

# The SUGAR LINK

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## “Adopt a Sugarcane Community Program” of the Extension Services - Visayas

The Agricultural Extension Services of SRA is in the forefront of providing technical knowledge and skills to the sugarcane planters in the country. The technical services extended enabled the farmers to increase farm productivity, and improve farm efficiency.

With the growing interest on new products from sugarcane, such as bio ethanol, muscovado sugar and renewable energy, it is expected that the area planted to the crop will increase significantly. Consequently, the number of sugarcane planters will increase due to the expansion in area and also due to the effect of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). The general result, however, is an increase in the area of coverage and the number of clientele to be served by each agricultural extension worker. These new planters, particularly the Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) require most of the needed technical assistance in order to profitably grow the crop thus raise their income from sugarcane farming.

The recent rationalization in the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) resulted in limited manpower resources such that only one or two Agriculturists are assigned per mill district. With the present manpower complement, it is difficult, if not impossible, for the Mill District Officer (MDO) to serve all clientele in the area.

The present Extension delivery system, while mandated to provide continuous technical assistance and extend technologies to sugarcane farmers thru visits in scattered farms everyday, it could not provide the services more effectively and efficiently. Monitoring and assessing the impact of the extension programs implemented become less effective. Thus, it is imperative to devise an innovative Extension approach that will apply to the present situation. This resulted to the launching of the “Adopt a Sugarcane Community” program utilizing the Community Based Participatory Extension Management (CBPEM) approach.



A sugarcane farm of one of the adopted communities (top photo).  
During the meeting with an adopted community (below).

CBPEM is a participatory development approach that has evolved through years of action researches. It is founded on the philosophy that the local people, e.g. farmers, are teachable and that given the opportunity to help themselves, they could lead more progressive and self-reliant communities. If properly empowered, they can make better decisions for themselves and for their communities. The resultant benefits are two-fold: 1) more effective and efficient delivery system, and 2) more relevant and sustainable community development program.

The program involves the selection of low producing communities in the district based on the productivity of the locality; identify the major stakeholders and subject them to participatory exercises of their rights to access community service.

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## List of adopted sugarcane communities

Mill District / Name of community	Area (ha)	No. of Farmers Involved	PRODUCTIVITY ( Average Lkg/Ha)				Identified Factors that Contributed to Low Productivity
			CY 2007-2008		CY 2008 - 2009		
			MD	Comm	M.D.	Comm	
<b>LA CARLOTA M.D.</b> 1. Hda. Remedios ARB Kapitbahayan Dev. Coop. 2. Brgy. Balabag, La Carlota City, Neg. Occ. 3. Brgy. Biak na bato, Masulog, La Castellana, Neg. Occ.	31.4 43.67 74.00	36 33 16	151 151 151	82.24 64.91 78.59	137 137 137	69.95 69.95 77.38	1. Lack of technical knowledge on proper sugarcane farming. 2. Lack of capital. 3. High cost of agricultural inputs 4. Inadequate fertilization 5. Water-logged areas 6. Planting of mixed varieties 7. Poor road network 8. Lack of sugarcane hauling facilities 9. Climate change
<b>MA-AO M.D.</b> 4. Sandungao ARB MPC, Bacong Montilla, Ma-ao, Bago City, Neg. Occ.	70.84	57	136	68.78	118	55.14	1. Lack of Capital 2. Planting of old and mixed varieties 3. Low application of fertilizers 4. Depleted fertility of the soil 5. Acidic Soil 7. Lack of hauling facilities 8. Poor farm-to-market roads
<b>First Farmers/BAC-MUR M.D.</b> 5. Casa ARB MPC, Concepcion, Silay City, N.O.	42.00	28	145	40.86	135	53.80	1. Financial constraint 2. Mixed and old varieties 3. Low fertilization
<b>HPCo M.D.</b> 6. San Vicente MPC, Hda. San Vicente, Brgy. Capt. Ramon, Silay City, Neg. Occ.	35.40	20	177	83.22	161	84.95	1. Planting of old and mixed varieties 2. Low fertilization 3. Continuous ratooning up to 4th ratoon 4. Financial constraint
<b>VICTORIAS M.D.</b> 7. Hda. Marilou. Brgy. XIII, Victorias City, Neg. Occ.	29.68	56	150	95.91	133	105.23	1. Lack of capital 2. Low fertilization 3. Old and mixed varieties
<b>LOPEZ M.D.</b> 8. Katilingban Farmers ARB MPC, Hda. Minacalao, Brgy. Rizal, Sagay City, Neg. Occ.	30.00	20	145	82.65	121.7	84.80	1. Lack of capital 2. Lack of technical knowledge on sugarcane farming 3. Old and mixed varieties
<b>SAGAY/DANAO M.D.</b> 9. Pasto ARB, Brgy. Magticol, Toboso, Neg. Occ.	65.00	24	117	59.65	111	59.89	1. Lack of new HYVs 2. Lack of technical knowledge on sugarcane farming 3. Poor road condition 4. Insufficient farm inputs 5. Lack of farm machineries 6. High cost of labor 7. high cost of inputs
<b>SAN CARLOS M.D.</b> 10. Tres Marias ARB, Agpangi, Calatrava, Neg. Occ.	127.36	93	138	88.33	108.83	93.65	1. Lack of financial support 2. High price of agricultural inputs 3. Lack of technical knowledge on sugarcane farming 4. Planting of old and mixed varieties
<b>BISCOM M.D.</b> 11. Aranda, MPC, Aranda, hinigaran, Negros Occ.	97.61	112	142	64.00	57.75		1. Poor road network 2. Lack of capital to finance sugarcane farming 3. Lack of access to new HYVs 4. Lack of approved technologies on sugarcane farming 5. Planting of old and mix varieties 6. Lack of technologies on sugarcane farming
<b>SONEDCO M.D.</b> 12. San Jose Villa MPC, San Jose, Dancalan, Ilog, Neg. Occ.	157.50	70	129.39	27.86	117.12	25.13	1. Poor road network 2. High cost of hauling 3. High cost of agricultural inputs 4. Planting of mixed varieties 5. Lack of technical knowledge in sugarcane farming.
<b>DACONGCOGON M.D.</b> 13. Tapi, Kabankalan, Neg. Occ.	182.50	82	101.65	52.15	90	48.58	1. Inadequate knowledge on sugarcane farming 2. Lack of capital 3. High cost of agricultural inputs 4. Inadequate fertilization 5. Use of mixed and old varieties 6. Poor road network 7. Lack of hauling facilities
<b>BAIS-URSUMCO M.D.</b> 14. Agrarian Reform MPC, Namonbon, Abis, Mabinay, Neg. Occ.	118.80	83	111.59	89.00	93.13	82.00	1. Use of mixed varieties 2. Inadequate fertilization 3. Poor cultural practices

