



Rice S&T Webinar Series with SUCs set in motion

ELOUEZA MARIE P. DELA CRUZ

To provide access to latest science-based information on rice research development to the academic community, particularly in State Colleges and Universities (SUCs), DA-PhilRice, spearheaded by the Office of the Deputy Executive Director for Development (DED-D), is now partnering with local SUCs.

The Institute has tied up with UP Los Baños and launched the "Rice Science and Technology (S&T) Webinar Series," which consists of seven episodes focusing on critical rice industry statistics, technologies, and government initiatives in support of rice.

Dr. Karen Eloisa Barroga, DED-D, expounded that this webinar series aims to mold the minds of students in SUCs, who will soon be the next-generation scientists and innovators.



Rice information presented can also be used as bases for theses of students or be incorporated in lectures of teachers.

"We want to facilitate awareness of the students and faculty on rice, particularly in its contribution to food security and the economy," she added.

Partnership with Central Luzon State University is in the works and expected to start in March, and DA-PhilRice also plans to collaborate with other SUCs.



Seeking guidance for better public service. In compliance with Republic Act No. 11163, DA-PhilRice held its first National Bible Day Forum, Jan. 30. Over 600 participants from the Institute and fellow government agencies nearby reflected on how the Bible plays a role in their lives as individuals and public servants. Above, Executive Director John de Leon (2nd from left) is giving Dr. Ronnie Domingo, forum speaker, a certificate of appreciation and with them are Dr. Jasper Tallada, DED-D Karen Eloisa Barroga, and Dr. Ricardo Orge who served as panelists of the forum.

SHEREEN R. FRANCIA

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Rice education improved for increased awareness

KATRINA JANELLE T. ALARCON

As appreciation and understanding of rice are vital steps in helping the country achieve enough rice supply, DA-PhilRice recalibrates its frontline education program to ensure that visiting learners will value rice and rice farmers; and gain substantial knowledge on rice science and technology.

Executive Director John de Leon recently issued a memorandum designating rice experts from each division to respond to the learners' needs, further improving the Institute's quality of service to its stakeholders. This move is part of the transition from virtual to face-to-face interaction, as the Institute anticipates a higher number of visitors this year.

As a knowledge hub for rice science information in Nueva Ecija, DA-PhilRice accommodated more than 2,000 learners in 2022, including farmers, extension workers, journalists, students, scientists, partner-agencies, policymakers, and dignitaries from the British Embassy in Manila, *Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas*, and Gambia Standards Bureau.

Last year's evaluation report showed that knowledge gain exceeded learners' expectations and increased their awareness of the value of rice. The report also showed that they were very satisfied with the services of the frontline educators and campus facilities.



Lorelie Vee Domingo (left), one of our official frontline educators, explains to the visitors the characteristics of the pigmented rice, a healthier type of rice. This exhibit is displayed at the Rice Science Museum.

The Institute's learning spots include the Rice Science Museum, FutureRice Farm, *Palayamanan*, experimental fields, Rice Gene Bank, laboratories, and rice machine display, which also serve as an avenue in promoting campaigns such as the "Be RICEponsible" - an initiative encouraging consumers to not waste rice and to consume the nutritious brown, red, and black rice.

The Community Relations Office leads the planning and skills development training for frontline educators, in partnership with the local government unit of Science City of Muñoz and the Department of Tourism. 🍌



De-stress for wellness. Wellness hubs like a meet-up spot on a rooftop called Roofscape, D'Pharm Herbal and Vegetable Garden, and an arboretum were launched in a mindsetting and mental wellness activity of the development sector, Jan. 24. Initiated by the Office of the Deputy Executive Director for Development, the activity was aimed to strengthen teamwork and encourage staff to de-stress after a hard day's work. 🍌 KATRINA JANELLE T. ALARCON

New Strat Plan prioritizes GAD

GLAIZA D. CARRERA

Anchored on the Institute's mandate, DA-PhilRice continues to ensure that gender and development (GAD) is integrated in its new strategic plan to be implemented from 2023 to 2028.

Projects under the new programs are evaluated through a checklist determining whether these are gender-sensitive and responsive. Implementers also ensure that harmonized GAD guidelines, which provide a framework for project development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation are followed.

In a study conducted by the Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries (PCAF), results show that women's "full participation" in agriculture is limited despite its "increasing roles in rice-farming activities."

PCAF said that women are more engaged than men in capital and seed sourcing, transplanting, palay drying, milling, and marketing.

Dr. Diadem G. Esmero, GAD Focal Point System-Technical Working Group Focal Person, said that program planning for the next five years was guided by the Sustainable Development Goal on gender equality.

