

ACCESS

The Official Publication of the Agricultural Training Institute



From **15**
to **500**
The Success of the
ATIng Gulayan ng DA
Free Seminars
p.8

e-Learners share
their opinion on
POVERTY
and **FOOD**
INSECURITY
p.13

AgriTalk
BRINGING GREEN IDEAS IN THE HEARTS OF CITIES
p.6

RECYCLING
INVENTOR TURNS COOKING OIL INTO BIOFUEL

IT TIME IN PUERTO PRINCESA

CONTENTS

- 1 Potentials of Phl cacao explored at free seminar
- 2 International expo features all things agri
- 3 Aton sets new directions for ATI
4 new courses added to e-Learning's list
- 4 Metro residents learn income-generating technologies at AgriTalk
ATI joins nat'l movement to raise rice awareness
- 5 MPM-RD scholarship caps off Batch 4



ACCESS

The Official Publication of the Agricultural Training Institute

Editor-in-Chief Antonieta J. Arceo |
Associate Editor Erika Z. Vizcarra |
Writers and Contributors Jeremy Agsawa, Ajea C. Alcantara, Marianne B. Antonio, Corazon Z. Cabangbang, Clemente A. Gabion, Jayvee P. Masilang, Daniel U. Nilo, Romermart Aubigne Peñamora, Karl Louise M. Salibio, Larry Illich N. Souribio, Angelica Marie T. Umali, Catheryn M. Villorente, Erika Z. Vizcarra | **Layout and Creatives** Angelica Marie T. Umali | **Adviser** Dir. Alfredo S. Aton, MPS-DM

This publication is quarterly published by the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute (DA-ATI)
Elliptical Road, Diliman,
Quezon City, Philippines

Printed in the
Republic of the Philippines

Copyright 2018, All rights reserved.

AGRITALK: Bringing green ideas in the hearts of cities 6
Cover Story

An overnight success: ATIng Gulayan ng DA Free Seminars 8
Feature

- 10 Free seminar takes interest in mushroom start-ups to new level
Seminar on free-range chicken production highlights opportunities
- 11 More communities go green with urban agri gardens
- 12 Corn, cassava achievers recognized, linkages continue to strengthen

If there is poverty in the city, there co-exists food insecurity. Do you agree or disagree? 13
Insights

Potentials of Phi cacao explored at free seminar

Catheryn M. Villorente

DILIMAN, Quezon City—Cacao is a cash crop that can provide good income. With its short gestation period, a farmer can earn up to Php150,000 from a hectare of cacao.

Its production, market potentials, and processing were some of the major points discussed during the last of the series of free seminars of the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) in 2018.

Various cacao experts were invited to talk about a list of topics on cacao production and processing. Kennemer Foods International, Inc. technical manager, Pedro Cruz, presented the cacao production and market potentials.

He shared some good agricultural practices in cacao production such as the provision of shade and what kinds of crops are suitable for intercropping.

He also stressed that cacao is a good choice since the Philippines has the ideal climatic conditions for growing this crop. Aside from this, cacao beans are the main ingredient in many products ranging from food to cosmetics. The most popular of which is chocolates made from cacao mass, cacao butter, and sugar.

Cacao production also has support from the government for it is an integral part of various programs and projects. Some of these are the Department of Agriculture-High Value Commercial Crops, Department of Environment and Natural Resources-National Greening Program, Philippine Coconut Authority's Kasaganahan sa Niyugan ay Kaunlaran ng Bayan, Land Bank of the Philippines - Cacao 100 and many others. By 2020, it is estimated that the demand for cacao will reach up to five million metric tons, a good business opportunity for smallholder farmers engaged in cacao.

Meanwhile, Rose Dela Cruz and Joycedel Macias, chocolate researchers from Biao Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Cooperative showed the participants the processing of chocolate from cacao beans. Some of the attendees even joined the hands-on activity on chocolate preparation.

ATI Officer-in-Charge Director Luz Taposok graced the opening program of the event and encouraged the participants to share their learning with their families and friends, "You can serve as our multipliers and mentors to those farmers and individuals interested in cacao."

About 230 individuals interested in cacao farming attended the free seminar that was held at the ATI Rural Development Education Center on November 9, 2018. They expressed appreciation for the free seminar and looked forward to the 2019 series. ★



Supervised by chocolate researchers from the Biao Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Cooperative, some of the participants join the chocolate-making activity during the free seminar.

International expo features all things agri

Jayvee P. Masilang

PASAY CITY, Metro Manila—Agriculture programs, products, technologies, ideas, innovations, and many more were on showcase during AgriLink/FoodLink/AquaLink 2018 which featured the 25th International Agribusiness Exhibition and Seminars.