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			MD	Comm	M.D.	Comm	
15. Magbabaul sa Kadangke MPC, Abog, Simborio, Pamploña, Neg. Or.	54.40	25	111.59	81.36	93.13	52.64	1. Use of mixed varieties 2. Inadequate fertilization
<b>TOLONG M.D.</b> 16. Manggolod Farmers MPC, Manggolod, Sta. Catalina, Neg. Occ.	140.40	103	102	51.87	92.17	57.11	1. Planting of old varieties 2. White grub infestation 3. Lack of soil analysis 4. Lack of technical knowledge in growing sugarcane 5. Planting of sugarcane on marginal areas 6. Lack of capital
<b>PASSI M.D.</b> 17. Agdayao MPC, Agdayao, Passi City, Iloilo	89.00	46	113.33	85.39	72.4	62.93	1. Lack of financing 2. Imbalance and improper fertilization 3. Planting of old and mixed varieties 4. Lack of technical knowledge in growing sugarcane 5. Poor barangay roads 6. High cost of labor 7. Damage due to typhoon "Frank"
<b>SANTOS LOPEZ M.D.</b> 18. Cag-an Farmers Assn., Cag-an, Anilao, Iloilo	22.92	25	112.46	87.44	78.8	71.34	1. Lack of new technologies on sugarcane culture 2. Low level of fertilization 3. Planting of old and mixed varieties
<b>CAPIZ M.D.</b> 19. Viscaya Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries MPC, Brgy. Viscaya, Pres. Roxas, Capi	29.70	18	106.74	84.00	84.73	76.06	1. High cost of agricultural inputs 2. High interest on loans to finance sugarcane farming 3. Planting of old and mixed varieties
<b>BOGO-MEDELLIN M.D.</b> 20. San Jose Farmers Coop., Caputatan Sur, Medellin, Cebu	42.27	22	98.08	61.58	74.64	72.93	1. Lack of capital 2. High cost of fertilizers 3. Lack of access to new HYVs
<b>ORMOC M.D.</b> 21. Boroc Agric'l., Primary MPC, Boroc, Ormoc City,	133.80	31	120.95	82.97	87.59	85.77	1. Lack of financial support 2. Planting of old and mixed varieties 3. Lack of technical knowledge in growing sugarcane
<b>Total / Average</b>	<b>1,618.32</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>129.08</b>	<b>72.04</b>	<b>106.71</b>	<b>69.49</b>	

The main objective of the program is to improve the productivity of the farms involved, and ultimately improve the lives of the farmers. Once achieved, the program will be expanded to the other communities in the mill district.

The Agriculturist will focus most of the Extension activities to the Adopted Community for a certain period, of about 2 to 3 crop years or until the main objective is attained. However, the MDOs should allot also enough time for consultations and assistance to other farmers and the MDDC in the Mill District.

Moreover, the Extension worker should also act as facilitator to tap development or livelihood programs with various GOs and NGOs for the selected communities.

Although this program covers only a small portion of the entire mill district, yet the presence of the SRA extension work will be strongly felt in these areas. Likewise, it will be more easy and simpler to assess the impact of the various programs that have been implemented in the locality.

