



Governor Petilla Acknowledges ViCARP's Contribution to the Agricultural Progress of Leyte



Governor Petilla further said "these agricultural advances had brought us far to some corners and we are not about to turn around back and lag behind again". The new governor pointed out the agricultural progress that the past administration of the provincial government had brought upon Leyte particularly on high value vegetables and fruit crops and how this has significantly changed the lives of farmers and farmer entrepreneurs for the better.

Governor Jericho L. Petilla acknowledged the contribution of the Visayas Consortium for Agriculture and Resources Program (ViCARP) to the agricultural advancement of the province of Leyte in his message during the Farmers' Field Day on August 9, 2004.

Governor Petilla said, "as an active member of ViCARP, Leyte has availed of and benefited from LSU's most adaptable agri-innovations ." Some of the agri-innovations he identified were modified swine dispersal, artificial insemination of large animals and innovations on rootcrops and abaca production and business management.

Governor Petilla also said that LSU could be of great help to the province to fend off the high cost of hybrid rice seed it purchased if, with its resources, it will undertake hybrid rice seeds production.

He also spoke of the mari-culture zone that the province considers to establish. He stressed his support to the technology knowing that this could help the province become self-sufficient of fish supply. He further stressed that " with LSU having a pool of advance and modern agricultural and fisheries technologies, Leyte can truly become an agriculturally developed province." 

ViCARP is Runner-up of 2004 Ugnay Award

ViCARP was again declared as runner-up of the Ugnay Award.

The Ugnay Award is conferred annually by the Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (DOST-PCARRD) to the consortium that has displayed an outstanding performance in R & D management and technology promotion and dissemination in its region.

ViCARP received such credit in recognition of its "facilitative strategy in enhancing the involvement of the regional offices of DOST and DTI in providing technical, financial and marketing assistance to micro-small medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Eastern Visayas".

The consortium was also cited to have "established a strong partnership with local government units in support of technology promotion and R & D utilization". Also, it "has sustained a strong coordination of R & D projects among its member-agencies".

ViCARP was also awarded as first runner up in 1995 and 1996. In 1997, it bagged the Ugnay award for the first time and, in 2003, it again garnered the prestigious award.



RRDCC Chairperson and LSU President Paciencia P. Milan and ViCARP Director Jose L. Bacusmo received the award from DOST Secretary Estrella F. Alabastro assisted by PCARRD Executive Director Patricio S. Faylon (left) and NEDA Secretary Romulo L. Neri (extreme right) during the awarding ceremonies held on November 10, 2004 at the PCARRD Headquarters in Los Baños, Laguna.

The consortium received a plaque of recognition and a cash prize of P100, 000.00 during the awarding ceremonies held on November 10, 2004 at the PCARRD Headquarters in Los Baños, Laguna.

The Ilocos Agriculture and Resources Research and Development Consortium (ILARRDEC) is this year's Ugnay Awardee. The Central Luzon Agriculture and Resources Research and Development Consortium (CLARRDEC) is also one of the runners-up. 🌱

ViCARP Celebrates 26th Anniversary

With the government's austerity measure, ViCARP held a simple, yet memorable celebration of its 26th anniversary on November 17, 2004.

The consortium staff with some Leyte State University (LSU) staff, gathered at the ViCARP office for the celebration.



ViCARP Director Jose L. Bacusmo blows the ViCARP candle during the consortium's anniversary

Aside from its birthday, ViCARP has another reason to celebrate. This year, it was chosen as one of the runners-up of the *Ugnay* (Outstanding Research and Development Consortium) Award.

Since 1978, ViCARP has been operating as a consortium of agencies and institutions undertaking research and development in agriculture and natural resources in Eastern Visayas.

In its 26 years of service, ViCARP has reaped numerous awards including the *Ugnay* Award in 1997 and 2003. 🌱

ViCARP Participates in Joint RTP-RACO-RMIS Coordinators' Meeting on Techno Gabay



Engr. John Glenn C. Ocaña of DOST-8 and Regional Technology Promotion Coordinator Hazel Grace T. Taganas (both in white) represent ViCARP in the Joint RTP-RACO-RMIS Coordinators Meeting on Techno Gabay.