She also said that inclusivity is included in the Institute's core values



DA-PhilRice GAD Focal Person Jungie A. Diamsay shares her knowledge on gender equality during the 5-day Gender Mainstreaming training at the International Rice Research Institute, Feb. 6-10.

and attributes, ensuring that all stakeholders are provided with equal opportunities regardless of gender, age, or abilities.

"Inclusivity also drives us to value diversity of origins, perspectives, beliefs, and sociocultural contexts while creating equitable access and opportunities that fit capacities, roles, and needs," she said.

Inclusivity in the Institute's operations is evidenced in the increase of

budget attribution from a mere 5.35% in 2017 to 38.63% in 2021.

Late last year, DA-PhilRice GAD was awarded as one of the five recipients of the 2022 Government Best Practice Recognition (GBPR) by the Development Academy of the Philippines among 219 entries.

Among its best mainstreaming practices include the creation and localization of a GAD Focal Point System, and training of staff in ensuring that DA-PhilRice products, research, and extension services are gender-sensitive and responsive.

DA-PhilRice also shared its GAD practices to the city government of San Jose, Nueva Ecija and National Irrigation Administration in Region 3. 🍌

Fungal biological agents show potential vs rice pests

CRIS MAE T. NECESITO

To find alternative methods for controlling pests, researchers from DA-PhilRice Agusan evaluated the effectiveness of insect-killing fungi in managing rice pests.

The study, "On-Farm Evaluation on Entomopathogenic Fungi, *Beauveria bassiana* (Bals.) Vuill. for the Management of Rice Bug in Agusan del Norte" compared the potential of the fungi with farmers' conventional insecticide application against brown plant hopper, rice bug, and rice black bug.

According to researcher Belen Tabudlong, the use of these fungi can result in over 50% cost savings and can cause more than 60% mortality in insect pest populations. The study also

offers environmental and economic benefits.

The fungi were cultured with the *B. bassiana*-infected rice bug in flat bottles inoculated into 200g culture substrates with the use of corn.

These substrates were suspended in water then applied in an infected field using a spray bottle.

The study was awarded best research paper during the recent Regional Symposium on Research and Development Highlights (RSRDH) by the Caraga Consortium for Agriculture, Aquatic, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development and will be published in the Philippine Entomologist Journal.



With a 60% mortality rate, fungus *Beauveria bassiana* paralyzes the body of rice bug samples.

Tabudlong conducted the study with Malou Villaruben and Noel Quiroben. 🍌

RiceBIS-assisted coop ups sales from PhP16k to Php200k

FRANZEL MONIQUE D. BONILLA

Rayuray Brown Rice, a brand assisted by DA-PhilRice Batac, gained better-than-expected sales from 1.75 tons to 10t, sold at P60/kg in just two months.

Rayuray Farmers Agriculture Cooperative (RFAC) in Batac City, Ilocos Norte reported a jump in sales from PhP16,000 in 2021 to PhP200,000 in 2022, in which the 10t-sales were achieved in August and September.

"The significant increase came from the intensified promotion of consumption of brown rice. We thank the Rice Business Innovations



Nutritious brown rice marketed by the Rayuray Farmers Agriculture Cooperative.

System (RiceBIS) project here for supporting us in marketing and in developing our products," Guillermo Quemquem, coop chair, said.

"The RiceBIS team assists the coop on marketing, financial management, and links them to

profitable markets," RiceBIS Project Lead Leah May Tapeç said.

Interested buyers may reach the group via Facebook Messenger (Rayuray Farmers Agriculture Cooperative) or call/text at 0995 911 3940 or 0975 212 4173. 🍌

Quezon farmers satisfied with RCEF digital system

RHEA GRACE Y. MALAPASCUA

Candelaria farmers in Quezon—the first Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) farmer-partners who tried the *Binhi e-Padala* in the province, were satisfied with the inbred rice certified seeds distribution in their area in Dec. last year.

Rosalinda Ramos Porto shared that from 30 min to an hour waiting time during regular seed distribution, the transaction using the system only took around 3-5 min.

She added that the distribution had no long queues, and that she was able to choose her preferred variety.

"*Binhi e-Padala* is commendable because it reduces our transportation costs. There's no need for us to deliver to far places. Expenses were also lessened as only four people were needed in distribution," Domingo Brion Jr, seed grower and



Prior to release of certified seeds, the Quezon Palay Seed Grower Association, Inc. scans QR codes in seed sacks for system input.

member of the Quezon Palay Seed Grower Association, Inc, said.