During the process of providing technical knowledge and skills to the farmers in the adopted communities, the Agriculturists shall also train some

farmers to become agent of change or Extensionist. These trained farmers will be tapped to spread-out to other farmers in the neighboring farms the best practices they have adapted which helped them improve their farm production. These partner-farmers can also be utilized to give testimonies or lectures during seminars in other Agrarian Reform Communities or Adopted Communities. Through this process, the dissemination of the new and approved technologies on sugarcane growing will be accelerated.

For Crop Year 2009-2010 the Extension Services-Visayas has identified 21 communities for the program, involving 1,618.32 ha. of sugarcane farms and 1,000 farmers.

Farmer-leaders in some of the selected communities participated in the training-planning workshop on CBPEM at ATI, ASU, Banga, Aklan last October 20-24, 2009, together with the Agriculturists of SRA-Visayas. Upon their return to their respective communities, they formulated their action plan which will serve as road-map in their desire to develop their own communities.

## Hermont plantation spared from great damage due to El Niño

Iloilo province was not spared from *El Nino* that brought severe damage to sugarcane plant this year. The damage is manifested by yellowing of leaves, stunted growth, poor germination and death of some stools. Thus, for CY 2010-2011 it is expected that production will be affected due to reduction in cane tonnage.

The 274 has. Hermont plantation of situated at Dingle, Iloilo was not however affected by drought.

In crop year 2008-2009, Hacienda Hermont experienced very low production of 37 TC/ha mainly due to the adoption of old and traditional practices of sugarcane culture. This prompted the farm administrator together with its three *encargados* to attend the August 2009 SRA-Universal Robina Corporation (URC) - Passi "Sustainable Sugarcane Farming Seminar" in Passi City. The knowledge and the new technologies they learned from the seminar enabled them to increase their production. (Kudos to Ms. Consuelo S. Fortin for her constant follow-up on the implementation of the new technologies and her extension work given to Hermont).

Thus on CY 2009-2010 the average production of the farm improved to 51 TC/ha and they are expecting to increase higher by 2010-2011 as seen by the good stand of the crop despite the ill effect of *El Nino* to agricultural crops. "*Applying and following the SRA recommended technologies were the reasons why our sugarcane plantation was only slightly affected by drought*" said Ms. May Linda Carreon, the energetic lady manager of the plantation. She added by saying that the knowledge they gained from SRA OPSI seminar was 100% applied to their farm. "*Kay luyag namon pamatud-an ang ginasugid sang taga SRA*". (We want to prove what SRA personnel is telling).

Moreover, during our ocular visit to their farm we observed that they are also practicing trash farming in about 40% of their farm area. Other areas are applied with organic fertilizers (mudpress, bagasse,



Ms. C. Fortin (left) and Ms. Carreon (right) during a visit to the Hermont Farm.

## Phil 93-1601 produces 205 LKg sugar per hectare in Ormoc M.D.

The yield of the new HYV, Phil 93-1601 was monitored closely at the farm of Engr. Herminigildo Serafica in Valencia, Ormoc City.

The variety was planted last February 2009 and harvested a year after. Its average production for crop year 2009-2010 was 90 tons and 205 LKg per hectare.

Lime and fertilization application was based on the recommendation of SRA. Total area planted to this variety was 6 hectares. With the good performance of this variety, Engr. Serafica is set to expand the area planted to Phil 93-1601 and expects a higher production for the farm.

Relatively, this variety had produced an average of 103 tons and 240 LKg for crop year 2007-2008 and 106 tons and 222 LKg per hectare for crop year 2008-2009, at Maao Mill District. This was published in Sugarlink on its April-June 2009 issue. (J. alao/PAO)



PHIL 93-1601

mill ash and chicken dung). Beneficial microorganism (BMO) was also applied to their field and animal manure which is abundant in their site since they are managing a big poultry and piggery project.

Liming of acidic soil is applied whenever necessary and weeding is done both mechanically and manually with minimal irrigation during the peak months of drought (April-May). The result of the soil analysis and the use of organic fertilizer reduced the application of chemical fertilizer to 50%.

The farm utilizes high yielding varieties such Phil 932349, Phil 97-3933, Phil 8013, VMC 84-524, VMC 86-550, and VMC 84-947.

Proper cultural management of sugarcane crop, like this one from a big sugarcane farm proved that adverse weather condition is not a hindrance in obtaining higher productivity and efficiency. (Consuelo S. Fortin)

## RD&E conducts El Niño Seminar

To keep abreast with the damage brought by *El Niño* phenomenon to sugarcane crops in the Visayas, Research Development & Extension Department conducted a seminar on "Crop Damage Assessment due to El Niño and other Calamities" last April 21, 2010 at SRA Training Center, Bacolod City.

The seminar was attended by extension workers all over Visayas area. Mr. Ireneo Olivares, Regional Agricultural Statistics officer from Regional Agricultural Statistics Office, Region VI was the guest speaker. His topics include the general guidelines in Damage Assessment and reporting for sugarcane crop which covered different type of calamities; standard concept and definition related to the phenomenon; numerological, geological and hydrological conditions affecting the phenomenon and other indicators of the production loss after the drought, although the biggest part of his lecture focused on the computation of production losses.

