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# grains

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January - June 2020



## ■ INSIDE

- Highlights of NFA's 2019 Accomplishments
- NFA: Facing the Challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic



The recent turn of events in our personal and corporate lives is just overwhelming. The passage of Republic Act 11203 and a pandemic that has turned the world upside down have brought us disturbing times as we sail our own boats not sailing smoothly on tempestuous sea of challenges. Yet, we are managing the course of things, gracefully, confidently, effectively - simply because we lift one another up from our boats. This is the essence of unity, the biggest challenge to win - conquer the ocean and reach the shore safely.

Cover Design: Lambert Manalo

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# WINNING AS ONE

**IT'S ALL WORTH IT** borrowing the theme of the 2019's 30th Southeast Asian Games "We Win as One" for this issue's editorial. Because for always, unity is the name of the game – a magic word that works wonders – one that stands solid and strong against dissent and disagreement. In the course of things, unity spells strength and greatness - amid diverse personalities, feelings, interests, goals - joined in harmony and utter wholeness.

With their unity and indomitable spirit coming on too strong and consistently unyielding, the Philippine team dominated and delivered sterling and shining performance against 11 countries represented by 5,630 athletes, with distinct toughness, endurance, agility, perseverance in over 500 events in 56 different sports; showed just what the Filipino brand of kindness and hospitality is all about amid harsh and stiff competition; and came out shouting the joy of victory and savoring the sweetest of success. Host country, Philippines, clinched the title as the Overall Champion, with 387 medals, including 149 golds to crow about, each symbolizing the blood-sweat-and-tears of Filipino sportsmanship.

In the coming days, NFA will be mustering a great sense of unity as in the past many years of its existence courtesy of its impending restructuring as an offshoot of the passage of the Rice Tariffication Law. The agency has been under critical periods in its history but has survived and resurfaced every time it stumbles, coming out stronger and wiser all because both management and rank-and-file have chosen to be united after all the discord and dissonance in addressing conflicts and crises.

There is a need to win something positive out of the RTL. There has to be a good and grand ending to its multifaceted impact on the food industry and to the country's quest for economic recovery. The NFA family, more than ever, should stand united to work for the best options for every employee, and for every position and function that may be affected once the law is implemented and especially when the restructuring takes place.

Unity is a sure defense against any forms of instability that may result from the restructuring process. Unity at work is a sure win for the majority, putting aside personal or individual issues or differences in favor of those who would either avail of the special incentive package or stick it out with the agency after careful thought and consideration. Unity at best is winning this episode in the agency's history as one NFA family.

Another episode, more painful and devastating, is invading the country and the whole wide world today -- the coronavirus 2019 or Covid-19. The NFA is taking the sudden onslaught of this pandemic with its characteristic resilience and adaptability to change. Backed up by a solid and strong workforce plus physical resources to withstand the rigorous procurement and distribution activities, the NFA has been pulling it through successfully -- for the food needs of the Filipino people, especially the most helpless – for the sake of food security.

Again, unity is that magic word that would turn one of the darkest times in the history of mankind upside down – that would fortify the HEALING that each human being longs for and rightfully deserves.

Indeed, healing as one in this time of a pandemic may well prepare everyone to win even greater challenges ahead as a corporate family, as a people, as a nation.



## THIRTY

So this is how it ends...

I wore a long skirt with slits on both sides. I was that skinny, fresh from the province kid with a permanent smile plastered on my face. I was finally living my dream of working for the government. That's all that matters to me at that time - to have a secured, permanent job.

Sure there were moments when I thought of transferring to another office, but that was part of the whole process. In the end, I stayed. It's been over 20 years and I never stopped loving my agency. Until recently.

This year, things started turning for the worst. I was told I can no longer hold on to my position. I always thought I'm covered with the cloak of security of tenure. That I can keep working until I decide to say goodbye. Or when I reach the age of 60. But apparently, that is not the case here. It's quite complicated, so to speak.

And so, this is how it ends.

There was no proper goodbye. It's like I've done something evil and they're driving me away. One more thing, all this is happening at the height of a pandemic. Tragic, right?

In the Korean drama I watched recently, Moon Gang Tae keeps getting his dose of one bad luck after another. His friend Nam Ju Ri says everyone receives a certain amount of bad luck in a lifetime. If he's got all his bad luck now, surely he'll receive good luck the rest of his life.

There's an end to every suffering. You can't be sad forever. You can't be happy always either. This means that whatever life gives you, be strong. Because it's the journey that truly matters in the end.



## CENTRAL OFFICE

## NFA donates rice for Taal Volcano victims

After tens of thousands of people from CALABARZON area were affected by the eruption of Taal Volcano last January 12, 2020, the National Food Authority immediately donated a total of 2000 bags for distribution to victims of Taal Volcano eruption.

Local NFA offices in Cavite also released 489 bags to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD); Batangas issued 50 bags to the local government of Taysan and 60 bags to the Lions Club of Batangas.

Meanwhile, the city government of Valenzuela has signified its intention to buy 9,600 bags from the food agency, also for distribution to the displaced families.

NFA Administrator Judy Carol L. Dansal assured that the food agency has enough rice stocks especially in the affected areas. The rice inventory in Region 4 (Southern Tagalog) stands at 1,930,000 bags; NCR has 197,000 bags and 1,963,000 bags for Region 3 (Central Luzon).

"We are ready to respond anytime to provide the rice requirements of various relief agencies and LGUs. We have a standing Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with relief agencies such as the DSWD, Office of Civil Defense and LGUs for the supply of their rice requirements for relief operations during natural disasters, calamities and other emergencies," added Dansal.

She said that local NFA offices in Batangas, Cavite, Metro Manila and Central Luzon are on alert status and are closely coordinating with the LGUs and relief agencies for the issuance of rice for distribution to affected families and those in the evacuation centers. NFA Operation Centers were also activated to ensure a 24-hour response and regularly monitor the situations in the area. Residents from hardly hit areas of Batangas are now staying in evacuation centers set up by the government. (MA. CYNTHIA DL. SUAREZ)



## NFA assures sufficient rice stocks amidst spread of COVID-19



The National Food Authority (NFA) has sufficient rice inventory in the National Capital Region (NCR), even in case of emergency situation or possible lockdown due to COVID-19. This was the assurance from NFA Administrator Judy Carol L. Dansal, in view of the government's total efforts and preparations about the COVID-19 outbreak.