ViCARP-Regional Technology Promotion (RTP) Coordinator, Hazel Grace T. Taganas and Regional Applied Communication Officer, John Glenn C. Ocaña attended the Joint RTP-RACO-RMIS Coordinators' Meeting on October 11-13, 2004 at PCARRD, Los Baños, Laguna.

During the meeting, each consortium gave updates on TG implementation including the problems encountered such as the lack of funds, difficulty in monitoring of TG activities, non-sustainability of the program, differences in structures and negative attitude of some TG staff. Some participants presented possible solutions to said problems.

Participants of the meeting also defined the roles of the RTP, RACO, and RMIS Coordinators in the TG implementation.

Some of the identified roles of the RTP Coordinator were to lead the planning and implementation of the program, link with host agencies about interconnectivity, coordinate the trainings, update or intensify content build-up of Farmers' Information and Technology Services (FITS) Centers, ensure the participation of MS in TG promotion and e-commerce, oversee operationalization of FITS Centers, conduct monitoring and evaluation and assist the FITS Centers in the resource generation.

The RACO Coordinator, on the other hand, shall strengthen and sustain cooperative working relationship with and among communication specialists in the RDE community, pool scant communication resources of the consortium members and cooperating agencies, develop and upgrade regional communication capability, provide IEC services to the consortium and TG Program, conduct communication research on IEC strategies and lead in the process documentation of consortium activities and TG program.

RMIS Coordinators are expected to assist PCARRD-MISD in the identification of trainees through coordination with TG, conduct Training Needs Assessment, accomplish the FITS Center ICT Capability Situationer Questionnaire, identify the training venue, set up facilities and equipment in the training area before the session begins and ensure that all equipment needed for the training are working.

The participants also formulated a work plan of TG activities from 2005-2010. ViCARP's work plan is to promote and establish additional TG centers, strengthen established TGs, monitor and evaluate TGs, and institutionalize TGs.

PCARRD also oriented the participants with the Knowledge Networking Towards Enterprising Agricultural Communities (K-AGRINET), a program that seeks to provide farmers, fisherfolk, extension workers, and agri-entrepreneurs in the rural areas with ICT-enabling tools for acquiring technological information. The different technology delivery models were also presented.

The participants also gave updates on RDE convergence initiatives. RTP Coordinator Taganas presented the ViCARP-TG and RRDEN-CPAR Convergence Framework. 🌱



in May 22, 2003 was established with funds from the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), German Foundation for Development (GTZ), and LSU. PCARRD and DOST released P500, 000 each for the project. GTZ, on the other hand, pitched in some P 1.4 million for the renovation of the lab and purchase of equipment. Dr. Goltenboth also gave an additional P 140, 000 for the purchase of chemicals and laboratory supplies. The Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR) also committed to donate P500, 000 as its counterpart.

Conceptualized due to the prevalent abaca bunchy top disease that plagues Leyte and Southern Leyte, the Leyte State University (LSU) Plant Disease Diagnostic Laboratory formally kicked off on December 2, 2004 with a blessing of the laboratory and its premises. Former Visca-GTZ Consultant Friedhelm Goltenboth and Deputy Director of the Leyte Island Project (LIP) Allen Molen graced the occasion. Mr. Molen represented LIP Adviser Dr. Peter Keller.

The laboratory, an offshoot of the PCARRD-ViCARP-coordinated meeting of abaca stakeholders

For the first three years, the laboratory will accept indexing job of abaca from abaca farmers free of charge, after which, it will charge reasonable fee to clientele.