With the theme “Efficient Value Chain in the Hog Industry: A Must for Continued growth”, the event underlined the importance of the farm-to-fork chain that begins from the producers and travels along the entire production and marketing route. Furthermore, each phase in the value chain has to be studied to identify the gaps that lead to inefficiency and substandard quality products.

Department of Agriculture Undersecretary for Agribusiness and Marketing Jose Gabriel “Pompee” La Viña graced the opening program. He mentioned the importance of events like AgriLink to showcase the opportunities in agriculture and to attract more people, especially the younger generation.

“Activities such as this enable our people to see the richness and benefits agriculture can provide. With our government’s vision of having available and affordable food for every Filipino, empowering our farmers and the agriculture industry will be key in attaining this and improving our economy,” La Viña said.

The Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) took part in the said activity by giving out free information, education, and communication (IEC) materials on agriculture and fisheries. These included kits and titles on urban gardening, organic agriculture, crop production, lowland and highland vegetable production, pest and diseases, herbs and spices, as well as recipe guides, newsletters, and eco bags.

The ATI also partnered with owners of nine farms that are mostly accredited as its Learning Site (LS), Extension Services Providers, and Farm Tourism Site from Central Luzon and CALABARZON. This is to give them direct market and networking opportunities.

The participating farmers were from K-D Farm in Nueva Ecija; Eco Natural Integrated Farm and Tingtano Integrated Farm in Tarlac; Luntiung Republika in Cavite; Forest Wood Garden in Laguna; Vilela’s Farm and MoCa Family Farming RLearning Center in Batangas; EV Sanchez Agri Farm in Rizal; and Beegood Agriventures in Quezon.

One of the LS cooperators present in the event was Emma Tolentino of Eco Natural Integrated Farm. Aside from promoting their products, Tolentino shared her expertise on organic

concoction production through a seminar with more than 70 farm enthusiasts.

“We should use organic fertilizers for our plants and animals so that they will grow healthier. We should consider this because we eat what we produce,” Tolentino shared. Aside from concoctions, Tolentino mentioned other materials she uses in her farm as organic fertilizers which include mushroom fruiting bags, rice straws and rice hulls, animal manure, ornamental plants, and others.

More than 1,700 individuals visited the ATI booth during the three-day expo, while the featured farms garnered a total sales of around Php122,000.00. AgriLink/FoodLink/AquaLink 2018 took place last October 4-6, 2018 at the World Trade Center. ★



Agriculture products and free reading materials on the ATI booth caught the attention of farming enthusiasts who joined the AgriLink/FoodLink/AquaLink 2018.

Aton sets new directions for ATI

Erika Z. Vizcarra

DILIMAN, Quezon City—New Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) director, Alfredo Aton, sets the tone for the next few years as the Institute turns another leaf under his leadership.

In a meeting with ATI division chiefs, Central Office section chiefs, and training center directors, Aton asked for everyone's cooperation and support in improving the bureau's programs and services for the stakeholders and the public.

"I hope that everybody in our organization will work together towards the same direction. We need to ensure that the Institute is in line with [Agriculture] Secretary Manny Piñol's thrusts," he said.

With this, he asked for a review of the strategic plan to see how far the ATI has come and find out if amendments are necessary. ATI Management Association president and ATI Cordillera training center director Arlene Flores and Policy and Planning Division chief Milagros Urbano were tasked to lead this undertaking. Under his term, Aton aims to guide the ATI in "reaching the ground" consistent with Piñol's directive. A one-day free seminar per month has then been lined up by all training centers nationwide starting 2019.

Aside from this, at least an hour of financial literacy lectures will be incorporated in all ATI training initiatives. This is in support to the Department of Agriculture's (DA) financial aid programs for farmers, fisherfolk, and other stakeholders.

Meanwhile, to monitor the accomplishments of the network of ATI offices, Aton requested for a quarterly physical and financial review. Likewise, top-performing centers will be recognized every year.

The Institute is also set to celebrate its 32nd anniversary in January next year. All training centers are expected to hold festivities in their respective areas in the simplest way possible, Aton urged.



Director Alfredo Aton calls for the review of the strategic plan.

Other activities lined up early 2019 are the annual review and the crafting of ISO quality objectives and risk assessment planning workshop.

Prior to the meeting, all the 16 training center directors received one unit of vehicle each during a simple turnover ceremony.

Aton was designated as the new OIC of the ATI through DA Special Order

No. 1180 dated December 3, 2018.

A native of North Cotabato, Aton worked for 21 years in the provincial governor's office. He started as accounting clerk before rising to the ranks as financial examiner and management and audit analyst. In 2016, he became the deputy director of the ATI.