"We have 455,000 bags of rice in Metro Manila. This is good for 40 days, at 10% market participation. Of

course there are still rice stocks in the household and the commercial sectors, which comprise the great portion of rice stocks in the market," Dansal said.

The continuing transfer of 2,224 bags (111,206 MT) of rice to NCR from the nearby rice-producing regions is also being fast-tracked. This is to ensure the rice sufficiency level of NCR at all times. NCR will receive 311,920 bags (15,596 MT) from Region 1; 1,000,000 bags (50,000 MT) from Region 2; and 912,000 bags (45,610 MT) from Region 3.

The total government rice stocks is 9.636 million bags or 481,800 MT. This is equivalent to 14.5-day rice consumption requirement of the whole country at 661,930 bags. They are stored in different strategically located warehouses in all provinces.

Dansal noted that the NFA had already bought 1,734,230 bags (86,711 MT) of palay from farmers and farmer coops and associations. This is 124% of the 1,399,000 bags target for January and February. For the whole 2020, the NFA aims to locally buy 15,440,000 bags of palay.

RA 11203 mandates the NFA to maintain a sufficient level of rice buffer stocks to be sourced locally, intended primarily for emergency/calamity operations. NFA continues to sell rice through disaster/relief/calamity operations response outlets, and other government agencies.



## NFA plays crucial role in Inter-Agency Task Force COVID-19

Being the nation's custodian of government rice buffer stocks, the National Food Authority (NFA) had been tapped to perform important functions under the National Task Force Covid-19 of the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) on Emerging Infectious Diseases.

Specifically, the NFA was assigned several tasks under the IATF Task Groups on Response Operations and Resource Management and Logistics.

In line with this, the NFA has organized its own NFA Covid19 National Task Force composed of the National Task Force chaired by Administrator Dansal; the National Task Group on Response Operations chaired by OIC - Deputy Administrator for Marketing Operations Rex C. Estoperez; and National Task Group on Resource Management and Logistics chaired by Deputy Administrator for Finance and Administration Tomas R. Escarez.

At the regional level, the NFA's Luzon Task Group is chaired by Region 1 Director Yolanda R. Navarro; Visayas Task Group is chaired by Region 6 Director Dianne R. Silva; Mindanao 1 Task Group chaired by Region 10 Director John Robert R. Hermiano; and Mindanao 2 Task Group chaired by Region 11 Director Lester Romeo E. Malana.

The NFA Task Force shall coordinate with the IATF-NTF-Covid19 regarding the agency's role and contribution in the crisis management, provide relevant information and analysis, promulgate and supervise the implementation of rules and regulations within its jurisdiction, and undertake other tasks that may be deemed necessary for the agency to perform.

Part of NFA's functions is the provision of all the necessary supplies and materials to protect its frontliners from possible transmission of the disease and other hazards at work. Office premises, furniture and equipment as well as warehouses will also be periodically disinfected.

All NFA officials and employees, including contractual, job orders and third party service providers physically reporting for work are considered as frontliners. They shall be provided with medicines, vitamins and protective



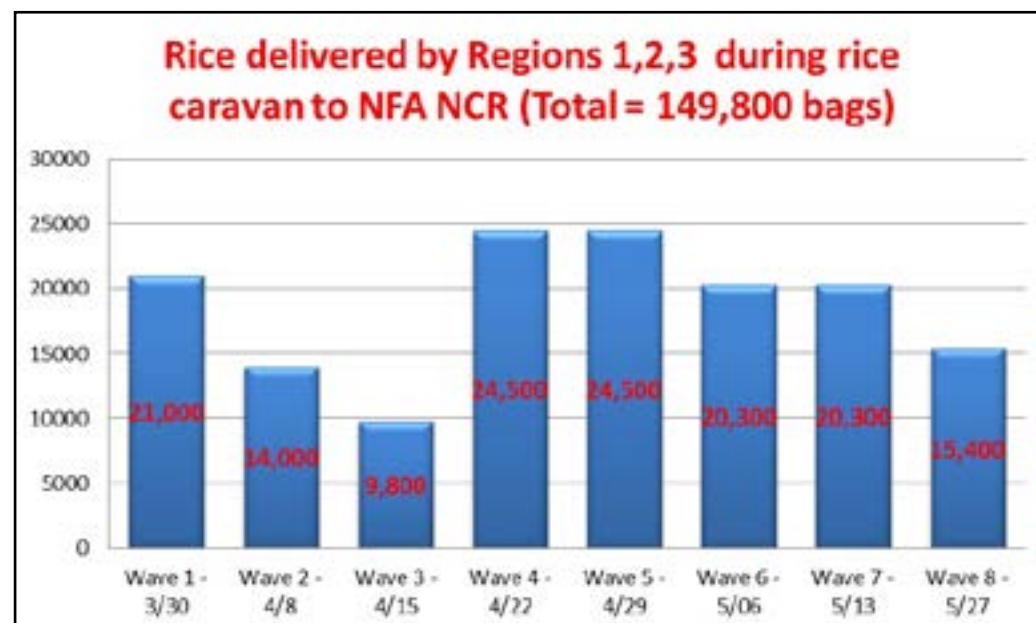
materials, as well as hazard pay and/or overtime pay, subject to civil service and accounting rules and regulations.

To effectively prevent transmission of COVID-19 among NFA frontliners, employees and other persons entering the agency's premises with body temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher will not be allowed inside. Employees shall immediately be brought to the nearest medical facility following the DOH protocol, while non-NFA personnel will be advised to seek medical help and follow the DOH protocol.

To ensure operational continuity, all NFA offices shall continue to perform their functions, adopting the work schedules prescribed in the ECQ guidelines, such as: work-from-home, skeletal workforce, compressed work week, and staggered working hours.

The NFA shall also continue to ensure unhampered delivery of government rice stocks by providing food lane vehicle passes to NFA-owned trucks, contracted trucks, private haulers and traders transporting NFA rice.

Continuous coordination with LGUs and emergency relief agencies shall be done to assure them of the availability of rice stocks for their relief requirements and activities.



The NFA also conducted 8 waves of rice caravan from Regions 1, 2, and 3 to replenish NFA stock of rice in the National Capital Region during the COVID-19 outbreak, totalling 149,800 bags for the period March 30 - May 27, 2020.