The laboratory does not limit its services to abaca farmers alone. Diagnostic tests may also be done for other crops. Dr. Lucia M. Borines, a molecular plant pathologist of the Department of Pest Management (DPM), has been assigned as caretaker of the laboratory. A science research assistant has been hired by LSU to assist Dr. Borines. 🌱

ViCARP, RRDEN Re-Validate Regional Integrated RDE Agenda and Programs

The Visayas Consortium for Agriculture and Resources Program (ViCARP) and Regional RDE Network (RRDEN) re-validated the Regional Integrated RDE Agenda and Programs (RIRDEAP) on fisheries, agriculture, environment and natural resources and engineering, industry and energy on August 30, 2004 at the Sabin Resort Hotel, Ormoc City.

The activity, which was attended by a total of 144 R & D workers and stakeholders, was in line with ViCARP and RRDEN's aim of ensuring the relevance of RDE programs to the needs of the region. It served as a venue for ViCARP and RRDEN to determine what RDE activities and commodities should be given priority. Also, knowing the RIRDEAP of the different RDE sectors facilitates complementation in agenda and programs of institutions in the region involved in agriculture R & D.

Forester Edilberto E. Nasayao, Regional Technical Director for Research of the Department

of Environment and Natural Resources -8 (DENR-8), presented the RIRDEAP on environment and natural resources. On the other hand, Ms. Justerie M. Granali, RIFRC Manager of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources -8 (BFAR-8), presented the RIRDEAP on fisheries while Southern Leyte State University (SLSU) Vice President for R & E, Valerio B. Cabalo, presented the RIRDEAP on engineering, industry and energy.

There were seven presentors for the RIRDEAP on agriculture. They were Dr. Lelita R. Gonzal of the National Abaca Research Center (NARC), for abaca; Dr. Othello B. Capuno of LSU, for corn; Ms. Fe Hipe of the Department of Agriculture-8 (DA-8), for rice; Dr. Marcelo Quevedo of the Philippine Root Crops Research and Training Center (PhilRootcrops), for rootcrops; Dr. Andrew T. Orais of DA-8, for livestock and poultry; Dr. Francisco T. Dayap of DA-8, for fruitcrops; and Prof. Tessie C. Nuñez of the National Coconut Research Center-Visayas (NCRC), for coconut. 🌱



The Farm and Resource Management Institute (FARMI), Visayas Consortium for Agriculture and Resources Program (ViCARP), Leyte State University (LSU), and Cornell University conducted the first regionwide System of Rice Intensification (SRI) on-farm trials in Eastern Visayas from July-October 2004. SRI is a system of growing rice that offers unprecedented opportunities for improving rice production under reduced purchased inputs, lower water use and high use of organic fertilizers.

The on-farm trials came after Dr. Norman Uphoff, Director of Cornell International Institute for Food Agriculture and Development (CIIFAD) delivered a seminar about SRI at LSU.

Fourteen rice-growing areas in Ormoc City, Maasin City, the Leyte municipalities of Jaro, Baybay and Babatngon, and Biliran, Biliran served as test sites. Results of the trials revealed an average of 1.81 tons/ha increase in rice yield. In every test site, both SRI and the conventional rice culture were used to grow rice. Rice grown using SRI gave an average

yield of 9.42 tons/ha while rice grown using the conventional practice gave a yield of only 7.61 tons/ha.

A big difference in the number of tillers per hill was also observed. Rice grown using SRI produced 25-35 tillers per hill though only one seedling was planted in every hill while those grown using the conventional culture produced only 9-18 tillers despite the 3-6 seedlings planted per hill.

Because of this rice yield increase, FARMI in partnership with ViCARP and RRDEN are active in promoting SRI in more areas in Region 8. 🌱



Rice planted the SRI way has better growth and higher yield than those planted using the traditional practice.

ViCARP, RRDEN Conduct 16th R and D Symposium

The Visayas Consortium for Agriculture and Resources Program (ViCARP) and the Regional Research and Development/ Extension Network (RRDEN) joined efforts in conducting the 16th Regional Symposium on Research and Development Highlights on August 30-31, 2004 at the Sabin Resort Hotel, Bantigue, Ormoc City.