The direction-setting meeting and vehicle turnover were held at the ATI Central Office compound on December 10, 2018. ★

4 new courses added to e-Learning's list

Catheryn M. Villoriente

DILIMAN, Quezon City—In line with its goal to empower and build the capacities of its stakeholders, the Agricultural Training Institute continues to develop its e-Learning program for agriculture and fisheries.

In addition to its existing 55 free online courses, four new courses were developed and uploaded to provide the growing number of e-Learners with technical knowledge in growing crops, raising livestock, and in agribusiness.

Now online and open for enrollment are: Advance Beekeeping, Growing Carrot the Natural Way, Improving Quality of Life: Growing Rice

Organically and Rise and Grind: Coffee Processing as an Enterprise.

Courses are composed of two to four modules that discuss production, processing, management, and opportunities of the said commodities. To enroll, visit www.e-extension.gov.ph/elearning. Certificates for these new courses can be downloaded from the website itself once the registered e-Learner has completed the requirements for each course.

These e-Learning courses were developed by the ATI regional training centers in Cordillera, CALABARZON, and Northern Mindanao. ★

Metro residents learn income-generating technologies at AgriTalk

Catheryn M. Villorente

DILIMAN, Quezon City—Metro Manila residents are getting more inspiration to make agriculture as a business venture with the help of farming experts from different parts of the country.

In the third leg of the AgriTalk seminar series, residents from different urban areas became more aware of the benefits of agriculture, particularly, square-foot gardening, mushroom production, organic concoctions, goat production, and exotic fruit trees.

“The topics discussed were very informative, interesting, and helpful. The technologies presented can also be a source of income and, when applied, will help eliminate hunger,” Linda Gokioco from Caloocan City said.

Gokioco is among the estimated 540 agriculture enthusiasts who flocked the event, which was spearheaded by the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI).

The experts who served as resource persons included ATI Learning Site owners Honorio Cervantes of Cervantes Farm in Cagayan de Oro and Emma Tolentino of Eco Natural Integrated Farm in Tarlac.

Central Luzon Integrated Agricultural Research Center for Upland Development chief, Emily Soriano, and Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office III science research specialist, Robinel Ocampo, also talked during the event, together with Agriculture Magazine editor Zac Sarian.

Budding organic farming entrepreneur, Jead Grace Saronicman, from Quezon remarked, “It was my first time to attend this seminar and I learned a lot. It increased my interest in agripreneurship and I will definitely be joining all of your events from now on.”

AgriTalk is a collaborative project of the ATI, Manila Bulletin Publishing Corporation, and Bureau of Agricultural Research.

The project’s Metro Manila event was held last September 28, 2018 at the ATI Rural Development and Education Center. Meanwhile, the last AgriTalk for the year was held in Davao City on October 17, 2018. ★

ATI joins nat’l movement to raise rice awareness

Jayvee P. Masilang

DILIMAN, Quezon City—The Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) showed its support to the National Rice Awareness Month (NRAM) thru several activities this November.

Last November 5, an exhibit was launched at the ATI main lobby which featured products and technologies in rice farming. Among these were traditional rice varieties, alternate wetting and drying technology, rice based products, rice machineries, and the Philippine Rice Information System (PRISM) and Rice Crop Manager (RCM) apps. The said products and technologies were showcased until November 9.

Also on November 9, ATI staff and personnel were briefed on the activities and message of NRAM by their rice focal person Janelle Faye Tanudtanud. She highlighted the key messages of the celebration this year

which is linked towards the theme “Quality Rice, Quality Life”.

“This year, NRAM addresses the gap between farmers and consumers. We should be aware of the value of quality rice in advancing the life of rice farmers, consumers, and all others who depend on rice,” Tanudtanud explained.

Present in the NRAM briefing was successful rice farmer Ernesto Perlas. He shared how their family turned their life around through farming. Perlas and his family own the Perlas ng Palayan Farm in Nueva Ecija, a recognized Learning Site of the ATI, which promotes and showcases family farming.

“I am a soldier turned overseas worker turned farmer. My farming life started when I joined training programs on growing rice, corn, and

vegetables. Now, my family and I are one in farming and helping other farm enthusiasts,” Perlas shared.

After the briefing, the ATI family dug in a boodle fight featuring brown rice. This is part of NRAM’s message of promoting better health through healthier rice.

The celebration will next be shared to students as ATI will conduct NRAM briefing in a school in Metro Manila on November 23. This is through its ‘Glamourizing Farming through Urban Agriculture’ project. The activity aims to reach children to learn about basic rice value chain and gain appreciation on rice. ★

MPM-RD scholarship caps off Batch 4

Angelica Marie T. Umali

TAGAYTAY CITY, Cavite—As part of the efforts to improve institutional linkages of government agencies for better governance and sustainability of rural situation, the scholarship on Masters in Public Management, Major in Rural Development (MPM-RD) was granted to another batch of students.