## REGION I

### ILOCOS NORTE

By: Ruby Jean C. Pambid  
GOAI/ Acting IO

#### BAGNOS MPC DISTRIBUTES NFA RICE.

Distribution of NFA rice purchased by the Bagnos MPC through their CDIF on January 11, 2020 at Brgy. Binacag, Banna, Ilocos Norte. Bagnos MPC, a cooperative managed by women, is well-known in the province and in Region I because of its rice coffee products (Banna Blend) which have already garnered various regional and national awards.



**BRIEFING ON RICE SITUATION.** PM Eleonor Andres (center) briefs Bacarra Mayor Fritzie dela Cruz Gapasin (left) on the rice situation in the province during a courtesy call on January 28, 2020. She also discussed the Rice Loan Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with LGUs. Also in photo is Municipal Accountant Lydia A. Mann (right).

**DANSAL IN ILOCOS NORTE** Adm. Judy Carol Dansal (2nd from right) receives a warm welcome from Region I employees headed by Director Yolanda Navarro upon her arrival at the Laoag International Airport on February 25, 2020 to attend the 1st Quarter DA Management Committee meeting at the Fort Ilocandia Resort and Hotel, Laoag City (right photo). Also in photos are Ilocos Norte Provincial Manager Eleonor A. Andres (in red blouse), and La Union Provincial Manager Fortunato B. Bulao (in orange shirt).



**PAMULINAWEN FESTIVAL.** NFA Ilocos Norte employees headed by PM Eleonor Andres (center, first row) participate in the Civic-Military Parade as an opening activity of the Laoag City Pamulinawen Festival on February 1, 2020.





**FIRST QUARTER DA MANCOM.** Attendance of Administrator Judy Carol L. Dansal and Region I Director Yolanda R. Navarro to the 1st Quarter DA Management Committee (ManCom) meeting at the Fort Ilocandia Resort and Hotel, Laoag City on February 27-28, 2020.



**PRICE FREEZE MONITORING.** The NFA and representatives from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Ilocos Norte Provincial Office, Department of Agriculture (DA), and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) conducts an on-site monitoring of prices of basic necessities and prime commodities during the Enhanced Community Quarantine in the province to make sure that price freeze is being implemented. Said monitoring was done in various establishments in Laoag City, San Nicolas and Batac City on March 20, 2020.

**CLEAN AND GREEN.** As part of the celebration of the Department of Agriculture's 122nd Anniversary and Farmers' and Fisherfolk's Month, the NFA Ilocos Norte Family spent the two holidays of June (June 12- Independence Day, and June 19-Laoag City Day) by doing series of Clean and Green activities at the Dingras GID Warehouse located at Brgy. Saludaes, Dingras, Ilocos Norte.

Well-loved Ilokano vegetables like tomatoes, ladies' fingers (okra), snow cabbage (pechay), bitter melon (ampalaya), string beans, bottle gourd (patola/upo), squash (kalabasa), and papaya were planted. Seedlings were donated by DA Provincial Office and Ilocos Norte Research and Extension Center. Landscape improvement was also undertaken.



**CONTINGENCY MEASURE.** A total of forty one thousand three hundred seventy six (41,376) bags were issued to the different local government units in the province of Ilocos Norte as of June 30. Rice issuances to LGUs is one of the contingency measures during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## ILOCOS SUR

By: Jacquelyn R. Madalipay  
correspondent

**WAREHOUSE INSPECTION.** Administrator Judy Carol Dansal (far left) inspects the Tomato Paste Plant and Multiline (7171) Warehouses in Santa, Ilocos Sur together with RD Yolanda R. Navarro (2nd from right), PM Lolita Sanedrin (far right) and other NFA Ilocos Sur employees during her visit on February 26, 2020. The warehouses were provided by the Provincial Government of Ilocos Sur as buying station/storage of palay deliveries free of charge. Savings incurred from rental expenses on the free use of the two (2) warehouses from October 2019 to June 2020 is more or less Php1.2 million sans the free use of more than 300 pcs pallets in the said warehouses. Kudos to Governor Ryan Luis V. Singson.



**INDUCTION OF PFAC OFFICERS.** PM Lolita Sanedrin (far left) inducts into office the newly elected officers of PFAC Ilocos Sur on January 20, 2020. Prior to this, a meeting was conducted where PM Sanedrin updated PFAC members about NFA's programs. She urged them to participate in the Institutionalized Procurement Program (IPP) and assist NFA to build its buffer stocks.



**MARKET MONITORING.** Amid COVID-19, NFA Ilocos Sur personnel conduct rice price and supply monitoring in selected major markets in the province as part of the OPCEN Situational Report during the ECQ.



**MEDIA INTERVIEW.** Correspondents Lovelyn Palacpac of DWRS Radio Station and Michael Layante of Iluko Heritage Channel on May 21, 2020 interviewed PM Lolita O. Sanedrin who informed that during the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) and General Community Quarantine (GCQ) Luzon-wide, NFA-Ilocos Sur continued serving the LGUs, Legislators, DSWD, PNP and other relief institutions by issuing rice for their relief operations while maintaining a skeletal work force, Mondays to Sundays. She said that rice issuances to authorized NFA rice retailers/ outlets were temporarily suspended beginning March 18, 2020 to prioritize the rice requirements of relief agencies and LGUs. She informed that the Provincial Office's palay milling operations from five (5) contracted millers are in full swing to meet the rice requirements of relief agencies and LGUs; and to build up buffer stocks for the coming lean months. She assured that all rice releases are newly milled and good quality local rice while the branch continues to procure palay at Php19.00/kg for clean and dry.



**PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF 100,000 BAGS CAPACITY WAREHOUSE.** In response to the letter-request of NFA-Ilocos Sur for a lot donation at the 2nd District of Ilocos Sur for the construction of a 100,000 bags capacity warehouse, former Deputy Speaker/Congressman Eric D. Singson (far left, left photo) met with Region I Dir. Yolanda Navarro (2nd from left, left photo) PM Lolita Sanedrin (2nd from right, left photo) and Regional Engineer Jonathan Corpuz (far right, left photo) on June 24, 2020 to discuss the sketch and lay-out plan of the proposed warehouse. After the presentation, former Congressman Singson led the group for an on-site inspection (right photo). The lot intended for donation is more or less 5,000 sq. m. located along the diversion road of Candon City, considered a prime lot.



**MILLING OPERATIONS.** NFA Ilocos Sur intensifies the issuance of palay for milling operations to its five (5) contracted private millers to beef up its rice inventory and meet the rice requirements of LGUs, DSWD, PNP and other government agencies for their relief operations.