The activity was attended by a total of 144 R & D workers, administrators and policy makers.

Highlighting the activity were the presentation of the best basic, applied and development papers. A total of 16 papers were presented, six of which were basic researches, seven were applied researches while three were development projects.

The study entitled "Regeneration of Abaca (*Musa textiles* Nee) From Shoot Tip Explants Through Somatic Embryogenesis" conducted by Dr. Marilyn M. Belarmino, Dr. Lelita R. Gonzal and Ms. Elizabeth C. Parac won the Outstanding Basic Research Award.

Researchers Dr. Maria Juliet C. Ceniza, Dr. Paciencia P. Milan, Dr. Victor B. Asio, Ms. Salome B. Bulayog, Ms. Mylene D. Napiza, Mr. Marlito Jose M. Bande, Mr. Hernando L. Mondal, Mr. Darwin B. Posas and Mr. Jimmy Pogosa, on the other hand, garnered the Outstanding Applied Research Award for their study on "Status, Ecological Changes and Market Study of Products of Rainforestation Farms".

The Outstanding Development Project Award went to researchers Glicerio N. Pernito, Alicia D. Bulawan, Mario Socrates P. Tisado, Jose Jimmy C. Palma, Dionesio M. Bañoc, Carlos S. De la Cruz, Marciano S. Sacay, Reynalda T. Tisado, Epigenio U. Bartolini, Jecella A. Demegillo, Elvira C. Torres, and Rufino B. Ayaso III of DA-8 for their paper on "Piloting A Community-Based Participatory Action Research in Selected Key Corn-Based Areas in Eastern Visayas".

A total of 30 posters were also presented during the event. The poster entitled "Fiber



RRDCC Chairperson and LSU President Paciencia P. Milan cuts the ribbon to mark the opening of the 16th R & D Symposium. Looking on are DOST-8 Regional Executive Director Edgardo M. Esperancilla (extreme left), Secretary of the Ormoc City Mayor Manuel Pascual, ViCARP Director Jose L. Bacusmo (back of Dr. Milan), DA-BAR Chief of Regional Programs Rustico David and DA-8 Regional Technical Director for Research Felix V. Quero Jr. (extreme right).

Characteristics of Promising Abaca Accessions in NARC Germplasm Suited for Specific Industry End Uses" of Dr. Luz O. Moreno, Ms. Amie A. Parac and Mr. Felix L. Ocon won the Outstanding Poster Award. 🌱

ViCARP-RMIS Updates ViCARP Website

ViCARP members can now post news and announcements online.

RMIS Coordinator Sean O. Villagonzalo announced this during the 4th quarter joint REACTF-RMIS meeting on December 3, 2004 at the OVPRE AV Room, LSU, Baybay, Leyte.

"We designed the ViCARP website in such a way that ViCARP members can update other member agencies about their future activities and latest developments without necessarily being experts on web page development," Engr. Villagonzalo said.

Engr. Villagonzalo taught the REACTF and RMIS members how to update the ViCARP website. He also stressed the importance of designating one staff per agency to do the updating. Only those authorized by their agency head will be given the passwords needed to access the webpage. 🌱

PCA-8, BAFPS Conduct Techno Demo and Public Consultative Forum of Draft Philippine National Standards for the Virgin Coconut Oil

Imelda C. Tangpuz, PCA-8

In a joint effort to make the public aware of the new and latest addition of the Philippines to the family of coconut products in the world market, famously known as Virgin Coconut Oil (VCO), the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) Regional Office No. VIII and the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standard (BAFPS) main Office, initiated the Visayas wide Techno Demo and Public Consultative Forum of Draft Philippine National Standards (PNS) for the VCO on October 27, 2004 at the Hotel Don Felipe in Ormoc City.

The activity aimed to create awareness of the public on the potentials of the VCO as a valuable resource that could provide a wide variety of important functional benefits for people from all sectors of society. Secondly, it was also the proper venue for presenting the Drafted Philippine Product Standards for the VCO, being a new product, as conceptualized by the BAFPS.