A total of 114 government employees engaged in rural development work from the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) were part of this fourth and latest leg of the scholarship program.

The scholars completed the 42 units of academic requirements in a span of 18 months. Through a blended learning approach, a combination of traditional face-to-face classroom interaction with online learning, they were guided by professors from the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP), University of the Philippines Diliman, Ateneo de Manila University-Ateneo School of Government, and Xavier

University in Cagayan de Oro City.

Mc. Bien Saint Garcia of the DA–Office of the Secretary attained the highest Grade Point Average among the Batch 4 scholars and delivered the class address; while the Leadership Award was given to Melba Ariño of DENR. Furthermore, the best Rural Development Action Plan and Project was awarded to Ariño and her fellow group members, Dennis Ariño (DENR) and Marlito Cabuños (DA). Their project is a case study in Mapanas, Northern Samar which aimed to improve the well-being of coastal communities through coastal ecosystem management.

Meanwhile, MPM Alumnus Dr. Nicamil Sanchez led the Public Manager’s Oath and MPM-RD Batch 1 Alumna Hazel Ann Alforja led the Alumni Association Oath-taking.

More than 70 of the scholars came from the DA, where 19 are from the ATI. ATI’s Information Systems Researcher III, Joeven Calasagsag shared, “Apart from the formal

academic concepts of leadership, management, and rural development that we learned, what mattered most was the collaboration, camaraderie, and bond that were developed during this learning journey. It was not just a personal trip, it was an expedition which carried the aspirations and ideals of our respective clients. It reminded us about our beneficiaries who strive to improve their lives through the services and interventions that we, the scholars of the government, will deliver to them.”

DA Undersecretary for Operations Ariel Cayanan, DENR Assistant Secretary Jesus Enrico Moises Salazar, and ATI Director Alfredo Aton graced the event. Also present were ATI Regional Training Center directors Rogelio Evangelista, Pat Andrew Barrientos, Dr. Eden Bautista, and Dr. Carolyn Daquio.

The MPM-RD Batch 4 Commencement Exercises was held at the DAP Conference Center on December 17, 2018. ★

ATI Information Officer III Yovina-Claire Pauig receives her diploma in Masters in Public Management, Major in Rural Development from DAP President and CEO Atty. Engelbert Caronan, Jr., MNSA.



AGRI TALK

BRINGING GREEN IDEAS IN THE HEARTS OF CITIES

Marianne B. Antonio

People are changing the city landscape.

With the growing awareness on urban agriculture, residents are beginning to believe in the promising opportunities of farming in the city. More and more urban communities are adopting the countryside lifestyle through the establishment of home and communal gardens.

The increasing number of farm-to-table advocates is evident in last year's AgriTalk series in different regions in the country.

First launched in 2017, AgriTalk is a joint effort of the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) and the Manila Bulletin Publishing Corporation, through the Agriculture Magazine. It is a free one-day seminar intended to highlight opportunities in agribusiness by featuring experts and success stories in various agricultural fields. Through lectures, exhibits, and special demonstrations, participants are fueled with knowledge and inspiration to plant in the comfort of their own homes.



A learning opportunity for everyone

The first AgriTalk in 2018 kick-started in Iloilo City which gathered 400 agriculture enthusiasts, farmers, agricultural extension workers, and students. They learned new technologies in producing organic concoctions, square-foot gardening, mushroom production, goat production and management, and edible landscaping.

Also in partnership with the Bureau of Agricultural Research and the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office (DA-RFO) VI, the event reinforced everyone's role in food security.

In his welcome remarks, Dr. Peter Sobrevega, Regional Technical Director for Research and Regulation of DA-RFO VI, encouraged the attendees' active participation in attaining affordable and available food for the country.

Meanwhile, the second AgriTalk held in Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija, emphasized the economic potentials in farming. It was attended by 400 Central Luzon farmers and farming enthusiasts.

Desiree Duran, president of the Bulacan-based ATI Learning Site, Duran Farm Agribusiness and Training Center Association, Inc., shared the income opportunities in farm tourism.

Likewise, Honorio Cervantes, square-foot gardening expert from Cagayan de Oro; Celestino Mananguit, 2016 Gawad Saka awardee; and agriculture experts from DA-RFO III discussed various technologies in urban farming.

Free information, education, and communication materials from the ATI and Manila Bulletin Publishing Corporation were also distributed during the event.

Practical and helpful topics

In the third AgriTalk, some 540 Metro Manila residents were further provided with practical knowledge on agribusiness.