**RICE DISPERSAL.** Trucks were loaded with NFA rice for dispersal to NFA NCR as committed by NFA-Ilocos Sur to beef-up the rice inventory of Metro Manila for issuances to LGUs and other government institutions for relief operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.



**SOCIAL DISTANCING.** Members of the Philippine National Police (PNP) of the different detachments of Ilocos Sur observe social distancing while availing their monthly rice allowance from NFA. The food agency strictly implements health protocols such as passing through a thermal scanner, foot bath, one representative per detachment, and no mask, no entry policy.

**TROOP FORMATION.** PM Lolita Sanedrin (far left) briefs on NFA's programs such as procurement, distribution and milling operations during the troop formation of ESAC Security Guards, a contracted security agency of the provincial office. She cited the necessity of regular re-shuffling of places of assignment, satisfactory performance of their duties and responsibilities and her observations of their actual performance for the past months. Acting Senior Enforcement and Investigation Officer (SEIO) Eunice T. Abalos reminded them on the renewal of their licenses, wearing of complete uniform and encouraged them to be alert at all times.



**COMPLETION OF WAREHOUSE.** The Warehouse Inspection Team of the Regional Office I headed by Regional Director Yolanda Navarro (2nd from right) and Regional Engineer Jonathan Corpuz (far right) together with Provincial Manager Lolita Sanedrin (far left) and PSQAO Engr. Edward Leo Pascua (2nd from left) conducted inspection of the on-going completion of the 45,000 bags capacity warehouse located at Bantay, Ilocos Sur on February 6, 2020.

**KAPIHAN SA ILOCOS.** To elicit greater public awareness on food sufficiency amid COVID-19, RD Yolanda R. Navarro served as resource person during the "Kapihan sa Ilocos" radio program at the Philippine Information Agency, Regional Office I on May 4, 2020. RD Navarro discussed the food agency's continuous palay procurement, distribution, rice milling, rice caravan and rice issuances to LGUs, DSWD and other relief agencies for their relief operations during the Luzon-wide ECQ. (SONNY REY RIVERA, correspondent)





## PANGASINAN

By: Maezle M. Ferrer  
correspondent

**WOMEN'S MONTH.** PM Veralew De Vera (far right, seated) and his staff in this posterity photo after discussing the role, empowerment and importance of womanhood in celebration of the Women's Month held on March 13 in Alaminos City, Pangasinan.



**RICE RELEASES FOR COVID-19.** Since the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) took effect last March 17, NFA Eastern Pangasinan continued to serve the rice requirements of local government units and relief agencies. As of June 30, a total of 59,514 bags were released to 21 LGUs, 36 barangays, eight legislators, six non-government organizations and one government agency. The province transferred 28,100 bags of rice to the NFA-NCR as part of the agency's Rice Caravan. Milling operations in the agency's Satake ricemill and six private miller-contractors were fast-tracked to serve the rice requirements of LGUs and relief agencies; and maintain sufficient rice buffer stocks especially for the coming lean months.

**CONDUCT OF PHYSICAL INVENTORY.** Even with the pandemic, routine operations are being conducted, like the First Semester Semi-Annual Inventory Count for NFA Grain Stocks, By-Products, Empty Sacks and Wooden Pallets. The Provincial Office Inventory Committee headed by Assistant Provincial Manager Jeoffrey S. Paraton conducted the inventory last May 26–28 witnessed by Acting RSQAO Adoracion Chan as the Regional Representative.



## WESTERN PANGASINAN

By: Jean Ticman  
correspondent

**75th LINGAYEN GULF LANDINGS.** PM Ramon B. Cuaresma (center) leads NFA Western Pangasinan employees during the commemoration of the 75th Lingayen Gulf Landings & 13th Pangasinan Veterans' Day held at Veterans Memorial Park, Capitol Complex, Lingayen on January 9, 2020. Also in photo is Lingayen Mayor Leopoldo N. Bataoil (right)



**NEW DISTRIBUTION STRATEGIES.** PM Cuaresma (6th from right) meets with the officers of the Confederation of Grains Retailers Association of the Philippines (GRECON) Western Pangasinan chapter on January 15, 2020 to discuss the agency's new rice distribution strategies in the province and showed off the quality of cooked imported rice. As a show of support, GRECON officers signified their intention to help the food agency in the disposal of re-milled imported rice in the province. PM Cuaresma updated the stakeholders of NFA's continuous palay buying activities and on-going milling operations.



**1st QUARTER PFAC.** PM Cuaresma (2nd from left) during the 1st Quarter Regular Provincial Farmers Action Council meeting chaired by Katho C. Moreno on January 16, 2020. Provincial Industry Services Officer (PISO) Marissa Jacinto and PM Cuaresma said that NFA is always ready to buy palay from local farmers/farmer cooperatives/associations. Election of the new set of PFAC officers followed.



**MEETING WITH PRIVATE RICE MILLERS.** PM Ramon Cuaresma (far right) discusses the Terms of Reference for the Procurement of Private Milling Services with the rice millers in the province. He encouraged them to participate in the bidding but advised them to comply with the requirements.



**QUALITY AUDIT.** Provincial Quality Audit Team undertakes regular quality audit to ensure that all palay and rice stocks are of good quality.



**RELIEF OPERATIONS FOR LABORERS.** About 107 hired laborers of the provincial office, considered as frontliners, receive relief goods from the Western Pangasinan Employees' Association and PM Ramon B. Cuaresma. The project was a simple way of appreciating the laborers for doing an important job and continuously reporting for work even during the ECQ.





**RICE ISSUANCE TO LGUS.** The NFA Western Pangasinan has distributed a total of 48,931 bags as of June 30, 2020. The provincial office and all warehouses are open daily even during the pandemic for the relief operations of LGUs and other relief agencies.



**UGNAYAN WITH RICE MILLERS.** Administrator Judy Carol L. Dansal (standing) meets with private miller contractors in La Union, Eastern and Western Pangasinan to address their concerns in the ongoing milling operations during the Enhanced Community Quarantine in Luzon. Adm. Dansal wanted to fast track the replenishment of rice stocks in deficit areas for issuance to LGUs. The dialogue was held at MC Hotel in Lingayen, Pangasinan.