He also imparted rigid instructions to the extension workers on how to compute for the volume of losses in percentages in TC/ha and LKg/ha and the filling up of the report form that will show the total losses on the sugarcane production due to the phenomenon.

Mr. Efren D. Landoy, Chief Agriculturist talked on the "Crop Damage Assessment due to Drought and other Calamities", too.

It was a one-day seminar which brain-stormed the extension workers, particularly in the computation of percentage in the volume of losses in TC/ha or LKg/ha of the sugarcane crop.

The output of the seminar assures RD&E the total actual losses in sugarcane production and the data gathered could serve as a basis in the preparation of the crop estimate for the next milling season. (Ma.Florencia Logroño)



Delivering lecture is Mr. Ireneo Olivares, Regional Agricultural Statistics Officer from Regional Agricultural Statistics Office, Region VI

## 90 members attended seminar on Basic Sugarcane Farming

The Boroc Agricultural Primary Multi-Purpose Cooperative (BAP-MPC) in Ormoc Mill District conducted seminar on Basic Sugarcane Farming during their 19<sup>th</sup> General Assembly last March 7, 2010 to update farmers on the latest technology in sugarcane growing.

Topics of interest that brought enthusiasm and found application to the farmers' sugarcane farm like *Pagsulundan sa Pagtanum sang Tubo*; Fertilizer Management; Harvesting & Ratooning were discussed.

SRA's extension officers Oscar Panes, Sr. Agriculturist/APPC of Cebu-Leyte, and Jessie Alao, Agriculturist I of Ormoc Mill District spearheaded the seminar. (O.Panes / J. Alao)



Mr. Jessie Alao & Mr. Oscar Panes delivering lecture (left). Mr. C. Pulvera & Mr. J. Yahot BAP-MPC Manager and Chairman of BAP-MPC with CDA speakers extended their gratitude to SRA

## PHILSURIN supports IMDDC BOF Project

The Iloilo Mill District Development Council Foundation, Inc. experienced a big demand of the bioorganic fertilizer they produced. At the onset of the milling season they were able to distribute thousands of bags of bioorganic fertilizer and demands continue to soar high. This prompted them to continue mass producing to meet the increasing demand.

However, warehousing of the finished BOF inside the Universal Robina Corporation (Passi) premises became a problem as the storage area is frequently flooded during heavy rains. Thus the IMDDC plans to build a warehouse at Brgy. Imbang Grande, few kilometers away from the working area.

PHILSURIN pledged to support the realization of a warehouse after the MOA is signed between SRA, URC and IMDDC. As agreed, SRA continues to provide the technology for BOF production, URC the supply for mudpress, bagasse and mill ash; and the IMDDC for the management and other obligations. (Consuelo S. Fortin)

## LGARDC conducts OJT for 30 agriculture students

Thirty Agriculture students from different agricultural schools in Negros and Panay gathered at La Granja Agricultural Research & Development Center (LGARDC) for the On-the-Job training from November 9, 2009 - February 12, 2010.

Time frame set by the LGARDC for the training period was 56 working days or 448 hours. Ninety six hours of lecture and practicum were allotted each to Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA), Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI), and University of the Philippines at Los Baños, College of Agriculture, Research & Training Station (UPLBCA-RTS). Eighty hours each were scheduled to the Philippine Carabao Center (PCC) and DA-Regional Integrated Agricultural Research Center (DA-RIARC).

Participating schools were the Central Philippines Adventist College (CPAC), Northern Negros College of Science & Technology (NONESCOST), and Iloilo Polytechnic State College (NIPSC)

For 56 days the students have immersed in the different fields of concentration among the five (LGARDC) agencies. At SRA they were exposed to the different areas of sugarcane culture. They were also given the chance to participate in laboratory activities like soil and juice analyses, Trichogramma production and propagation of new HYVs "in vitro".

With 40% lecture and 60% practicum, Johnmar S. Jereos of NONESCOST and Julie G. Leida of CPAC declared they have gotten a lion share of practical knowledge for the time, money and effort they have spent while training in SRA-LGAREC.

At the end of the training, LGARDC staff accompanied the students on a field trip to Hda. Progreso in Isabela, Negros Occidental. True to its name, Hda. Progreso, a 455 hectares highly mechanized farm of Mr. Rafael Abello is indeed a progressive farm, more so with its diversified projects like vermicomposting, hybrid goat raising, piggery and livestock.