Linda Gokioco, participant from Caloocan City, said that the topics were “informative, interesting, and helpful.” She added, “The technologies presented can also be a source of income and, when applied, will help eliminate hunger.”

Experts during the event include Emma Tolentino of Eco Natural Integrated Farm in Tarlac; Emily Soriano of Central Luzon Integrated Agricultural Research Center for Upland Development; Robinel Ocampo of DA-RFO III; and Zac Sarian, editor of Agriculture Magazine.

The fourth AgriTalk was held in Davao City with 376 participants. This was also the first ever AgriTalk in Mindanao. During the event, the Dabaonons were encouraged to create their own mini farms in their respective households.



Dante Simangan, Manila Bulletin Vice President for Circulation Department, urged the participants to contribute in providing fresh food for the community. DA Assistant Secretary for Livestock Enrico Garzon, Jr., and ATI Region XI Center Director Dante Esguerra, likewise, expressed their support in the promotion of urban agriculture.

Davao region residents were educated on various practices in exotic fruit trees production, cacao production, square-foot gardening, mushroom production, making organic concoctions, and growing ornamentals.

From the production of farm-to-table foods and utilization of limited spaces to planting seeds of sustainability, AgriTalk underscores that the establishment of home gardens is key. Seeing the big turnout in 2018, the ATI and the Manila Bulletin Publishing Corporation will continue to intensify the promotion of urban farming through the AgriTalk series.

For 2019 and beyond, agriculture enthusiasts in other key cities in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao can look forward to the free learning opportunity provided through the AgriTalk events.

AN OVERNIGHT SUCCESS
**ATING GULAYAN NG DA
FREE SEMINARS**

Larry Illich N. Souribio



The first "ATIng Gulayan ng DA" free seminar in January 2017 was attended by 15 people in a small hall at the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI). The topic was Edible Landscaping. It was rather an underwhelming number for such an interesting topic.

The second free seminar was held less than a month after. More than 500 individuals showed up, so two training halls were used and a broadcast was done outside the building and through Facebook live. The topic was Mushroom Production.

In the succeeding months that free seminars were conducted, more and more people showed up to learn new knowledge on agriculture and fisheries. Attendees included almost every societal group in the metro.

How did this simple event earn so much recognition in such a short span of time?

The power of social media

Recovering from disappointment after the first free seminar, the ATI utilized a promotion that is ingenious but familiar. It turned to Facebook for its massive information dissemination about the undertaking.

Within hours of posting the infographic about the schedule of the seminar series, the "ATIng Gulayan ng DA" Facebook page earned 2,000 likes. It was also bombarded with hundreds of direct messages asking for the details of the topics and the seminar's requirements. Phones also rang non-stop from calls from interested individuals who are not tech-savvy. The image was shared more than 5,000 times and reached more than 100,000 Facebook users. It was a viral hit that even then National Youth Commission chairperson Cariza "Aiza" Seguerra shared it on her Instagram feed.

One netizen, Alberto Bryan Lanica III, rated the Facebook page five stars and wrote a review: "This is good for all. This helps us learn new ideas and technologies through research and development that is relevant in our times."

Keeping the momentum

More people from all walks of life continued to visit the agency to inquire about the different programs and activities in agriculture and fisheries. More people are now talking about how they can start their own gardens in their homes and communities.

"I attended [this seminar] because I know that there will always be new knowledge that can be learned. If there are no seminars like this, those who seek for new knowledge will have nowhere to go," shared Bong Jiao, a businessman who attended the Mushroom Production Free Seminar.

Attendees of these free seminars were amazed about how they can apply the knowledge that they gained

even in their own households. The concepts and practices are very applicable even without farm lands. Furthermore, the topics are not restricted to highly technical agriculture topics. There are also topics on livelihood ideas through food processing.

The cost of free

Aside from attending the seminar, participants are also required to bring plastic bottles. One bottle will be turned into a planting container for vegetables. They can then take this home as a souvenir during the seminar. Another bottle will be donated to ATI. This will be used as an improvised container for planting vegetables for the "ATIng Gulayan Garden" within the ATI compound. Not only do they learn something, they also help the environment by donating plastic bottles that oftentimes contribute to the garbage problem of the city.

Free to dream

Free seminars will still continue to educate the people of the city. Aside from teaching them essential and relevant topics, these will show everyone that agriculture is an important sector in our country.

Thousands of individuals have already attended the free seminars offered by the ATI. Even though it initially intended to cater to residents in the city, many of the participants came from different provinces all over the country.

It is the goal of this activity to educate the people of the possibilities in farming and fishing. It also envisions an urban population who practice agriculture through urban gardening.