**ADM. DANSAL MEETS MAYOR LEOPOLDO BATAOIL.** Administrator Dansal (left) assures Lingayen Mayor Leopoldo Bataoil (opposite Adm. Dansal) that NFA has ample supply of rice (stocks) in the province after a meeting with the rice millers at the MC Hotel on April 17. She informed the local chief that the agency continues to deliver unimpeded services to the public.



**COURTESY VISIT.** While in Pangasinan, Administrator Dansal (left) visit to Governor Amado Espino (right) at the Capitol Resort Hotel. She updated the Governor on the agency's operational activities particularly milling operations while assuring sufficient supply of rice in NFA warehouses in Pangasinan in response to the Governor's query on the agency's level of rice stocks.

**RICE MILL INSPECTION.** Administrator Dansal (in black face mask) inspects the Vergara-Tagorda Rice Mill in Mangatarem, Pangasinan, one of the contracted rice mills in the province. The NFA officials observed the milling operations, including the actual delivery of rice to NFA warehouse.



**PLANT PLANT PLANT.** With the theme "Agrikultura ang Pagasa sa Kabila ng Pandemya," NFA-Western Pangasinan headed by PM Ramon Cuaresma joins the DA family in the celebration of its 122nd anniversary by planting vegetables and other fruit bearing trees in the front yard of the Provincial Office and at the vacant lot of GID Alaminos on June 25, 2020.

**RICE BUSINESS INNOVATIONS SYSTEM BRIEFING.** NFA joins the project briefing on Rice Business Innovations System (RiceBIS) Mangatarem Modern Farms at Mangatarem DA Office on June 25, 2020. This is a pilot project of PhilRice in seven selected barangays of Mangatarem which aims to help farmers increase their yield by one ton/ha, increase income by 25%, lower production cost to P7-8/kg, reduce postharvest losses and link them to market and Business Development Service (BDS) Providers. Mr. Roberonta said that NFA continuously buys palay from farmers to provide them a reasonable price for their harvest. NFA was represented by PM Ramon Cuaresma and Provincial Standards and Quality Assurance Officer (PSQAO) Caezar Roberonta (2nd from left).



## ■ REGION II

### CAGAYAN

By: Charlotte M. Pallingayan  
correspondent

**BENEFICIARIES OF RICE DONATION FROM KOREA.** Tuguegarao City Mayor Jefferson P. Soriano (3rd from right) together with NFA Regional Manager Genaro S. Nunez Jr. (2nd from right) and OIC-Division Chief Franco G. Lopez of Disaster Response and Management Division of DSWD FO2 (far right) and other local government officials hand over the rice donation from the Republic of Korea to the beneficiaries from Tuguegarao City in a simple ceremony held at Tuguegarao City Hall on June 11, 2020. RM Nunez said the rice donation was made through the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR). He said the government requested APTERR for a rice donation to be distributed to affected households in the provinces of Cagayan, Isabela, Quirino and Nueva Vizcaya that were hardest hit by Typhoon Quiel in November 2019. A total of 8,750 families from the four provinces received one bag of rice at 40 kilograms per bag. The rice donation arrived early in March at the port of Manila but deliveries were delayed because of the COVID-19 outbreak.



Lal-lo Mayor Florence Oliver B. Pascual (6th from right) and Provincial Manager Emerson G. Ravilas (7th from right) of NFA Cagayan distribute rice donated by the Republic of Korea (ROK) to more than 100 families affected by Tropical Storm Quiel. A total of 2,900 bags were distributed in the different towns of Cagayan. The distribution was carried out by NFA in cooperation with the officials of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). The rice was part of the 350MT donation of KOREA to the four provinces of Region 2.



**ISABELA**

By: Dianne April Soriano Pangan  
correspondent

**Food security commitment**

The warehouses in NFA-Region II were utilized as drop off points for the 950MT rice donated by the Republic of Korea through the NFA and Department of Social Welfare and Development National Resource and Logistics Management Bureau (DSWD-NRLMB). The donation was part of the emergency food assistance of the Republic of Korea's Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR). The rice shipments were delivered to NFA warehouses on May 26-29, 2020.

The 8,750 bags allocated for Region II were distributed in four (4) provinces - Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, Isabela and Cagayan, as identified by the DSWD. NFA turned over the rice donations to the DSWD, and the LGUs who distributed it to the beneficiaries affected by Typhoon Quiel that hit these provinces in November 2019.

A total of 1,500 bags were distributed to the affected families in Nueva Vizcaya, 600 bags for the province of Quirino, 3,750 bags for the province of Isabela and 2,900 bags for Cagayan province.



Arrival of 1,500 bags allocation of rice donation of Korea at NFA Nueva Vizcaya.



Regional Director Genaro S. Nuñez Jr. (3rd from right) with Cagayan Provincial Manager Emerson G. Ravilas (far left) personally supervised the turnover of Korean-donated-rice to DSWD of Cagayan.



Beneficiaries from LGU Mallig, Isabela received their rice donation from APTERR.



NFA employees assist DSWD officials during the withdrawal of rice donated by Korea at NFA Warehouse in Cagayan.

**KALINGA**

By: Dalisay N. Sudario  
correspondent

**PALAY PROCUREMENT.**

NFA-Kalinga continues to procure palay from farmers even during the General Community Quarantine. Acting PSQAO Monalisa N. Arcega (left photo) take samples from palay deliveries at the FLGC Warehouse, Liwan West, Rizal on June 16, 2020. Amidst the prevailing ex-farm price of palay of Php 20.00 per kilogram in the province, some farmers loyal to NFA chose to deliver their produce even at a lower buying price of Php. 19.00/kg.



**RICE CARAVAN.** Bags of rice are loaded to trucks at NFA-Kalinga warehouse as part of the rice caravan from Region II to augment the rice requirements of NCR during the ECQ due to COVID-19.



**RICE ISSUANCE.** NFA-Kalinga issues 240 bags to DSWD-CAR with the help of the Philippine National Police of Tabuk City (left photo) while the Municipality of Tanudan withdraws 1,000 bags, intended for relief operations during the COVID-19 lockdown in the province.



**EXIT CONFERENCE.** Provincial Manager Fe E. Salim (center) and staff meets with resident Auditor Catherine L. Agyao (far right) during the COA Exit Conference held on June 30, 2020 to assess actions taken on Audit Findings for year 2019.

