



SAAD TALÁAN

Official Quarterly Newsletter of the Special Area for Agricultural Development Program Western Visayas



SAAD PHASE 2 STARTS IN W. VISAYAS

By Christ John Gamarcha and Cedie Bataga

Carrying its pursuit for localized agricultural development for marginalized sectors, the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Program has identified its new areas of operation in five priority provinces and nine municipalities for its Phase 2 implementation in Western Visayas.



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FEATURE | BUGASONG PIG RAISERS EARN PHP 164K; FA TRANSFER PIGLETS TO 15 NEXT GRANTEES



NEWS | NEG OCC FAs GET INCUBATORS TO BOOST NATIVE CHICKEN, DUCK PRODUCTIONS

SAAD PHASE 2 STARTS IN W. VISAYAS

9 PRIORITY MUNICIPALITIES IN 5 PROVINCES IDENTIFIED

By Christ John Gamarcha and Cedic Bataga

➤➤➤ NEW PRIORITY AREAS FOR PHASE 2

Aiming to reduce poverty and increase local food production of 5th-6th income class and top-three poorest municipalities in the region, DA-SAAD has identified provinces to benefit from livelihood projects to be provided by the program. The priority areas are Iloilo (3 municipalities), Antique (1 municipality), Aklan (2 municipalities), Guimaras (1 municipality), and Negros Occidental (2 municipalities).

HELPING FARMERS IN NEED

“Ang SAAD Phase 2 ang isa guid ka dako nga oportunidad para sa aton diri sa Western Visayas para padayunon ang aton misyon sa pagbulig sang mga mangunguma nga naga kinahanglan guid sang bulig”

Dominador A. Marquez
OIC-RTD for Operations and Extension

➤➤➤ FUND ALLOCATION

This year, SAAD Region 6 received Php 39.7 million allocation from the General Appropriations Act (GAA) of 2023 which will be used to procure livelihood inputs under each pipelined projects for target beneficiaries. Of the 34 targeted livelihood interventions, 13 are livestock and poultry-related, 6 are corn-related and 15 are high-value crops-related projects. Enterprise building remains to be the peak goal of sustained livelihood projects provided to identified farmers' associations (FAs) from 2023 to 2028.



In Phase 1, Western Visayas implemented projects and parallel development initiatives under the Php 264 million total fund from 2019 to 2022. With this, 190 livelihood projects in Antique and Negros Occidental were implemented and directly benefited 698 individual farmers, 507 FAs with 17,516 group members.

Nine (9) municipalities from the five abovementioned priority provinces met the eligibility requirements. The majority of identified beneficiaries belong to Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDA) and End Local Communist Armed Conflict (ELCAC) areas.

As of writing, the teams have conducted the Beneficiary Needs Assessment (BNA) study in Moises Padilla (4 FAs), Bingawan (4 FAs), and San Rafael (3 FAs).

Consolidated information on the socio-economic conditions and community priorities gathered will be the basis for support and interventions to address the needs of the beneficiaries.

Out of 34 targeted FAs, 13 will be receiving livestock and poultry-related projects, 6 will be receiving corn-related projects, and 15 will get high-value crops-related projects. These livelihood interventions are set to be implemented by the second and third quarters of this year. ###



Special Area for Agricultural Development Program Technical Personnel Ms. Reah Garduce II (second from left) discusses with counterparts from the Municipal Agriculture Offices of Buruanga and Tangalan, Aklan during the Regional Strategic Panning Workshop in Iloilo City on January 2022.

INFOGRAPHICS





SAAD VEGGIE GROWER TRADES PICKLES TO EARN INCOME

By Christ John Gamarcha

Juvy Albiar, or Manang Juvy as she is fondly called by her family and friends considers farming as her bread and butter. Nestled in a far-flung village of Agpangi in Calatrava, Negros Occidental, Manang Juvy grew up accustomed to farmwork, and now with two (2) children, she oversees their half-hectare farmland while her husband works overseas. She built a small vegetable garden allotting her harvests to home consumption.

In 2019, she joined a group of vegetable cultivators with the aim of contributing to product consolidation in their village. Assisted by the Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO), they encouraged 60 farmers to form the Agpangi Nalikban Vegetables Growers' Association (ANVEGA). Most ANVEGA farmers tend small-scale vegetable gardens, while others are engaged in swine and native chicken production.

➤➤➤ INCLUSION TO SAAD PROGRAM

In 2020, Calatrava MAO called for a town-wide meeting and orientation for the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Program. ANVEGA officers, including Manang Juvy who was then its treasurer, attended the activity in hopes of accessing farming assistance.