From Hda. Progreso, the students were brought to Guintubdan, Brgy. Ara-al, La Carlota City for lunch where they also enjoyed swimming in the cold waters of the mountain resort. (Ma. Celia Dejecacion)

## SRA personnel attend CES Executive Leadership and Wellness Camp

Four CES Eligibles from SRA attended the second CES Executive Leadership and Wellness Camp held at Alona Kew White Beach, Panglao Island, Bohol last April 14-16, 2010. The SRA personnel were Mr. Josephino M. Agosto, Manager III, Administrative and Finance Department, SRA-Quezon City; Ms. Rosemarie S. Gumera, Manager III, Planning and Policy Department, SRA-Quezon City; Dr. Doreta A. de los Santos, Manager III, SRED, SRA-Visayas; and Mr. Efren D. Landoy, Chief-Extension and Technical Services Division, SRA-Visayas. The theme for this year's wellness camp was "Detox, Destress, Deliver and Discover: A CES Work-Life Balance Camp." The activity was part of CESBs advocacy to promote total wellness, work-life balance and sustained productivity among government executives. It was also a response to the clamor from CEOs for a seminar on holistic stress management that not only deals with physical and emotional, but also spiritual and social well-being aspects. This camp seeks to equip the participants with knowledge, tools and practical tips on managing stress, maintaining a healthy body, mind and relationships to achieve over all work-life balance.

Some of the topics presented during the seminar were: Work-life Balance and Understanding Stress; Achieving Workplace And Personal Wellness; Nurturing The Body, Liberating The Mind; Eating Right And Practicing Alternative Health; Preventing And Managing Lifestyle Diseases; Tapping Into The Inner Mind, and Adapting To Change, Managing Reforms. These were given by noted speakers on the subject. Yoga sessions were also held for beginners and intermediate practitioners.

The wellness camp was attended by about 74 participants from various government agencies from the different parts of the country.



Participants of the CES Leadership and Wellness Camp at Panglao Island, Bohol

## Iloilo MDDC supports green power project

A bio-energy generating project of the Global Green Power PLC, a United Kingdom Company, will soon rise at Mina, Iloilo. The project will utilize rice straw, corn stalks, sugarcane trashes, and other indigenous materials to generate electricity.

Sugarcane trashes are abundant in the field during harvest season which are usually burned for easy land preparation. With the emergence of the bio-generating project, burning of trashes will be eliminated thus contributing to a healthy environment and at the same time give extra income to the farmers, stressed David de Montaigne, president of the company.

Seeing the advantages and future benefits of the projects, the IMDDC board pledged their full support. (csf) @

### *Lessons from geese*

#### (The Fundamentals of Working)

1. Flying in a "V" formation allows *geese* to travel much farther than flying on their own.  
*Teams with common direction can go faster and farther than an individual.*
2. When the lead goose tires, another takes over.  
*Team succeeds by sharing the hard tasks and the leadership. We must share the arduous tasks and the lead role.*
3. *Geese* honk to encourage those up front to keep up speed.  
*In those teams where members encourage each other, there is higher productivity.*
4. When a goose is sick or injured, two others will follow it down to protect it.  
*Good teams stand by each other even in difficult times.*

Lifted by E.V. Linco

From: COA Bulletin No. 2, Vol. 2000, page 20. Lesson for staff update. "Working together in the New Millennium" Sent by Willy N. Guiriba, Fellow CCAF

## Advocacy for Gender and Development (GAD)

### What it is not, What it is

- IT IS NOT telling women to be like men or to edge out men;
- IT IS telling women and men to expand their social space so they can freely take on roles according to the individual capacities, not on the basis of sex.
- IT IS NOT pitting women against men;
- IT IS making women and men actualize their true roles
- IT IS NOT exhorting women to stop doing housework and find employment;
- IT IS making them realized that their work at home makes it possible for other to do paid work outside of the home;
- IT IS also telling men and women that housework is a shared responsibility of everyone in the household, as much as it is every able-bodied member's responsibility to share in providing for the household's needs.
- IT IS NOT speaking for women;
- IT IS making them find their voice and letting them be heard
- IT IS NOT working for women or doing things for them;
- IT IS working with women and enabling them to do things for themselves
- IT IS NOT making a list of do's and don'ts;
- IT IS making preferential options for women with a vision of development and the kind of society they want, and on the basis of understanding their situation, devise strategies for change and methods to achieve that vision
- IT IS NOT having pat solutions even to similar problems;
- IT IS realizing that the dynamics of gender varies from culture to culture
- IT IS NOT giving expert "advice"
- IT IS listening to others and with them, analyze situations and formulate solutions according to prevailing resources;
- IT IS being aware of the complexity and difficulty of the concepts that require understanding, the values that will be challenged, institutions that have to be transformed
- IT IS NOT ends justifying the means;
- IT IS ensuring that processes reflect the vision of a free and just order
- IT IS NOT approaching/relating to people as roles, e.g. "housewife", "farmer", "manager", "secretary"
- IT IS approaching/relating to people as persons
- IT IS taking the initiative rather than reacting to someone else's actions;
- IT IS appreciating the value of diversity
- IT IS NOT being superheroes;
- IT IS believing that each person has a role to play, and that collectively, we can reshape and redirect out institutions, our development.

(Reprinted from "The Public Manager", December 1998 issue, by Richard Albert)@ Lifted by E.V. Linco

## 2010 SRA In-house review evaluates seven completed research projects

Seven completed researches were presented and evaluated during the 2010 In-House Review held in SRA-LGAREC on April 22-23, 2010. The Review was attended by the SRA-LGAREC and Bacolod technical staff as well as Extension staff in Negros and Panay. Ms. Crescenciana L. Morales, Chief Science Research Specialist welcomed the participants and guests, after which Mr. Rimmon T. Armones discussed the rationale and mechanics of the Review.

