

Rice farmer beneficiaries of the Department of Agriculture Ilocos Region’s LU CHAMP Program finally reaps the fruit of their labor

Rice farmer beneficiaries of the Department of Agriculture Ilocos Region’s La Union Clustered Hybrid Advocacy, Mentoring and Partnership (LU CHAMP) program finally reaps the fruit of their labor after planting hybrid rice in a ten-hectare clustered techno-demo farm in the municipalities of Sto. Tomas and Rosario, respectively.

21 farmer cooperators in Sto. Tomas and 11 in Rosario were selected for the implementation of the program in partnership with the Provincial Government of La Union – Provincial Agriculturist Office and private seed companies.

Aside from these municipalities, LU CHAMP also covers ten other areas (Bacnotan, San Gabriel, Santol, Sudipen, San Juan, City of San Fernando, Aringay, Caba, Bauang, and Agoo) in La Union.

“Nagpapasalamat kami sa DA sa pagsali sa amin sa techn-demo farm na ito. Kung wala sila, malaki ang gastos namin. Kasi kahit mura ang presyo ng palay, andiyan ang techno-demo na nakatulong sa amin (We are thankful to DA for including us in this techno-demo farm. Without them, our production cost would be a lot. For even if the price of palay is cheaper, there is the techno-demo that helped us.),” said Mr. Hilario Villanueva, 68, member of Bued Communal Irrigation System Dam 1 Association in Sto, Tomas, La Union.

As DA continuously intensifies its efforts in attaining food security in the country, increasing rice production through hybrid rice technology has been identified as one of the keys in attaining this goal as proven by the previous hybrid rice derby that was conducted by the agency last year during the dry season.

This program therefore involved planting of one National Seed Industry Council (NSIC) approved hybrid rice variety in a ten-hectare cluster area in which the best variety in a specified municipality will be determined.

Farmers are still learning how to fully attain high production in using hybrid seeds but through this program, they are expected to apply practices maximizing the yield potential of 12 tons per hectare of the different commercially available hybrid rice seeds in the region.