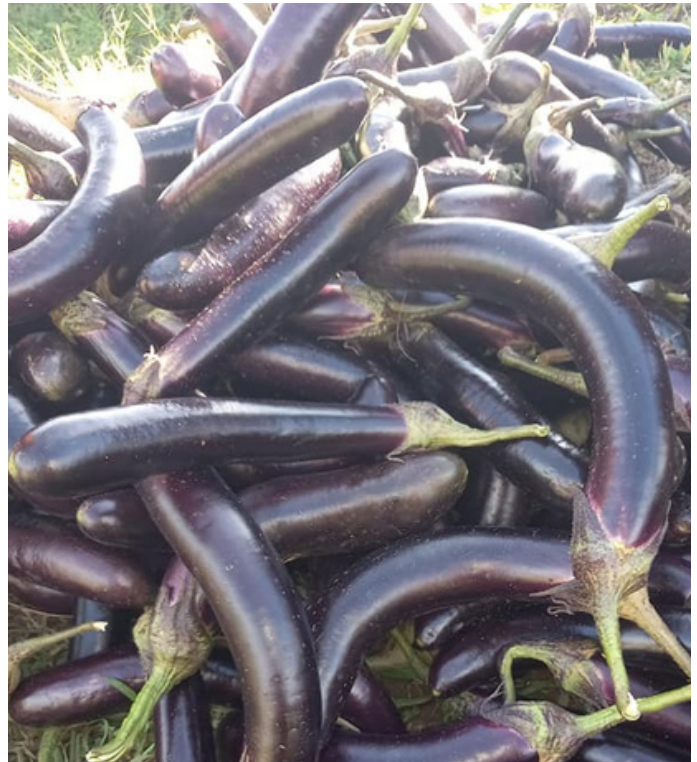
In 2021, the ANVEGA received a Vegetable Production package worth Php 257,460.42 from the Program after a community needs assessment. The project is composed of vegetable seeds and farming tools and supplies.



➤➤➤ ALBIAR'S PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Manang Juvy was among the members who received the second wave of inputs in 2022. After land preparation, Manang Juvy was able to plant the seeds on her 0.5-hectare farm early in March 2022. Together with ANVEGA members, she likewise received capacity-building and technical training on vegetable production and enterprise development discussing farm practices for efficient food production.

From March to April 2022, Manang Juvy earned Php 28,100 gross income after harvesting a total of 785 kilograms (kg) of eggplant, hot peppers, and cucumbers. She saved up from hauling expenses since she sells her produce to a vegetable trader who consolidates fresh produce in their barangay bringing them to the town market or the neighboring city of San Carlos.



➤➤➤ TOWARDS COMMUNITY-BASED ENTERPRISE



Manang Juvy came up with an idea to prolong the shelf life of perishable produce and enhance and add value to her raw vegetable harvests using the knowledge she gained from SAAD's Value-Adding Training on Vegetable Processing. She decided to venture into vegetable pickling and vegetable meatball creation using the surplus of her harvest.

“Bilang usa ka mag-uuma ug ginang sa balay, nanginahanglan ko og dugang nga kita mao nga gisulayan nako ang paghimo og vegetable pickles ug meatballs. So sang akon na try, ning click man sya” (As a farmer and housewife, I needed extra income so I tried making vegetable pickles and meatballs. So when I tried, my products clicked), shared Manang Juvy.



In combination with breadcrumbs, cheese and a small amount of meat, roasted eggplants are the base of Manang Juvy's meatballs made into bite-sized pieces for easier consumption.

“Luwas sa pagpamaligya ug presko nga utanon, nag-pangproseso man ko sa akong mga ani aron makakuha og dugang kita. Tungod kay nahibal-an nako nga kung maghimo ako usa ka bag-ong produkto ug mahimo nako ibaligya ang akong produkto sa labi ka taas nga presyo” (Aside from trading fresh vegetables, I ventured into processing my harvested crops for additional income. Because I know that if I do value-adding, I will produce a new product and sell these at a higher price), added Manang Juvy.

On her first try, Manang Juvy sold 10 jars of vegetable pickles worth Php 30 each and 20 packs (8 pieces) of eggplant with cheese filling balls with Php 50 each. For this, she earned a gross income worth Php 1,300 offering the products to her neighbors and to the town market.

To sustain her production, Manang Juvy used her savings from vegetable and value-adding income to buy additional 30 packs each of squash, cucumber, and string bean seeds.