One of the highlight's review was the inspirational message of Dr. Rodrigo E. Tapay, Manager III. RDE Visayas. He declared the review "as the time when we recognize the efforts of our researchers to generate knowledge and technology on how to efficiently grow sugarcane", but more than that, he added, "this is also the time to reflect if our research direction is still relevant and significant to the needs of sugarcane farmers considering the challenges of the changing times".

For the Extension staff from Negros and Panay, Dr. Tapay reminded them that the Review "is also the time to obtain from them as frontline personnel, the feedback from the field regarding farmers adoption and reaction to SRA's recommended technologies like the HYVs distribution and BMOs application and recommendations". Likewise he challenged the technical staff to generate knowledge and technology, prioritize policies and advocacies and re-design packages of technology in the midst of the changing times.

Three distinctive personalities from the industry formed the panel of evaluators. They were Mr. Marcelino M. Guevarra, Chief Science Research Specialist & Scientist I, SRA-LAREC; Mr. Gerardo B. Burgoz, University Researcher V, UPLBCA – La Granja Research & Training Station, and Mr. Efren D. Landoy, Chief Agriculturist, Extension and Technical Services Division, SRA, RDE-Visayas.

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*The Sugar Link Editor*



Opening Program

The panel of evaluators



The participants

## Iloilo MDDC HYV nursery expansion project

The scarcity of planting materials of new high yielding varieties (HYV's) is common problem among Iloilo sugarcane planters especially during off-milling season. The existing 23.6 ha. Sugar-ACEF HYV nursery of the Iloilo Mill District Development Council of Brgy. Man-it, Passi City could not meet the pressing demands for cane points. Planters have to sign in for a 2-3month reservation in order to avail of cane points.

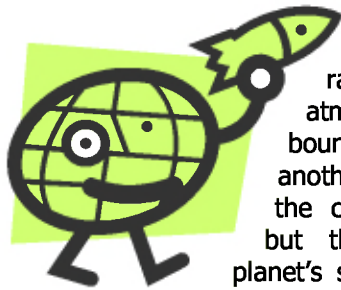
To address these needs, the IMDDC established a 12 hectare nursery project at Brgy. Imbang Grande, Passi City, which is currently planted with Phil 97-3933, VMC 84-524, scheduled for cut back in May and June, 2010. The estimated production however is seen to fall short vis-a-vis heavy demand for planting materials. Thus, the IMDDC is formulating plans and programs to address the situation. (csf)



## Some hot health reminders on global warming

The debate is over; nearly all scientists (and politicians) agree that climate change is real, is here, and is the result of human activity. Experts also agree that the consequences of global warming are serious and far-reaching. All too often, though, these consequences are framed in terms of the threat to polar bears, exotic wildlife, and beautiful glaciers. Without minimizing the value of stately bears and snow-covered peaks, many people find it hard to make lifestyle changes and economic sacrifices to protect such distant assets. But climate change threatens more than earth's vistas. It also threatens human health- and as Ondoy showed last year, it's already causing problems here in the Philippines.

### How Global Warming is Produced



Sunshine warms the earth. When solar radiation enters the atmosphere, a portion is bounced back into space, and another portion is absorbed by the clouds and water vapors, but the majority strikes the planet's surface. This solar energy warms the earth, but it's also reflected back into the atmosphere in the form of infrared radiation. Some of the infrared penetrates through the atmospheric gases and heads back to earth, where it adds warmth.

The atmospheric gases that reflect infrared radiation back to earth are known as greenhouse gases. Without them, too much solar energy would be lost, and the earth would be ice cold. But since the industrial revolution, the concentration of atmospheric greenhouse gases has increased, and the increase has accelerated in the past 50 years. That means more infrared energy is reflected back to the earth, where it produces global warming. Scientists report that the earth's temperature increased by 6°C during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and they project an additional rise by as much as 4.4°C during this century.

### Greenhouse Gases

Heat-tapping greenhouse gases are formed on earth by natural processes and human activities, and then enter the atmosphere. Here is a primer on the major gases:

Ⓢ **Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>).** A tiny amount of CO<sub>2</sub> enters the atmosphere every time you breathe out. But the CO<sub>2</sub> produced as a waste product of

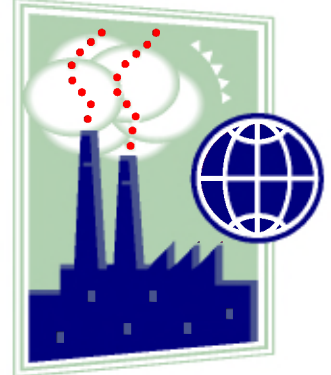
the body's metabolism is dwarfed by the CO<sub>2</sub> generated when wood and fossil fuels such as oil, natural gas, and coal burn. A variety of other industrial reactions also produce CO<sub>2</sub>. Plants remove CO<sub>2</sub> from the air as part of the biological cycle. But as fossil fuel combustion has increased and the world's forests have shrunk, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> climbed from about 280 parts per million (ppm) in 1750 to 315 ppm in 1958, and then to today's level of nearly 380 ppm. Carbon dioxide bears much of the blame for global warming- and at the rate we're going, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels could double as early as 2050.