Participants were the municipal LGUs, coconut stakeholders, academe, Department of Health specifically the Bureau of Foods and Drugs, some line agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs), farmer organizations and individuals interested of the VCO.

A total of 92 participants from Cebu, Iloilo, Bohol and the provinces in Eastern Visayas attended and actively participated in the open forum.

The invited resource persons for the affair were: Mr. Gilberto F. Layese, the OIC – Director of BAFPS Main Office who made a presentation on the *Standards Management in the Philippines*; Mr. Carlos B. Carpio,

Deputy Administrator for Research, Development and Extension Branch (RDEB) of PCA Central Office, who presented the *Draft Philippine National Standards of VCO*; and Mr. Paul Mamangon, a chemist that represented the VCO producers in Luzon, who shared his actual experiences while doing actual research on VCO that dates back to the early 90's (1993).

Ms. Mary Grace S. Rivere of BAFPS initiated the conclusion of agreements.

Mr. Alen G. Molen, GTZ Deputy Program Adviser of the Leyte Island Program (LIP), gave an overview of the LIP. During his brief discussion, Mr. Molen emphasized their involvement and support on VCO production, which is among the major concerns of the LIP.

The participants articulated well their queries, views and apprehensions on VCO during the open forum. The resource persons then mustered intelligent answers thereby satisfying the curiosity of the active and aggressive participants.

A very brief Techno-Demo in the afternoon then followed with Mrs. Julieta S. Uy, Provincial Coconut Development Manager of PCA Leyte, as the resource person.

Before the one-day activity winds up, a great number of participants from Eastern Visayas agreed to federate into a group of VCO producers in Region VIII and decided to meet again for their first organizational meeting on November 11, 2004 at the PCA regional Office, Government Center, Baras, Palo, Leyte. 🌿

NFA CELEBRATES 32ND ANNIVERSARY

Mary Agnes R. Militante, NFA-8

Amidst threats of privatization and abolition, the National Food Authority (NFA) celebrated on September 2004 its 32nd year of service to the Filipino people.

In the light of the current fiscal crisis the country is experiencing, this year's celebration was marked with simplicity yet meaningful activities, highlight of which was the conduct of "Oplan Palengke Watch".

Teams composed of NFA employees were deployed to the major markets in Tacloban City, Palo and Tanauan, Leyte to look into the supply and prices of commercial and NFA rice and at the same time to monitor the grains businessmen's adherences to the Philippine Grains Standardization Program (PGSP).

The team apprehended five persons with violations like failure to renew NFA license, illegal possession of NFA rice, non-display of price tag and no NFA license. Those apprehended were already summoned.

Meanwhile, on the issue of the agency's abolition or privatization for reportedly having contributed to the country's fiscal problem, the NFA, which is primarily mandated to stabilize supply and price of our basic staple is definitely not profit-oriented, according to NFA Regional Manager Benjamin B. Marta.

Selling low-priced good quality rice uniformly throughout the 7, 100 islands of the country, conducting relief operations during natural and man-made calamities and ensuring the farmers a ready market of their produce and a fair return of their investments through government support price are social responsibilities of the government that entail social costs. Marta explained that the programs of the agency are consumers' and farmers' gains. "No private entity will ever take on that responsibility because our kind of business is not for profit", he said.

"Indeed, it will be self-serving to say that the agency in its 32 years of service have a good track record in the stabilization of the process and supply of rice and other commodities such as sugar, vegetables, canned goods, noodles and certified rice seeds", Dir. Marta continued.

However, he underscored that even as it is self-serving to drumbeat against NFA abolition or privatization, we shall continue to do so, not only for ourselves but for millions of Filipino farmers and consumers whom we have been committed to serve.

Martha aired his concern that being a part of this sector for so many years, we are cognizant to the repercussions if NFA will no longer be there for the people. An unimaginable and imminent rice crisis just like in 1995 will become a constant threat to the nation.