Preparing her garden in March, she expects that harvest season may fall by the end of April.

"Kung magmalampuson ang akong pag-ani sini nga cropping season, nagplano ako nga maghimo naman usa ka batch sang akong mga value-added products" (If ever my harvest would be successful, I am planning to make another batch of value-added products), said Manang Juvy.

According to Manang Juvy, she looks forward to producing more pickles and veggie-balls as well as improving the packaging and labeling of her products.

To gain more buyers, she also created a Facebook page where she can advertise her processed goods.

Some ANVEGA members were also encouraged to process their harvested crops after seeing the good outcome of Manang Juvy's flourishing enterprise.

➤➤➤ ANVEGA'S VEGETABLE PRODUCTION VENTURE



ANVEGA reported Php 115,000 worth of accumulated savings for three (3) years of managing SAAD's vegetable production project. They are utilizing their fund to procure vegetable seeds, farm tools, and organic fertilizers to sustain their production. In July 2022, ANVEGA farmers cultivated bell peppers at their communal greenhouse facility measuring about 197.4 square meters. After five (5) months, the group harvested 109kg and sold it for Php 80/kg, recording a Php 8,720 gross income. They deducted their expenses from labor fees for land preparation and dividends intended for each member which amounted to Php 5,500. Finally, the association recorded a Php 3,220 income allotted as group savings.

With the closure of SAAD Program Phase 1 implementation in the town of Calatrava, ANVEGA aims to be a financially-stable entrepreneurial vegetable growers and traders. In December last year, provincial implementers endorsed ANVEGA to the High-Value Crops Section of the Municipal Agriculture Office in Calatrava for continued livelihood support and monitoring. To further their vegetable production, the group plans to take two huge steps: first is to establish a consolidation center or bagsakan wherein they could sell their fresh produce as well as processed products; second is to turn their association into a cooperative since more farmers expressed their interest in joining ANVEGA to replicate their vegetable venture. ###

BUGASONG HOG RAISERS EARN PHP164K

FARMERS' GROUP TRANSFER PIGLETS TO 15 NEXT GRANTEEES

By Cedic Bataga

Swine fattening has been a go-to alternative livelihood of every household because it is a great source of income in smallholder farms, it is a lucrative trade with the swine having a high feed conversion ratio. The income generated from this venture becomes their means to capitalize on savings and serves as their 'safety net' whenever a crisis arises.

In the Philippines, these smallholder farms contribute 77.7% to the country's swine population, with Western Visayas ranked 2nd in terms of contribution with a share of 11.6 percent (PSA, 2022).

However, illnesses such as African Swine Fever (ASF) pose threats, like the 2019 outbreak in the Philippines which severely affected the local hog industry and triggered losses in the economy.



The country's extensive response against ASF includes strengthened biosecurity and border control (area zoning) from national to local levels prioritizing projects that required and enabled local raisers to source swine within their borders. Massive IEC campaigns and issuance of ordinances by the Local Government Units (LGUs) were done to further maintain the province in the green zone.

With the province still in the green zone, the local government unit (LGU) of Antique, through its Veterinary Office, established an ASF border checkpoint in various points of entries and imposed strict protocols to ensure that the local swine industry is protected. The fortification of ASF watch was to secure their borders, noting that Antique is adjacent to Iloilo province where ASF cases continue to spread.

➤➤➤ HOG FARMING CONTINUES AMID ASF THREAT

The Talisay Rice Farmers Association (TRFA) located in Bugasong did not falter with such challenges that hindered business continuity for hog growers like them.

The group accepted a Php 181,784 worth of project package from the Department of Agriculture (DA)-Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program with the goal of utilizing the reproductive herd for breeding and meat purposes.

In two separate deliveries, 15 piglets worth Php 87,000 were delivered to the association on.



May 17, 2022 complemented with one hybrid boar and 5 gilts worth Php 177,500 on September 7, 2022. Also included in the package were hog feeds, drugs and biologics, packets of assorted vegetable seeds, organic fertilizer, and various farm tools and materials.

An agripreneurship training for value-addition of pork products was also provided to the recipients on July 29, 2022 to capacitate them

towards the establishment of their own community-based enterprise.

The FY 2022 Hog Fattening Enterprise with Vegetable Production Project was proposed by the association to not only boost the production of meat in the locality but also to increase their household income. After four months of diligent rearing of the hogs, 15 swine raisers of the TRFA listed a gross income of Php 164,410.

➤➤➤ POLICIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY



The association implemented health measures and policies on management, inputs' rollover, and repayment scheme to ensure stability and financial security.