Ⓢ **Methane.** Like CO<sub>2</sub>, methane is emitted during the production and transport of oil, gas, and coal. But methane also enters the air from the gastric emissions and "tailpipe" of cattle, and from decomposing manure and organic wastes in solid waste landfills. The concentration of methane in the atmosphere has more than doubled since the industrial revolution.

Ⓢ **Nitrous oxide.** This gas enters the atmosphere from agricultural and industrial activity, including fossil fuel combustion.

Ⓢ **Fluorinated gases (halocarbons).** All fluorinated gases result strictly from human industrial activities, not natural sources. Although only tiny amounts are present in the atmosphere, they are very potent green house gases.

While all these gases contribute to worrisome global warming, CO<sub>2</sub> and methane are particularly concerning. And since CO<sub>2</sub> lingers in the atmosphere for 50 to 200 years and methane for 12 years, prompt action is needed to control gas emissions, mitigate global warming, and protect human health.



### Health Consequences

Climate change can affect human health in many ways. The direct effect of exposure of hot weather is the most obvious example. For example, in the 1980s and '90s, heat stroke killed about 200 Americans a year, but the average toll is now close to 700 a year. Heat-related illnesses and deaths will increase as the earth warms up. And climate change involves more than warming; typhoons, floods, and

wildfires are expected to increase, causing injury, death, psychological trauma, and damage to the public health infrastructure.

Many insects thrive in warm weather. That means more insect-borne diseases, including viral encephalitis, malaria, and dengue. Tropical diseases may also spread to temperate zones. An example was the 2007 Italian epidemic of Chikungunya virus (a viral infection normally found in the Indian Ocean region) which reminds us that the global warming can make our small world even smaller.

If unchecked, polar melting will have devastating effects on the earth and its peoples. The sea level will rise, displacing millions of people. Human suffering and economic stress are obvious consequences. In addition, disruption in sanitation, the supply of fresh water, and food production may cause health problems that extend far beyond receding shorelines. Food- and water-borne infections and malnutrition are evident threats, but the combination of population shifts and socioeconomic hardships could also trigger political instability and international conflict.

The worst-case scenario may make the health consequences of global warming sound like science fiction or Al Gore's bad dream. One example is depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer, which has increased exposure to UVB radiation, which contributes to skin cancer, cataracts, and immune suppression. Air pollution is another threat whose time has already come. Particulate emissions and noxious gases spewed from tailpipes, smokestacks, and burning forests contribute to heart and lung diseases. Experts blame poor air quality for the fourfold increase in asthma since 1980.

Global warming may inhibit the growth of some important food crops, and it has already promoted the growth of some pesky plants. Ragweed and similar plants now produce twice as much pollen as they did 100 years ago, and rising CO<sub>2</sub> levels will boost pollen counts even further in the years ahead. It's another reason for the increase in asthma, as well as hay fever and allergies.

And just in case you still think climate change is just a problem for polar bears, consider this: The World Health Organization estimates that climate change is already responsible for 150,000 deaths a year worldwide, and the toll is expected to double by 2030.

## Cooling It

Climate change is a huge problem so big that it may seem insolvable. But instead of throwing up your hands and continuing to turn fossil fuels into CO<sub>2</sub>, we can take steps to control the problems.

Success will depend on a combination of scientific research, new public policies, and informed personal choices.

Government policy proposals are beyond the scope of this column. Still, we all can make small steps that can add up to a long march to progress. Here are things we can do:

- **Take steps.** Walk (or bike) for transportation. You'll cut your gas bill and generate less CO<sub>2</sub>.



Of equal importance, you'll get exercise that will lower your risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, dementia, depression, colon cancer, and osteoporosis.

- **Eat for a cooler planet.** Cows are living smokestacks that generate methane and nitrous oxide, two powerful greenhouse gases. The world's farm animals make 18 percent of the emissions that produce global warming. If you eat less meat and dairy, you'll reduce the demand for cows, and you'll take in less cholesterol-raising saturated fat. Substitute meat with healthful fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, and fish for the health of your planet and your body.



- **Make home improvements.**



Choose renewable energy, if available to you. Switch to compact fluorescent light bulbs. Turn off your computer when it's not in use. Unplug TV sets, printers, fax machines, and other electronics when you're away for a day or two.

- **Reduce wasteful consumption, reuse whatever you can, and recycle whatever you can reuse.** Health is everyone's concern, and climate change is everyone's problem. Do what it takes to reduce your carbon footprint and to prod our leaders to reduce global warming. It's not only cool thing to do. Your life and that of your children may depend on it!