**REGION III****BATAAN**

By: Romalyn G. Villar  
correspondent



The new Bataan provincial office building



PM Antonio Puno (far right) presents to Mr. Albert Dela Rea (second from right) a certificate for being an "early bird" client of the agency.

**NEW HOME**

The National Food Authority-Bataan officially moved to its new provincial office building situated at GID warehouse compound along Roman Highway in Balanga City. The office is a single-storey modern style building designed to better serve the local farmers and other stakeholders in the province.

Through the efforts of management and staff, headed by PM Antonio A. Puno, the office was able to acquire new furniture, and equipment for the new office.

As part of the celebration, NFA Bataan awarded a certificate to Mr. Albert Dea for being an "early bird" or the first client who set foot in the new building. NFA Region III Director Piolito C. Santos was invited to the occasion where he gave updates on the present situation of the food agency.



Director Santos (holding microphone) gives updates to employees on the present situation of the agency. Seated to his left is PM Puno.





**PLANT, PLANT, PLANT PROGRAM.** In support of the DA's Plant, Plant, Plant Program, NFA-Region III launched its local Urban Agriculture Program on May 2, 2020 at the NFA-Cabanatuan City Compound. Administrator Judy Carol L. Dansal spearheaded the launching together with Region III executives and employees, Regional Director Yolanda Navarro of Region I and Special Assistant Atty. Raul Canon.



**GOOD FRIDAY OPERATIONS.** The NFA is open for the Holy Week to receive rice from milling operations and distribute to LGUs and DSWD. This Good Friday operation was witnessed by Administrator Judy Carol Dansal, Special Assistant to the Administrator Raul Canon and Assistant Regional Director and concurrent Provincial Manager Elvira C. Obana.



**SERVICE AWARDS.** Adm. Dansal (2nd from left) and Regional Director Piolito Santos (far right) join the Region III service awardees, namely (L-R) : PM Jonathan Yazon (20 years), ARD Rolando Rufo (40 years) and PM Genoveva Villar (40 years) during the turn-over ceremonies for the Asst. Regional Director in the region.

### NFA BATAAN STRENGTHENS UGNAYAN ACTIVITIES

The Sangguniang Bayan of Abucay, Bataan organized a dialogue between NFA Bataan and farmer organizations on February 18, 2020 at Brgy. Laon covered court to discuss policy issues in the NFA's palay procurement program.

NFA Bataan, headed by PM Antonio A. Puno together with Licensing Officer Febe Austria, Warehouse Supervisor Edwin del Rosario, and Quality Assurance Officer Angelito Rodriguez were present during the meeting. The team detailed the step-by-step process of NFA palay procurement. PSQAO Robdriguez demonstrated the actual process of classifying palay and presented the Equivalent Net Weight (ENW) table for reference.



*PSQAO Rodriguez (far right) demonstrates the process of classifying palay.*

PM Puno said he will look into the issues and concerns raised by the farmers and encouraged them to report immediately to NFA Bataan management any illegal activities that may transpire during their selling of palay to NFA. He appealed for support to NFA's programs while encouraging farmers to sell their produce to NFA. He expressed gratitude to the Abucay Council for their continued support to the agency.



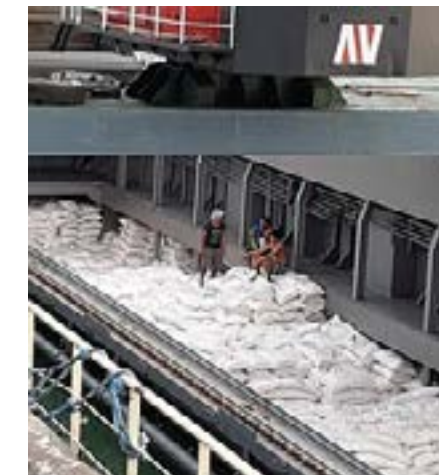
*PM Puno (standing) discusses NFA's palay procurement program*

### Dispersal of local rice to Region V

To facilitate the dispersal of local rice from Region III - Region V, NFA Bataan Provincial Office tapped the services of Seafront Port and Shipyard located at Lucanin, Mariveles, Bataan.

A total of 30,000 bags of local rice were sourced from the provinces of Bulacan, Bataan, Pampanga, Tarlac, and Nueva Ecija were shipped to Bicol via MV Cecilia V.

The Vessel Inspection Team headed by Provincial Standards Quality Assurance Officer (PSQAO) Angelito Rodriguez conducted a thorough inspection of the vessel to ensure the cleanliness of holds and hatches before loading the rice stocks. The loading operations commenced on February 8 and was completed on February 11, 2020. MV Cecilia V docked in Virac Port, Catanduanes on February 15, 2020.



*Local rice being transferred from trucks to MV Cecilia V*

## REGION IV

### QUEZON

**By: Christine Marie M. Turgo**  
correspondent

#### Dansal conducts site inspection



*Adm. Dansal (3rd from Left) with NFA Region IV officials in a dialogue with OIC Custodio Balaoing Jr (in blue polo)*

Administrator Judy Carol Dansal visited NFA Quezon on July 21-22, 2020 together with Southern Tagalog Regional Director Jaime Hadlocon, Assistant Regional Director Oliver Cambas and Regional Information Officer Asela Infantado.

Adm. Dansal conducted site inspection of the various projects being implemented at Philippine Fisheries Development Authority (PFDA) at the Lucena Fish Port Complex, where she is the vice-chairman. She held a dialogue with the Officer in Charge, Mr. Custodio Balaoing Jr.

The group was warmly welcomed by NFA Quezon employees headed by Provincial Manager Roy Untiveros. Adm. Dansal gave updates on NFA Restructuring and she assured that no one will be left behind. The affected employees will be given what is due them. During the open forum, Dansal also addressed all questions and concerns raised by the employees.

PM Untiveros thanked the Administrator and the NFA-Region IV management for their efforts in ensuring the employees' welfare.

#### NFA Southern Tagalog attends FGD on buffer stocking

The NFA Southern Tagalog Region recently attended a Focus Group Discussion on NFA Buffer Stocking conducted by an independent consulting team tasked to develop a study on the appropriate management scheme of buffer stocks including palay procurement, storage and distribution.

The consulting team was composed of four (4) expert consultants: Dr. Marites Tiongco, Agricultural Economist; Dr. Arlene Inocencio, Trade Economist; Dr. Caesar Cororaton, Economic Modeler and Mary Gillian

Santos.