From a mere 15 people, 15 hearts, and 15 minds, ATIng Gulayan ng DA Free Seminars will continue to touch thousands more. In the years to come, Filipinos would know how to feed themselves and their families and no one will go hungry.



Free seminar takes interest in mushroom start-ups to new level

Catheryn M. Villoriente

DILIMAN, Quezon City—To assist its clientele in acquiring skills, knowledge, and attitude on agribusiness, the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) continues to offer free seminars on the production and processing of various commodities.

Since growing mushroom has become popular, the Institute turns this trend as an opportunity to provide enthusiasts demonstration of technologies that could help them succeed in this enterprise. Hence, a free seminar on mushroom production was conducted.

Agriculturist Jennifer Reyes from Department of Agriculture (DA) MiMaRoPa served as the speaker during the seminar. She shared some technologies on the successful preparation of substrates for mushroom fruiting bags, bagging of substrates, sterilization, and inoculation.

She also stressed the importance of having the right attitude when venturing into mushroom production, “There should be no shortcuts in the processes. If you do take the shortcut, all of your inputs and hard work will be for nothing.”

For those who want to venture into the mushroom enterprise, Reyes urged them

to study its market first. She encouraged the participants to check out what kind of mushroom has high market demand before going to business.

The participants expressed their gratitude for the activity. Tony Bolos from Makati said he really appreciated the free seminar for he was able to interact with the speaker and hear her experiences firsthand. Prior to the seminar, Bolos has been watching mushroom culture videos on Facebook and YouTube.

He furthered that the seminar added to his motivation to try mushroom enterprise, “It really encouraged me to do this (mushroom-growing) and try this business out.”

Annie Bautista from Novaliches was also very grateful since she has been looking for training on mushroom-growing for several years now. This time, she learned more about the technology.

“Thank you, DA and ATI, for helping out Filipinos who want to have livelihood and uplift their own lives.”

This free seminar was held last October 19, 2018 at the ATI Rural Development Education Center. It was attended by around 700 individuals interested in mushroom-growing. ★



Agriculturist Jennifer Reyes of DA-MiMaRoPa shows the participants how to properly prepare mushroom fruiting bags.

Seminar on free-range chicken production highlights opportunities

Ajea C. Alcantara

STA. BARBARA, Pangasinan—Around 60 participants from different municipalities of Pangasinan attended the Free Seminar on Free-Range Chicken held at the Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center (ATI-RTC) I Multi-Purpose Hall, Sta. Barbara, Pangasinan on November 23, 2018.

The seminar was in support to the Department of Agriculture’s (DA) national livestock program in extending free-range chicken production in the Philippines.

Rhoderick Gray, member of Masagana Farmers’ Association and owner of Farm Ambiance, provided lectures, sharing, and demonstrations to the attendees. Gray, a known practitioner of free-range chicken production, discussed his Probiotic Herbal Technique (PHT) which he applies on his poultry.

The components of PHT are squash, ginger, saba, and red chili. According to Gray, using PHT will make a chicken more delicious.

Meanwhile, ATI-RTC I director Rogelio Evangelista encouraged the participants to take notes and feel free to raise their concerns.

“Importante na magkaroon kayo ng participation dito sa seminar. Marapat lamang na kayo ay magtanong kung kayo ay naguguluhan para kayo ay maliwanagan at may matutunan,” Evangelista said.

[“Your (active) participation in this seminar is important. You should ask questions when you get confused so that you’d really understand and learn from the discussion.”] ★



ATI officials and the Camillian Sisters ink the agreement for the ATIng Gulayan ng DA Community Garden.

More communities go green with urban agri gardens

Marianne B. Antonio

LUZON, Philippines—A series of partnership interventions was carried out by the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) as it continues to capacitate the Filipino people towards food security and self-sufficiency.

This is through the establishment of Urban Agriculture Garden Sites (UAGS) and the ATIng Gulayan ng DA Community Garden.

The ATI, through Officer-in-Charge Director Alfredo Aton, has inked a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the Presidential Security Group (PSG), represented by Lt. Colonel Oliver Logan, for the UAGS establishment and turn-over of urban farming starter kits.

The same partnership was also sealed with officers of BF Homes Executive Village in Parañaque, through Roberto Alvarez, Jr. and Tito Tolentino.

In separate MOA signing ceremonies with PSG and BF Homes Executive Village on December 4 and December 8, respectively, Aton expressed his optimism on the project. He emphasized that urban agriculture is a response to the problems on hunger and malnutrition among urban poor families.

The project aims to introduce the values of basic food production, healthy food systems, and clean urban environment to city dwellers. It is also an initiative to incorporate farming into the lifestyle of the urban communities.

The ATI will provide support to the establishment and enhancement of UAGS including farm structure and small-scale machinery, agricultural inputs, and technical assistance.