(Reprinted from *Philippines Star*, April 20, 2010 issue, by Tyrone Reyes, M.D.)®

## SRA 24<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration: “Sinadya 2010 sa La Granja”

SRA celebrated its 24<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on June 24-25, 2010. Gender and Development (GAD) Focal System-Visayas handled the activity in line with their program to raise awareness of SRA personnel on various GAD issues and concern (empowerment, health and capability building)

*Sinadya 2010 sa La Granja* started with the opening prayer on June 24 at 2:00 P.M. 194 employees came to join the celebration to actively participate in the activity. There were 2 competing teams, the Blue Team composed of 96 RD & E employees wearing blue shirts and the 54 regulation employees + 44 Admin and Finance staff in yellow. The SRA LGAREC swimming pool serves as the venue.

Early on the first day, cockfighting was the main attraction which came in full swing 5 hours before the schedule. At 6:30 P.M. dinner was served with drinks (hard and soft) to sustain the Reggae/Samba Night with the *Patikeros* and *Videoke* Challenge. The ladies in their 50's and above proved to be more of "*mga kiti-kiti*" who enjoyed singing and dancing as though it's yesterday once more". They would have sang and danced all night had it not been for the lightning that sends a tremor of warning to the one holding the microphone. After all, it was still a magical night.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> day the triathlon were all done in the pool. The male and female contestants for the water sports were directed to parade in their swimming suits. The female contestants were a bit apprehensive to do the catwalk in anticipation of the "*manaquitos* over there" who might make funny remarks of their vital statistics. True to their expectations and in fairness "the *manaquitos*" enjoyed watching their "*salbavidas*" and "extra loads" which were more pronounced when they overacted (a defense mechanism) their wiggles. Its okay for the men, for their battle with the bulge has been long forgotten.



The traditional "Going to Market" cause an upheaval of cheers from both the Blue and Yellow teams. This is the game we should do once in awhile to do away our stress. Beer drinking has so much fun where the ladies showed their drinking prowess. They finished their bottles of beer all the way down 1 minute ahead of the men. Constant practice made perfect!

And yes, there was the "*Pabitin*" which transported us back to our childhood days. And who can resist the temptation of hanging pieces of 1000 bills ready for the picking? But a few of us were cowed at Lucille's admonishment of "join at your own risk". When the raucous died down what seemed to be 1000 bills turned out to be 20, 30, 100 and 150 peso bills. It was fine and at the same time we can't deny it was fun.

In time, our new Administrator, Honorable Bernardo C. Trebol arrived with Engr. Alisla. The initial meeting was unexpectedly full of congeniality. Light remarks of "how tall, fair and handsome he is" was playfully accepted by the Administrator. Since he was born in the nearby Hda. Consuelo and had also studied at UP, the ambience was familiar and camaraderie bound the knot tightly.

The Honorable Administrator delivered a short but meaningful message. He encouraged the employees "*to work hard because thousands of people depend on our sugar industry.*" His mission and vision he said is to have a long term project that aims to make La Granja the largest research station.





He explained further that our plan must be in writing as soon as possible so we will know how much budget shall we made. "We have to do this", he said, "to gain the confidence of the people involve in the sugar industry." With regrets, he also announced that due to the impact of *El Nino*, we have to import sugar although it is not good for the industry.

To sum it all, what makes the *Sinadya 2010 sa La Granja* memorable? Was it the enthusiasm shared by the employees and



the new Administrator who stayed until Day 2 to enjoy such rare camaraderie "Or was it the sumptuous lunch wherein we partake our flowing food served with the fruit that "smell like hell but tastes like heaven?" Or rather, could it be the inherent hospitality and kindness of the La Granja people who sent home their visitors loaded with assorted plants and fruits in season? Your guess is as good as mine. What made the SRA 24<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration memorable is the lesson learned by everyone that made us all winners after everything has been said and done.

Thank you GAD Focal System-Visayas for choosing SRA-LGAREC as the venue of Sinadya 2010. *(Ma Celia E. Dejecacion)*



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**Answers for: "How many can you find" puzzle from previous Issue (Sugarlink Issue No. 25)**

D	S	W	T	O	P	A	A	S	E	H	S	V	N	C	Q	S	B	B
E	B	B	G	S	B	B	N	D	L	O	C	B	A	L	U	N	A	N
S	A	O	E	T	H	A	N	O	L	L	I	A	L	A	E	Q	V	N
Q	G	L	J	U	K	S	M	R	O	S	A	L	P	S	D	U	X	E
R	A	G	E	M	E	I	S	T	P	Y	E	U	O	Q	A	Y	T	N
U	S	H	L	S	D	C	F	O	P	T	A	N	I	O	N	D	E	A
A	S	R	A	J	C	F	V	E	L	R	T	O	T	E	U	F	Y	C
O	E	T	K	H	N	V	E	R	M	I	G	P	R	D	H	C	O	R
I	T	H	Z	K	J	E	R	S	D	T	H	E	E	Y	I	K	L	A
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L	G	L	V	L	D	V	O	U	A	S	C	C	A	M	A	W	E	S
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F	T	C	P	A	C	L	B	S	E	N	E	G	O	R	T	I	N	E
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