The discussion flow was smoothly done as all questions and clarifications raised by the team were clearly answered by Assistant Regional Director Oliver L. Cambas and the ten (10) Provincial Managers of the Region. The team assured that all responses will be taken into account.

With almost three (3) hours of discussion, the member of the consulting team felt elated and were impressed with the outcome of the dialogue. **(CHEL P. INFANTADO, correspondent)**





#### LEADERSHIP & VALUES RE-ORIENTATION SEMINAR.

About 54 officers and leaders of Our Lady of the Angels Cooperative attended the seminar on Leadership and Values Re-Oriented conducted by NFA-Industry Services Department on February 27, 2020 in Atimonan, Quezon.

Our Lady of the Angels MPC is an accredited cooperative of the NFA Quezon Provincial Office.

NFA Industry Services Department (ISD) Director Marietta J. Ablaza (standing) and Division Chief, Mr. Renato Narciso Robel were the resource speakers. They shared and imparted valuable knowledge on leadership styles and skills, teamwork, importance of values in leading an organization, etc.

NFA Quezon took advantage of the occasion to distribute brochures on palay procurement and conducted a *tagpuan* activity in the area.

## REGION V

### Frontliners at the backlines

With the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) over Luzon due to COVID-19 and the subsequent pronouncement of a State of Calamity over the entire nation by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, the NFA was at the frontlines, being one of the members of the Inter-Agency Task Force; and handling rice, the staple food of the Filipinos.



WS II Kevin C. Guevara (2nd from left) attending to the rice withdrawals of LGUs and other relief institutions, even on weekends and holidays.

At the onset of the ECQ on March 17, 2020, then NFA Sorsogon PM Rodrigo O. Embate Jr. was faced with the challenge of discharging NFA's mandate despite being short-handed due to the limited number of employees who could report for duty. But counting on the dedication of the employees albeit facing the dangers of COVID-19, NFA's services are brought even closer to the stakeholders, the farmers and consumers - the people.

Even with the risk of contracting the disease due to exposure to the virus, the Procurement Team, led by SGOO (WS II) Alex G. Gerolia, set out to Gubat to accommodate the deliveries of farmers in the said locality and from the nearby towns of Prieto Diaz, Bulusan and Barcelona. Joined by TD Joel J. Gerona, Account Analyst Patricia G. Magnaye and TD Manuel L. Bautista as Classifier, Special

Disbursing Officer and Driver, respectively, the Team was able to procure a total of 6,498 bags of palay at GUFADeco Warehouse. The province was able to procure 33,686 bags out of the 92,000 bags targeted for the summer cropping season.

There were personnel who tirelessly attended to the requests and withdrawals of LGUs, legislators and other institutions for their respective relief operations.

They were but some of the few who dared face the risk of contracting the disease, on a daily basis, to serve the needs of the Sorsoganons, to carry out the mandate of the NFA and to fulfill their oath of office. There were the support of warehouse personnel, classifiers, milling supervisors, drivers, to name a few.

They may not be taking care of the sick like the health and medical frontliners, but they delivered the staple food of the people - rice. In a way, they were in the frontlines.

For this, we salute the employees who braved an unseen enemy to be able to serve the farmers and other clients of NFA. Whether directly or indirectly, in front or at the back, what matters most is that NFA's services are brought closer to the people, more so in times of pandemic. (MICHELLE L. CASTUERA, correspondent)



Accounts Analyst Patricia G. Magnaye (left) diligently attends to a farmer who delivered palay harvests to GUFADeco Warehouse -- buying station in Gubat, Sorsogon.



Regional Manager Henry Tristeza award Certificate of Commendation to PM Julie B. Llanareas (top) and PM Rodrigo O. Embate Jr. (below) for their excellent procurement activities in their respective provinces.

### NFA Region V explores wonders of pot gardening



NFA-Region V employees as pot gardeners including RM Henry H. Tristeza (center, in shorts) pose after the activity.

Having no idle lands to plant, employees of NFA Region V headed by Regional Manager Henry H. Tristeza explored the wonders of pot gardening as they planted seeds of various vegetables in the collected unused pots in the Legazpi City compound on April 23, 2020.

### Catanduanes, Sorsogon receive commendations

*"Reaping what they sow!"*

NFA Catanduanes and Sorsogon received Certificates of Commendation from Region V Director Henry H. Tristeza last May 28, 2020 for complying with the instructions of the Department of Agriculture to convert idle lands into vegetable garden and orchard.

Catanduanes Provincial Manager Julie B. Llanareas and Sorsogon Provincial Manager Rodrigo O. Embate Jr. gladly received the said certificates.

Employees of the two provincial offices benefitted and received their shares from the fruits of their labor. Catanduanes Provincial Office sold some of their produce to the local residents; hence, generating income for the agency. Sorsogon Provincial Office donated some of their harvests to frontliners in Cabid-an as well as to the personnel of the Philippine National Police in the province.

Sorsogon Provincial Office received another Certificate of Commendation for being able to procure 8,140 bags of palay despite the ECQ and the increase in the prevailing buying price of palay in the province.

PM Llanareas and PM Embate thanked the management for recognizing their offices' efforts. The provincial managers expressed gratefulness to their respective employees for their untiring support and hard work. (JAHARAH SHYRRA R. PAVILANDO, correspondent)

Eggplants, squash, tomatoes, pechay and okra were planted in the pots arranged to maximize the space at the side of the building. In time, these pots will bear vegetables that are not just aesthetically appealing to the eyes but to the appetites.

The activity proved how determined and motivated the employees were to participate and comply with the Plant, Plant, Plant Program of the government thru the Department of Agriculture.



NFA-Region V employees planting seeds in the pots



### NFA Camarines Norte supports PDRPMC during ECQ



One of the meetings of the PDRPMC attended by Provincial Manager Noemi Morfe

On March 16, 2020, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte placed the entire Luzon under Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) in response to the increasing number of COVID-19 positive cases in the Philippines. The lockdown was aimed to restrict the movement of the people in the entire country to reduce, if not totally stop the spread of corona virus in the country.

Relative to this presidential declaration, the monthly meetings of the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (PDRPMC) became weekly, and were consistently attended by NFA-Camarines Norte Provincial Manager Noemi Morfe.

During these meetings, Governor Edgardo A. Tallado directed that only residents of Camarines Norte can enter the province except for food and drug deliveries. Holding areas were assigned at the boundaries of Tuaca, Basud and Tabugon, Sta. Elena; incoming residents will be quarantined for 14 days.

