

2023

PhilRice R&D Highlights



MALUSOG RICE



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Malusog Rice

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INTRODUCTION

In 2023, the Philippines continued its second year of deploying Malusog Rice, led by DA-PhilRice in tandem with IRRI. The informal seed system is employed in introducing Malusog Rice on a pilot scale in selected areas for promotional and market testing purposes.

PROJECT 1

Supply: ensuring availability and access to Malusog Rice

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Malusog Rice seeds and grains were produced in 2023 in 10 regions and 21 provinces across the country through PhilRice stations, partners, and farmers. Genotyping concluded that nucleus seeds produced during the DS had 99.8% purity; 99.6% in WS. Average milling recovery was around 65.0%; physical attributes and physicochemical properties were acceptable. Majority of the Malusog Rice samples analyzed met the desired carotenoid content with an average of 5.10µg/g.

Breeding work continues to transfer the Malusog Rice trait into popular, high-yielding local inbred rice varieties. From the 23 introgression lines developed and evaluated, six lines in the backgrounds of NSIC Rc 402, Rc 358, Rc 238, Rc 160, Rc 222, and PSB Rc 18 were selected as candidates for varietal registration. They are currently undergoing a multi-location trial cum distinctiveness, uniformity, and stability trial (DUST) to generate agronomic and grain quality data.

High-iron and high-zinc rice (HIZR) is currently undergoing the final stages of biosafety regulatory assessment. We will apply for the commercial propagation permit once we receive the certification of Field Trial completion. Meanwhile,

stacking work of HIZR with the beta carotene-enriched Malusog Rice has commenced at IRRI to develop 3-in-1 rice varieties.

PROJECT 2

Demand: creating and responding to the demand for Malusog Rice

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PROJECT 3

Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation Team that conducted the Market Studies

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With the increased supply of Malusog Rice, 3,500kg of milled rice were distributed to 700 households at risk of VAD in seven provinces: Quirino, Catanduanes, Antique, Samar, Agusan del Sur, Lanao del Norte, and Maguindanao. An acceptability study saw that 96% of households would include Malusog Rice in their diet once widely available; 96% were willing to pay for it; and 94% were satisfied with its storage, cooking, and eating qualities.

Further, 77,325kg of milled Malusog Rice were distributed for promotional purposes and sampling. Part of this supply was used in market tests across the 7 targeted provinces, resulting in the sale of 8,086 kg. The market test results indicate that Malusog Rice is marketable and has a price comparable to regular well-milled rice. All 14 participating partner retailers expressed willingness to restock and resell Malusog Rice, and nearly all customers (98.56%) indicated they would repurchase the product.

A sustained communication campaign promoted the acceptance and uptake of Malusog Rice. The campaign developed 35 knowledge products and marketing collaterals, distributing them to 14,450 stakeholders. A monthly e-newsletter was sent to over 914 stakeholders and partners, receiving a 90% satisfaction rate. Press releases on Malusog Rice were monitored, with 72% of stories having a positive tone, published locally (63%) and globally (37%). Social media efforts included five posts per week, resulting in 26,736 total engagements and a reach of 433,906.

In addition, the program's visibility was ensured across various media platforms. Thirty-five public service announcements were produced and pitched to radio

partners, 30 of which were aired 30 times on 15 radio stations. Furthermore, 11 radio interviews were arranged across 11 stations, and 17 stories were written, with 10 published on different media outlets. Collaboration with the Center for Culinary Arts resulted in the development of 20 Malusog Rice recipes, soft-launched on social media. One recipe, “Chicken Pastil at Malusog Rice,” was featured during the 2023 International Rice Congress. The next step involves developing and launching a recipe book in 2024.

Experiential promotions, in collaboration with government, private agencies, and LGUs, were conducted. This included 20 webinars/symposia/conferences both local and international for knowledge sharing, and participation in 55 exhibits and trade fairs for direct interaction with audiences. Additionally, 71 taste tests and 10 market tests assessed consumer acceptability. Hands-on experiences were provided through 14 farm walks and 21 techno-demo farms. Two cookfests encouraged housewives to develop recipes using Malusog Rice.

PROJECT 4

Governance: creating an enabling environment for the deployment and uptake of Malusog Rice

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Carried out were 450 stakeholder engagements in the form of briefings, dialogues, conferences, symposia, seminars, webinars, promotional activities, orientations, market-testing, and milled rice distribution activities with 21,738 stakeholders reached (25% of which are consumers, 16% farmers, 26% intermediaries like policymakers, and 32% general public). Conducted to draw support and participation in the implementation of the Malusog Rice Program, these engagements resulted in the following outcomes: 23 resolutions issued in 23 provinces/municipalities, 9 institutional policies, 32 statements of support, 19 buyback arrangements mostly by the local government units in the target provinces, 5 partner-initiated cookfests, 11 partner-initiated feeding programs, 42 partner-initiated publicity materials, 170 farmers participating in the cultivation of Malusog Rice, and 700 households responding in the acceptability study.