Martha pointed out that with the value of the peso going downhill and without NFA's presence in the market, a rice price hike will definitely occur. Consequently, prices of other commodities will likewise spiral.

Martha stressed that for several years now, even as gasoline prices and its by-products have been constantly increasing, the price of rice has remained stable and affordable throughout the country because of NFA's stabilizing effect. If the government ceases its social responsibility of providing food security for its people through the NFA, this kind of crisis can trigger turmoil and can have wide-ranging consequences.

There is no doubt that rice, being our staple food is a socially sensitive commodity. In particular, Region 8 will be adversely affected, as we are a rice deficit area, Martha ended. 🌱

Growing Corn the CPAR Way

Raelleen S. Diaz

If you think growing corn means no more than sowing and waiting for the crop to reach its ready-to-harvest stage, think twice. Farmers in Barangay Pagsang-an, Abuyog, Leyte grow corn in various ways and earn three times higher than those who use the traditional approach. With the schemes conceived and implemented by the Community-based Participatory Action Research (CPAR), tripling corn yield is not anymore impossible.

CPAR is a banner program of the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) that aims to fast tract technology promotion, adoption and create immediate impact in the countryside. The Eastern Visayas Integrated Agricultural Research Center (EVIARC) through the Regional Integrated Agricultural Research Center (RIARC) in Abuyog, Leyte piloted a CPAR project in Barangay Pagsang-an. The project, conducted from 1999-2003 aimed to promote a sustainable agricultural development in selected corn-based farming communities in the region.

RIARC established four technology demonstrations representing the project components namely, Corn Production Technology, Corn-based Vegetable Production, Corn + Poultry Integration and Farm Mechanization Demonstration.

With the adoption of corn production technologies such as use of hybrids and open-pollinated varieties, minimum tillage, detasseling and utilization of bio-control agents, corn yield dramatically increased to a remarkable 3.5 tons/ha from 0.8-1.0 tons/ha.

The Corn - based Vegetable Production Scheme on the other hand, taught farmers about various vegetable production practices such as the use of plastic mulch and bio-control agents. Squash, which gave the highest yield among all vegetables planted in the area had a total yield of 8.92 tons/ha. Before the project was started, the yield of squash reached a maximum of only 5 tons/ha.

In Corn + Poultry Integration, RIARC promoted the infusion of Triple Production Red (TPR), a chicken from Ohio, USA, to native chicken. With this infusion, a 22% raise in income was generated.

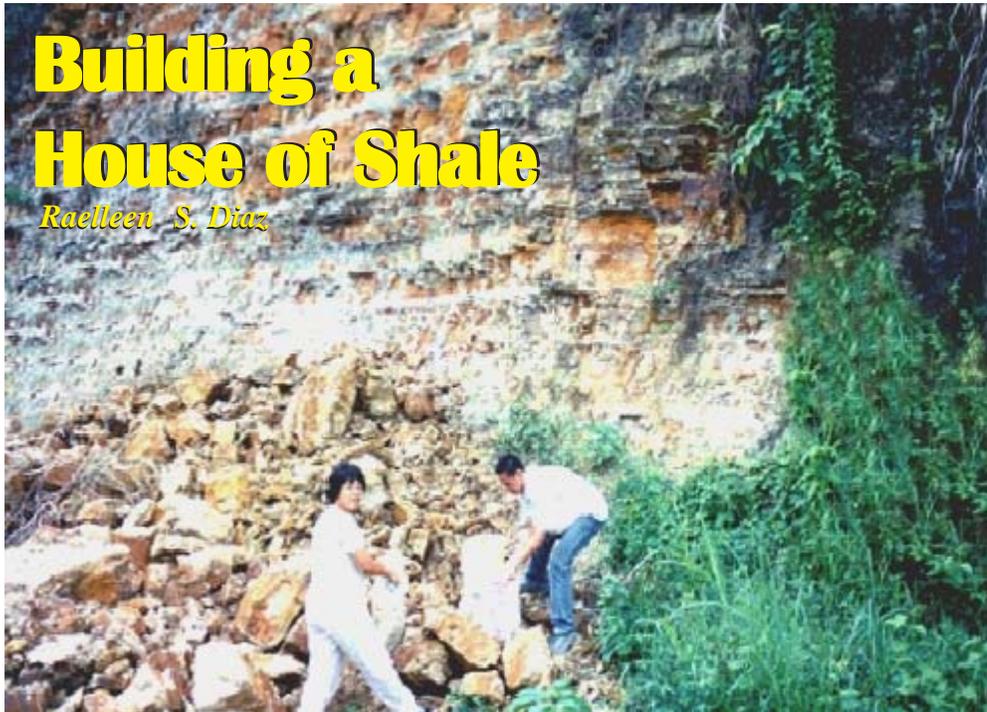
Farm mechanization such as post-harvest equipment and farm machinery contributed significantly to reduction of labor and thus, invited profit.