In the *Binhi e-Padala*, RCEF farmers receive seed distribution schedules

through a text message from DA-PhilRice. Qualified farmers then confirm their availability by replying to the message. 🍌

RSTC grad-farm school owner taps DA-PhilRice Negros

RINZO D. VALDEVIESO



A farm school owner who graduated from the RCEF-Rice Specialists' Training Course (RSTC) is collaborating with DA-PhilRice Negros to help address rice production constraints in Capiz.

Farm school owner Kryztof Ray Carillo of Dao, Capiz said he intends to help address low yields, high seeding rates, and poor nutrient management practices in their locality.

"I am confident in conducting the training and giving technical advice because of the comprehensive experiential learning I acquired from RSTC," Carillo said.

Through the collaboration, R&D Coordinator Alvin Palanog said they will promote the use of NSIC Rc 506, 40kg/ha seeding rate, drumseeder, and *Abonong Swak* recommendations.

Carillo will co-fund the establishment of demo sites and monitor these weekly and provide technical guidance.

Farm inputs will be offered to farmer-partners at a reduced cost with payments to be collected after harvesting.

Partnership initiatives with the local government unit will also be formalized within the first quarter of 2023. 🍌



Catanduanes farmers are hopeful for the Malusog Rice to improve nutrition in provinces with high cases of Vit. A deficiency.



Malusog Rice to address malnutrition in Catanduanes

AZRYL MAY M. JIMENEZ

As one of the pilot provinces identified with high cases of malnutrition, Catanduanes is now ready to produce and distribute *Malusog* Rice.

The betacarotene-enriched rice was established in San Andres and Virac this dry season with an expected harvest of 26t in 4.82ha in May 2023.

Harvested *Malusog* (Golden) Rice will be dispersed using the program-based buyback system approach, in which the National Food Authority (NFA) will purchase the rice from the farmer cooperators, and sell it as milled rice.

NFA is partnering with the concerned provincial and municipal local government units in procuring the *Malusog* Rice and will be distributed in feeding programs and relief operations.

Jerry Marquez, one of the farmer-cooperators in Virac, expressed his anticipation for an abundant harvest for their community to consume this type of rice.

"It was a good journey to experience the planting of *Malusog* Rice last season. I learned new useful practices, and the local government

unit was easy to coordinate with to help us," Marquez said.

Provincial Agriculturist Nelia Teves acknowledged the success of the pilot-scale deployment in the province and assured policy and technical support for implementing the *Malusog* Rice program from the Provincial Agriculture Services Office (PASO) and municipal agricultural offices.

Selected households in Viga and Virac, Catanduanes received the first milled *Malusog* 1 or NSIC 2022 Rc 682GR2E during the *Unang Ani ng Golden Rice: Isang Pasasalamat* in Dec. 2022. 🍌



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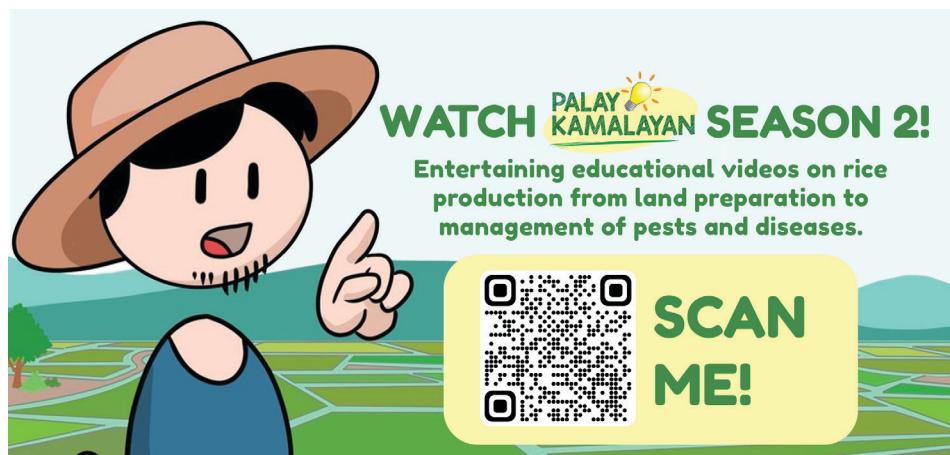
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Direct seeding gains interest among CAR, Region 2 farmers

DIANA P. LIM

The Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) - Seed Program in San Mateo, Isabela has observed a gradual transition in crop establishment with the machines introduced in RCEF demo farms.

Called *PalaySikatan*, RCEF farms promote the use of direct-seeded technologies such as precision seeder, drum seeder, and seed spreader, which advance the practice of the 40kg/ha seeding rate, in 39ha in Kalinga, Ifugao, Quirino, and Nueva Vizcaya this dry season.

