1-Victorias City, Negros Occidental) (Negros)

- (TBA) Commencement of 2021 Wet Season RCEF FFS in RiceBIS Phase II (Negros)

- (TBA) Virtual Farmers' Field Days in CALABARZON and MIMAROPA (Los Baños)

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- ✓ Malambot kapag naluto
- ✓ Malasa
- ✓ Sariling ani

PREMIUM RICE

PSB Rc18

ALA

25kg/bag

PhP 1,200.00

- ✓ Maputi at puro
- ✓ Malambot kapag naluto
- ✓ Mabango at malasa
- ✓ Sariling ani

PREMIUM RICE

NSIC Rc218 SR

MABANGO 3

25kg/bag

PhP 1,200.00

- ✓ Maputi at puro
- ✓ Malambot kapag naluto
- ✓ Mabango at Malasa
- ✓ Sariling ani

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2021-2030 MOU with UPLB shapes up



Talks are ongoing between DA-PhilRice and the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) on the renewal of a 10-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will support the national rice program.

Dr. Eduardo Jimmy P. Quilang, chairperson of the Institute's Technical Working Group, said that the proposed MOU will cover collaborative projects on variety development, digital agriculture tools, and new knowledge and information.

The collaboration will also cover enhanced resource-sharing of land, field experiments, research facilities, library, computer networks, workforce expertise, and project funds. Human resource development and exchange of faculty and research staff will also be stipulated in the MOU.

Meanwhile, Dr. Jose V. Camacho Jr., UPLB chancellor, said that the framework for the new MOU is anchored on raising the gears on rice research in the country in support of both institutions' commitments to ensuring food security and alleviating poverty.

The two institutions are currently developing thermosensitive genetic male-sterile (TGMS) lines and TGMS-based two-line hybrid rice; producing nucleus and breeder seeds; implementing the National Cooperative Tests for rice; conserving and managing rice germplasm; and screening CMS and TGMS parentals, breeding lines, and promising hybrids for grain quality and resistance to major insect pests and diseases.

Rice S&T updates in Quirino



Isabela station updated Quirino Governor Dakila Carlo E. Cua (center) and Sangguniang Panlalawigan members on rice science and technologies during a courtesy call at Cabarroguis on March 2 by the OIC Branch Director Joy Bartolome A. Duldulao (6th from left) and Jonathan U. Cabral (4th from left) of Community Relations Office. Possible collaborations for rice farmers' welfare are expected.

Batac station-MMSU reaffirm collaboration



Batac station and its host Mariano Marcos State University (MMSU) are reaffirming their collaborative activities under an existing 25-year memorandum of agreement. Station Officer-in-Charge Director Hazel Jane M. Orge (right) called on MMSU Pres. Shirley C. Agrupis (2nd from right) on March 2. Others in photo are Chief Science Research Specialist Leylani M. Juliano and retired Branch Director Reynaldo C. Castro.

Videos and Webinar you can watch:



Tulong-tulong sa RCEF



Webinar Series:
Understanding decision-making
processes of rice farmers in the
face of climate change



2020 Training of
Trainers (TOT)



RCEF Farmers'
Testimonial Videos

Scan the QR codes with your phone using your camera or QR code scanner to access the videos!