The project was also successful in its pursuit to mobilize LGUs and farmers' participation in the planning, implementation and monitoring activities. Also, it was



instrumental in establishing and strengthening linkages with LGUs, barangay officials, and non-government agencies, and other stakeholders.

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Building a House of Shale

Raelleen S. Diaz

The abundance of shale is a red flag to the applied earth

For some people, shale is nothing but a peril to the environment. But for those who dream of owning a comfortable but affordable house, this rock is a blessing in disguise.

It's no bluff. Findings of the study of Civil Engineers Mirzi L. Betasolo, Ronald Orale, Lourdes Amante and Felisa Gomba of the Samar State University (SSU) revealed that in terms of structural strength, shale is a good material for low-cost housing.

A hazard to the environment

Shale is a type of sedimentary rock formed from clay. Of all sedimentary rocks, it is the most abundant. Its abundance however poses a problem to the environment. When wet, shale weathers very easily to form mud and reduces water quality, choke streams, lakes, reservoirs and harbors. Worst, it causes landslides and floods.

The call for low cost housing materials

Most people prefer a concrete house due to its sturdiness. However, the cost of sand

and gravel, the aggregates that cover about three-fourth of the total composition of a concrete, had increased dramatically due to the high cost of delivery from its source. With this, the poor has no choice but to content themselves with their rickety nipa house and the likes. Thus, the call for a cheaper aggregate.

Shale as an answer

The adverse effects of shale to the environment and the high cost of housing materials at present had prompted the four civil engineers of SSU to conduct a study that would determine the utilization of shale resources for low cost housing.

They tested the potential of shale as a substitute for sand in terms of its physical properties (unit weight, gradation, specific gravity and absorption), attainable compressive strength and cost. They found out that shale is indeed a good alternative for sand in making concrete.

The physical properties of shale fall under those of a lightweight aggregate except that it absorbs more water. It is suggested that in forming the concrete, the amount of water must be twice more than the amount of the shale aggregate.  *to page 12*

Delia dela Calzada: A Farmer Par Excellence

Raelleen S. Diaz



Imagine a field full of crops, with ready-to-harvest-fruits dangling from branches and vines, leaves so green like no other and flowers promising a bountiful harvest in the months to come. Now imagine the same field being devastated by a savage storm.

Such occurrence is enough to discourage farmers particularly those whose only source of livelihood is farming. But Mrs. Delia "Manang Del" dela Calzada reacted the opposite way. She refused to give up when a cruel storm hit her farm in 2002 leaving her nothing but an empty field waiting to be tended again. Instead, she did all her best to restore what the storm had ruined. Just a few months after, Manang Del's farm had become a sight to behold.