Meanwhile, an ATIng Gulayan ng DA Community Garden was launched in Kingsville Executive Village in Antipolo City last December 19 in cooperation with the Camillian Sisters Maria

Domenica Development Center, Inc. Highlights of the event include the MOA signing and a ceremonial planting among the Camillian Sisters and ATI officials led by Aton and Partnerships and Accreditation Division chief Renato dela Cruz.

This initiative is to assist barangays, schools, and various community groups in providing available and affordable food in their localities. Technical and logistical support will be given by the ATI in the sustenance of the site. Also, the Institute will take the lead role in the conduct of capability building activities in the community.

The MOA signing for the UAGS establishment and turn-over of agricultural supplies were held in Manila and Parañaque City, while the launching of the ATIng Gulayan ng DA Community Garden was conducted in Rizal. ★

Corn, cassava achievers recognized, linkages continue to strengthen

Erika Z. Vizcarra

BUHANGIN, Davao City—The Department of Agriculture (DA) continues to strengthen its ties with local government units (LGUs) and farmers' groups to boost corn and cassava development as it awards industry achievers nationwide.

In a three-in-one ceremony, DA recognized top-performing LGUs, DA regional offices, and farmers' organizations. This is through the 6th National Quality Corn Achievers Awards (NQCAA), 2nd Cassava Cluster Management Excellence Awards (CCMEA), and 2nd Cornucopia Awards.

Five outstanding provinces, together with their respective provincial agriculturists and provincial corn coordinators; 25 municipalities/cities, including 21 agriculturists and 16 corn coordinators from these areas; and 100 agricultural extension workers were recognized for the 6th NQCAA.

In the second year of the Cornucopia Awards, incentives and recognition were given to farmer organizations implementing value-adding activities on corn and cassava. The awardees are the San Miguel Women Empowerment Movement Rural Improvement Club in Zamboanga del Sur; Calamba Upland Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative in Laguna; and Sion Gintong Araw Agriculture Cooperative in Misamis Oriental.

The 2nd CCMEA awardees, on the other hand, are Mantibugao ARB FC in Bukidnon; San Jose Multi-Purpose Cooperative in South Cotabato; and Fatima Multipurpose Cooperative Carigara Cassava Cluster in Leyte.

Prior to these ceremonies was the 14th Philippine National Corn Congress. The activity served as avenue for industry stakeholders to discuss current issues, share best farming practices, showcase modern farm equipment and technologies, and forge market linkages.



Members of the Sion Gintong Araw Agriculture Cooperative in Misamis Oriental receive their plaque and check for Php2 million as Cornucopia awardee. (photo by ATI-RTC XI)

Among the topics featured were updates on the DA corn and cassava programs; corn farming in Indonesia; corn milling technology; hog industry scenario; and sustainable and profitable production of rice and corn with ameliorant mitigant. Agricultural credit and the food retail scenario were also discussed.

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Food chairperson Cynthia Villar keyed the event. In her speech, she called for support for the legislation on rice tariffication and the implementation of the rice competitiveness enhancement fund.

DA Undersecretary for Operations Ariel Cayanan also gave his message on behalf of Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol. He spoke of the vital role of the LGUs in the implementation

and monitoring various development programs in their respective communities.

The event was held with the theme "Linking Corn Farmers: Towards Inclusive Economic Growth and Competitiveness" to mark the industry's development, which helped boost not only the livestock sector but also the thrust for food security. Around 2,000 delegates, including officials of the Agricultural Training Institute, attended the event on November 14-16, 2018 at D'Leonor Inland Resort. ★

If there is poverty in the city, there co-exists food insecurity. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Note: The opinions shown here were extracted from the online forum among enrollees of the e-Learning course on Basic Urban Gardening (URBAN1). You can check out this course, through e-extension.gov.ph/elearning.



I agree. I believe that one factor of poverty in the cities or any place is food insecurity. People work hard to buy the basic needs of the family and at the top is the food. People are dependent on what the market can offer, if they lack resources to get food then food insecurity exists.

Through urban gardening, people in the cities learn how to produce food for their own consumption within their reach. They don't need to spend a lot of money in buying food because they can just get it in their backyard or, later, if they want, they can produce more and sell it in their neighborhood for extra income.

– Aloha

I agree that if there is poverty in the city, there co-exists food insecurity because in the city, money is utilized to access almost everything—food, clothing, transport, etc.—and poor people [do not] have enough money for these especially for nutritious food.