According to Dr. Andres dela Cruz, DA-PhilRice Isabela RCEF coordinator, farmers are now trying direct-seeding as a solution to labor scarcity and its high cost.

Dela Cruz said that farmers already know about the direct-seeding technology but are hesitant to adopt because of limited operation skills in using the machine and doubt in low seeding rate.



Johny Ego, farmer-cooperator from Tabuk City, Kalinga and a first-time user of the precision seeder, reported that the machine reduced his expenses in rice production.

"Normally, I would spend Php10,000-Php12,000/ha for crop establishment alone, but now, I only spend Php5,000/ha," Ego said.

With the use of direct-seeded technologies, seed requirements

for 1ha and labor cost for crop establishment were reduced from 100-120kg to 40-60kg and Php10,000 - Php5,000 respectively.

Promotion of mechanical direct-seeding through the RCEF *PalaySikatan* demo farms started in the 2020 dry season. 🍌



Partnership with NIA aims for better communication strategies

SYLVIA THERESE C. QUIRING

Learning gaps in rice production technologies will soon be addressed in certain Mindanao regions through a communication needs assessment (CNA) to be conducted with the National Irrigation Administration (NIA).


OIC Branch Director Ommal Abdulkadil of DA-PhilRice Midsayap

said that the CNA results will guide the two organizations in delivering timely and harmonized communication and extension services.

Representatives from the irrigators' associations in Regions 9, 12, and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao will be selected.


In 2022, the station distributed about 100,000 knowledge products and conducted around 30 knowledge sharing and learning activities. 🍌





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Awards and Recognitions



Holy Angel University Board of Trustees

Order of Saint Gabriel Archangel
Outstanding Achievement



Dr. John C. de Leon
Executive Director

Scientific Career System

Newly Upgraded Career
Scientist II



Dr. Manuel Jose C. Regalado
Chief Science Research Specialist, CES

Mariano Marcos State University (MMSU) Alumni Association, Inc. Distinguished Alumna



Dr. Leylani M. Juliano
Chief Science Research Specialist, CES

JAN-FEB

Gantimpala Agad Awardees

Lifelong Learning Series
Committee, CES

Training Management Team, CES

Maria Shiela M. Muros, Los Baños

Jesusa M. Rivera, CES

RCEF Los Baños

RCEF Midsayap

RCEF Agusan

Seed Delivery Inspectors, Isabela

RCEF Isabela

RCEF Batac

RCEF Bicol

RCEF Negros

RCEF CES

Pasasalamat Awardees

Enrique Catalan, CES

Jayson Patayan, CES

Danna Mae Katrina M. Palada, Batac

John Paul A. Palillo, Los Baños

Jolita B. Carandang, Los Baños

Jenelie T. Ulep, Isabela

Anna Marie Bautista-Berto, CES

Raven Jenessa B. Dumlaog, Isabela



MARCH ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

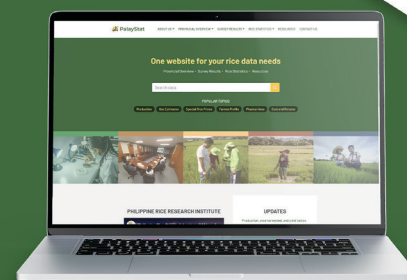
- 1-31** Women's Month Celebration
- 6-10** RCEF Short Course on Pest and Nutrient Management in Claveria, Masbate
- 7-8** Social mobilization (SocMob) for RCEF Seed implementation in Northern and Eastern Samar, and Leyte
- 7-9** Multimedia Training for Isabela station's staffers
- 10** Stakeholders Awarding and Retooling for agricultural extension workers (AEWs) in Eastern Visayas
- 13-24** RCEF Training-of-Trainers (RCEF-TOT) on high-quality seeds
- 14** Stakeholders awarding and retooling for AEWs in Bicol
 - SocMob for RCEF Seed implementation in Camarines Norte and Sur, and Catanduanes

- 3rd wk** Malusog Rice distribution in Catanduanes
- 24-25** DA-PhilRice Bicol 12th Anniversary
- 27-31** RCEF-TOT for Batch 1 in Lower Magat, Diadi, Nueva Vizcaya
- 28-30** Multimedia Training for Bicol station's staffers
- 29-30** CES dry season Lakbay Palay
- 29-30** Batac station dry season Lakbay Palay

TO BE ANNOUNCED:

Agusan station 1st Quarter Review
Technical briefing on Malusog Rice for stakeholders
Malusog Rice field walk in Quirino
DA-PhilRice Isabela Lakbay Palay

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