Citing talks with the group members, it was agreed by the majority that the gilt and boar will be sheltered in the lot owned by the FA President, though they all agreed to identify persons in-charge of managing, feeding, and maintaining the cleanliness of the pens.

The 15 first-in-line beneficiaries are required to give back the capital of the piglet in monetary form, thus, are expected to hand in Php 5,800 each. On top of that, 10% from the recipient's net income shall go directly to the association's savings.

Once the gilts repopulate, the members who tended to the herd will have a share and will have the chance to raise one for themselves; should there be more than one litter, the rest will be divided among members.

Moreover, one piglet will be intended for their utility bills such as electricity and water; likewise, a fee of Php 9,200 will be set aside as payment for the Artificial Insemination (AI) Technician.

With the policies strictly observed and implemented, the 15 members earned Php 164,410 gross from selling pork meat which they plan to use in buying another set of piglets until all members have the chance to raise and sell.

Without using money from their own pockets, the group efficiently and proactively made use of the capital, in the form of production inputs, given by the SAAD Program.



In November 2022, from their total revenue, the group bought 15 piglets worth Php 87,000 to turn over to the second-in-line members. This left the group with Php 77,410 net income, of which 10% (Php 7,741) was directly deposited to the association's savings.

Grateful for the aid extended by the program, BOD Member Liezl A. Noble even shared in an exclusive interview, "Kabahal guid ang nabulig ni SAAD sa amon pangabuhian. Tungod sa sini nga programa, duro amon naman-an, halin sa pagsagud kang baboy, sa pagmarket sini, hasta sa team building kung sa diin nangin close pa guid ang tanan na miyembro."

(SAAD has greatly helped us improve our livelihood. We learned a lot from the program starting from proper swine raising practices, how to market our stocks, and even experienced team building which brought all the members closer.)

➤➤➤ POLICIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

With TRFA's knowledge on meat processing, they plan to put up a meat shop, process meat, and sell pork by-products in their community such as tocino, longganisa, siomai, and embutido.

They committed to remain active in their current endeavor and intend to continue the rollover scheme to slowly build up the association's savings and until each member receives their share of the inputs.

Walking into the enterprise phase, they aim to expand their market linkages outside the town proper once their stocks reach production level at a maximum. ###

NEG OCC FAs GET INCUBATORS TO BOOST NATIVE CHICKEN, DUCK PRODUCTIONS

By Christ John Gamarcha



Seven (7) farmers' associations (FAs) in Negros Occidental received 11 units of automatic incubators from the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Program to support their duck production and native chicken enterprise.

Each FA from Salvador Benedicto and Toboso received one unit of incubator with a hatcher worth Php 74,368 per unit, while FAs from Calatrava and Moises Padilla received 3 units each. The incubator has a 528 egg maximum hatcher capacity that creates the ideal conditions for an egg to incubate and hatch successfully. It is designed to regulate incubation temperature and humidity at perfect levels as well as recreate the role that the broody hen plays in nature.

All FAs agreed to set up their incubators at locations with access to electricity. As of now, they have yet to finalize their policies on the sharing scheme of the machinery but most have initial plans to allot funds from their accumulated savings out of their income intended for electricity bills.



Aside from hatching, the incubator features include a digital temperature and humidity gadget, alarm system, aluminum edging or corner guard with viewing glass, casement window, and auto-refill made of melamine laminated plywood.

During the turnover, the Regional Agricultural Engineering Division (RAED) along with SAAD provincial staff performed incubator calibration as well as onsite training for proper handling of the equipment.

Each of the seven FAs has an existing native chicken production that currently has a population ranging from 130 to over 200 heads. With the use of incubators, the groups expect to increase their stocks to almost 50 percent.

With the provision of incubators from the SAAD program, Ms. Dolly Celedenio, chairperson of PLOFFA, is confident they will be able to increase the population of their native chicken more efficiently, thus having more stocks for their planned lechon manok (roasted chicken) enterprise.



Mr. Arnel Priolo, President of Hilub-ang Upland Farmers Beneficiary Association, for his part, recognized the importance of incubators for their native chicken production, especially since they are preparing to engage in a meat processing enterprise. ###

ABOUT SAADTALÁAN

SAADTALÁAN is a quarterly newsletter produced by the SAAD program to provide an overview and information on the program's important activities and events toward realizing its goals and objectives among farmers and fisherfolk groups in Western Visayas.

The SAADTALÁAN Editorial board reserves the right to edit and finalize all stories prior to publication

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