Manang Del's long-known perseverance and hardwork make her stand out from other farmers in Barangay Pagsang-an, Abuyog Leyte. It was no wonder when she was chosen as farmer-scientist for the Bureau of Agricultural Research' (BAR) Community-based Participatory Action Research (CPAR) project. It was CPAR that paved her way to become a farmer-scientist for Techno Gabay, a program conceptualized by PCARRD and implemented in Region 8 by ViCARP. When the Farmers' Information and Technology Services (FITS) component of Techno Gabay was launched in Abuyog, Leyte, ViCARP looked for an empowered farmer who could serve as farmer-scientist for the program. Manang Del, being an active CPAR farmer-scientist and a proven farmer-leader was the perfect choice.

As a Techno Gabay farmer-scientist, Manang Del serves as a facilitator in the adoption of relevant technologies. She provides technical assistance to on-farm visitors and never fails to conduct home and farm visits to inform farmers about new technologies. She is oftentimes invited as resource person during trainings, seminars and field days. During the Farmers' Field Day (FFD) held in conjunction with the 79th anniversary

celebration of the Leyte State University (LSU) on August 9, 2003, she served as the resource speaker on vegetable production to more than 1,000 farmers.

Manang Del is known to be innovative and receptive to new technologies. She applies technologies that she learned from the seminars and cross-visits she had attended. She is also popular among her fellow farmers as a farmer-composer-writer. She writes drama scripts or comical skits for culmination programs of farmers' classes and trainings and composes farming-inspired songs.

With the excellence that Manang Del displays, she is always a top priority in every DA and ViCARP sponsored – agriculture-related educational trips, trainings and seminars. In November 2003, she was among the 16 participants who were given the chance to join the educational trip to the vegetable highlands of Cebu. In June 2003, she also participated in the Major Island Techno Gabay Convention (MITGC) for the Visayas Cluster at the Aklan State University (ASU), Banga, Aklan. In both trips, she learned a great deal about novel technologies, which she had tested in her farm.

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(Growing Corn... continued from page 9)



Dr. Carlos P. Dela Cruz could not conceal his gladness as he received the 2nd Best Development Project Award from DOST Secretary Estrella F. Alabastro while NEDA Secretary Romulo L. Neri (extreme right) and PCARRD Executive Director Patricio S. Faylon (left) look on.

(Delia dela ... continued from page 11)

“Manang Del is no ordinary farmer. She’s also an influential leader and a great teacher. She has a hunger for new technologies and doesn’t waste time to test them. If one of these technologies works, she doesn’t hesitate to tell other farmers about it”, RIARC Information Specialist Alicia Bulawan says of her. Indeed, anyone who knows Manang Del would attest that she, in fact, is a farmer par excellence. 🌱

RIARC’s efforts did not go unnoticed. The center’s hardwork paid off when the project was declared as Best Development Project during the 16th Research and Development Symposium held at Sabin Resort Hotel, Ormoc City on August 30-31, 2004.

(Building a ... continued from page 10)

With a compressive strength falling within the range of a standard lightweight concrete block, shale as an aggregate is of good quality.

Moreover, it was awarded 2nd Best Development Project in the entire country during the PCARRD 32nd Anniversary held on November 10 at PCARRD Los Baños, Laguna. 🌱

Also, utilizing shale resources will reduce construction cost for about 30% to 40%. Compared to the P150, 000 cost in building a 30- square meter -residential house using sand, one needs only P80, 000 – 90,000 using shale.

Shale’s abundance, which had been detrimental to the environment, is actually an advantage to those who dream of owning a low-cost house. So, be wise and build a house of shale. 🌱

Editorial Staff

Editor

Dr. Wolfreda T. Alesna

Layout Artist Raelleen S. Diaz

Editorial Consultants

Dr. Paciencia P. Milan
Dr. Jose L. Bacusmo

Production Assistants

Anilfa L. Abenoja
Arsenia M. Posas
Pauline S. Caintic
Tamar L. Mejia Sr.

Contributors

Raelleen S. Diaz
Mary Agnes R. Militante
Imelda C. Tangpuz



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Leyte State University (LSU)
Visca, Baybay, 6521-A Leyte, Philippines
Tel. No. (053) 335-2615
E-Mail Address: vicarp_lsu@yahoo.com
