

Corn model farms to develop in Region 9

With a budget of about 4.6million, the Department of Agriculture (DA) will establish three Corn Model Farms (CMF) in Zamboanga Peninsula this year.

The farmer-partners for the CMF are the San Isidro Rural Improvement Club in San Miguel, Zamboanga del Sur, the San Isidro Farmers Association in Sergio Osmeña, Zamboanga del Norte and the Canuto Enerio Agrarian Reform Beneficiary Multipurpose Cooperative in Gutalac, Zamboanga del Norte.

DA9 Regional Executive Director Rad Donn L. Cedeño said that this project is in support of Secretary Dar's 8 Paradigms in Agriculture.

"The CMF underscores the 4th Paradigm to level up Agriculture in the Consolidation of small-and-medium-size farmers. These farms will be managed by a registered association in their respective cluster areas. We recommend our corn farmers to capitalize in clustering, because production can be added together to meet the market demands in terms of volume. Alongside, they can also dictate prices which would make them achieve masaganang ani at mataas na kita."

Initially, the CMF farmer-partners have undergone a series of trainings which will equip them with technical know-how as managers of the farms. Basic guidelines in the implementation of the project, Corn Production, Pests and Diseases Management, Fall Armyworm control and Post-harvest handling are some of the topics discussed in their briefing.

The project will utilize 50 hectares per site. The municipalities of San Miguel and Gutalac shall model the Open Pollinated Variety (OPV) White corn while Sergio Osmeña shall champion the Genetically Modified (GM) Hybrid Yellow Corn.

According to Engr. Tessie F. Montano, DA9 regional corn coordinator, the CMF will be implemented in the identified areas as soon as the trainings are completed. "The DA Corn Program will provide all the farm inputs like seeds and fertilizers, including the trainings. Throughout the project, we will also be providing technical support in partnership with their respective LGU - Municipal Agriculture Office," she said.

The CMF aims to increase farm production in corn cluster areas, establish corn market linkages, and ensure a sustainable corn production and source of food.