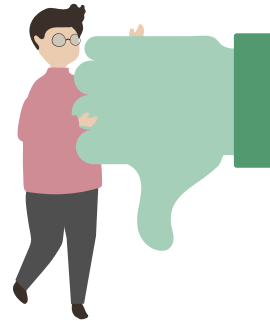
One time, I saw a billboard somewhere in Pasay with a picture of a poor smiling middle aged woman with words written, “The average farmer is 57 years old. Who will feed us few years from now?” (Not the exact words but that’s the idea.) I pondered upon it and realized it’s true. Not just the poor but most people in the city are NOT KNOWLEDGEABLE about farming, much more urban gardening. If only they knew, we could have changed the common notion that poverty co-exists with food insecurity.

– Krystle Joy



I disagree because even though poverty happens in the city, the instinct of people is to look for other means for their daily survival. Urban gardening makes food secure by utilizing resources suitable for urban set-up. Where there is food grown in our home, food is always readily available in our table.

– Jayson



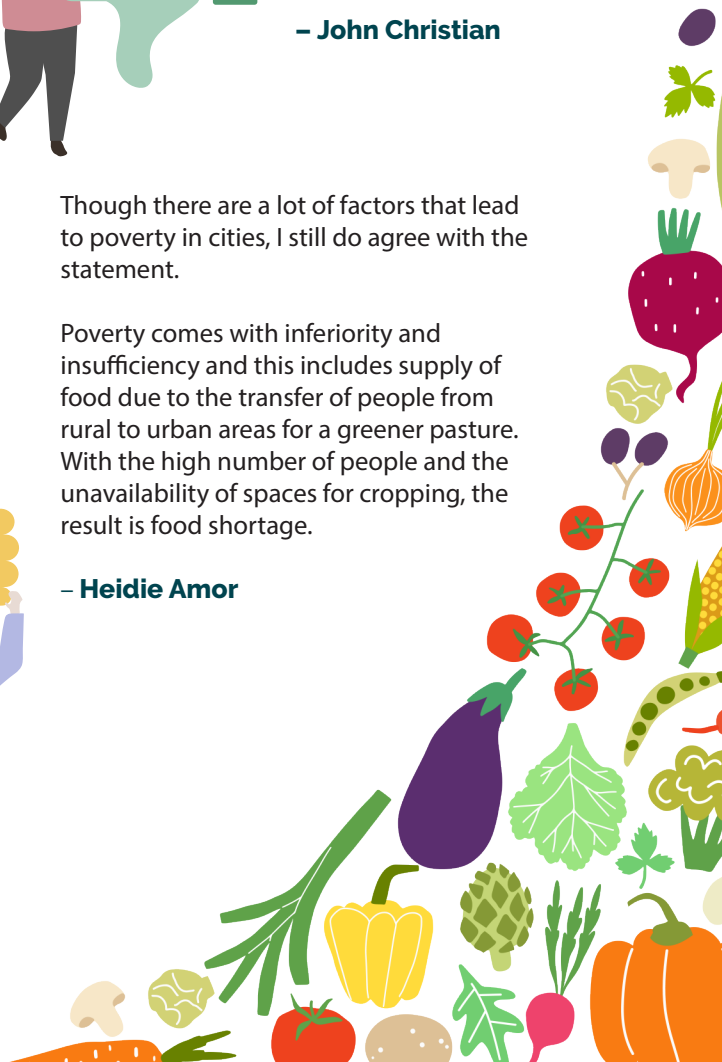
I disagree because we know that even poor people can have their own food if they know how to plant crops.

– John Christian

Though there are a lot of factors that lead to poverty in cities, I still do agree with the statement.

Poverty comes with inferiority and insufficiency and this includes supply of food due to the transfer of people from rural to urban areas for a greener pasture. With the high number of people and the unavailability of spaces for cropping, the result is food shortage.

– Heidie Amor





2019

AGRICULTURAL TRAINING INSTITUTE

FREE SEMINARS

FIRST SEMESTER

- ▶ **January 18**
Organic Farming
for Newbies
- ▶ **February 8**
Mushroom Production
and Processing
- ▶ **February 22**
Lowland Vegetable
Production
and Processing
- ▶ **March 8**
Poultry Production
and Processing
- ▶ **March 22**
Product Packaging
and Labelling
- ▶ **April 12**
Organic Farming
for Newbies
- ▶ **April 26**
Mushroom Production
and Processing
- ▶ **May 10**
Mango Production
and Processing
- ▶ **May 24**
Swine Production
and Processing
- ▶ **June 14**
Nursery Management
and Plant Propagation
- ▶ **June 28**
Upland Vegetable
Production
and Processing



ATI Building,
Elliptical Road,
Diliman
Quezon City 1100
Philippines



1800-10-9822474
for provincial toll-free calls

982-2474
for Metro Manila



0920-946-2474
for all networks



ati_director@ati.da.gov.ph
ati_extension@yahoo.com