The Camarines Norte Medical Society Association Spokesperson, Dra. Liza Mary Pangilinan-Palencia, also urged the local chief executives and other frontliners down to the barangay to strictly implement home quarantine.

In response, PM Morfe assured the Council that the agency will abide by their directives in strictly implementing the lockdown policies in the province. **(FELISA M. POBRE, correspondent)**

### DA-RFO 5 and provincial government of Camarines Norte support NFA's palay procurement

With the passage of Republic Act 11203, otherwise known as the Rice Liberalization Law, the mandate of the NFA was reduced in scope and is now focused on the attainment of food security through local procurement. With NFA's aggressive procurement, farmers now have a steady market for their produce; and rice could be made readily available during emergencies and calamities.

NFA Camarines Norte's palay procurement team, through the leadership of then Provincial Manager Remedios V. Dumawal, exerted utmost efforts and devised workable strategies to meet the procurement target of the province for the first semester of 2019. To augment its existing buying station at the GID 1 Warehouse in NFA Daet compound, collection centers were established in far flung municipalities of Capalonga and Sta. Elena. Palay assembled in these collection centers and within the vicinities are hauled by NFA-owned truck and delivered to NFA buying station.

Since the capacity of NFA-owned truck is limited only to 200 bags of palay, prompting farmers to wait for the availability of the said truck, PM Dumawal solicited the assistance of the Department of Agriculture (Daet Research Outreach Station) and the Provincial Government of Camarines Norte (Office of the Provincial Agriculturist) for additional vehicles to be used during NFA's procurement operations. DA/ROS and LGU/OPAG willingly lent to NFA their 50-bag capacity and 80-bag capacity trucks, respectively, for one month enabling the NFA to access other procurement areas and serve more farmers.

The DA and OPAG trucks were utilized mostly in Brgy. San Jose and Brgy. Sta. Cruz in the municipality of Jose Panganiban. Based on the information obtained from the

local farmers, the buying price of private traders were very low in those areas.

A total of 1,585 bags of palay from farmer organizations and 27 individual farmers were hauled using DA and OPAG trucks. The farmers served by these trucks greatly appreciated the presence of NFA in their areas, made possible with the kind assistance and support of DA and OPAG. **(REX FRANCIS G. ZANTUA, correspondent)**



The truck lends by the Department of Agriculture to NFA.

### Masbate joins DA's 122nd anniversary celebration

In celebration of the Department of Agriculture's 122nd Anniversary, NFA Masbate Provincial Office, through the initiative of Provincial Manager Allan Joseph P. Abapo, invited personnel from the Provincial Agriculture Office on June 23, 2020 to showcase the branch's ready-to-harvest fruits and vegetables grown in idle areas inside the compound. The planting and growing of different vegetables and fruit bearing trees has long been practised by the branch in support to the DA's Plant, Plant, Program.

During the visit of Ms. Cita Caña, Provincial HVCDP Coordinator, Ms. Novelen Laurio, Mun. HVCDP Coordinator, and Ms. Annie Jane Mondares, Agricultural Technologist, gave tips on the proper handling of plants for better production.

To encourage the employees, security personnel and warehouse laborers to grow their own vegetable gardens, packets of various vegetable seeds were distributed. Ms. Caña also volunteered to conduct a training on vegetable production and other technologies such as vermicast production and mulching to give personnel a better understanding of the proper planting procedure, with the abundant supply of rice hull inside the compound, HVCDP team also scheduled a demo on the preparation/production of carbonized rice hull. The Provincial Agriculture Office will provide the carbonizer equipment needed to produce Carbonized Rice Hull (CRH) during the demo which is scheduled on July 22-23, 2020. **(DANNAH JEAN E. MIJARES, correspondent)**



PM Allan Joseph Abapo (left) accepting the free seed packets (veggies and fruits) and corn seeds from DA Masbate.



PM Abapo (2nd from right) shows to Ms. Caña (3rd from right) and her team the newly planted seeds in the Gulayan sa Tanggapan.

### Albay strengthens commitment amidst the pandemic

Even in the face of the challenges brought by COVID-19, the National Food Authority (NFA) Albay Provincial Office continued to conduct procurement, distribution, milling, test milling, unloading, and dispersal activities. This is to provide uninterrupted service to meet the rice requirements of local government units, social agencies, and the Philippine National Police (PNP) in the Bicol Region.

The seven (7) rice milling contractors of NFA Albay, from the first to third districts of the region, operated unimpededly to mill the NFA palay stocks procured from individual farmers and farmer cooperatives during the summer cropping season of the year.

To further secure the supply of rice for the region during the current emergency, NFA Occidental Mindoro also shipped to NFA Region V 38,500 bags of well-milled local rice through MV Nicole Ingrid Vessel.



The selfless effort and dedication of the NFA Albay staff, led by Provincial Manager Remedios Dumawal and Assistant Provincial Manager Catalina D. Jaylo, in the unloading and dispersal activities resulted in the smooth unsealing of the vessel and conduct of visual inspection of the general condition of the shipment for immediate dispersal to NFA Masbate, NFA Camarines Norte, and NFA Catanduanes.

Since the outbreak of the pandemic and imposition of quarantine, 100 percent of NFA Albay provincial office rice sales went to LGUs and other government agencies.

Aside from milling, unloading, and dispersal activities, NFA-Albay stepped up its procurement of local palay. NFA buying stations in the province were open daily to receive farmers' deliveries. **(CHRISTINA D. ALCANTARA, correspondent)**



## Region V conducts briefing on project proposal preparation and implementation

In line with the instruction of the management on the immediate implementation of the Capital Outlay projects for the year 2020, NFA Region V under the leadership of Regional Manager Henry H. Tristeza and Assistant Regional Manager Chona E. Brijuega conducted a two-day Briefing on Project Proposal Preparation and Implementation including Engineering Reports at the NFA Social Hall, Legazpi City from June 25-26, 2020.

The briefing was actively participated in by Engineer III Edsel C. Benavides (Albay), Provincial Standards Quality Assurance Officer (PSQAO) Ma. Antonia E. Almadrones (Camarines Norte), PSQAO Marlon U. Mateum (Camarines Sur), Acting Engineer III Paolo Valdez (Masbate) via Messenger and PSQAO Ma. Theresa Estavillo (Sorsogon).

PM Engr. Alan S. Sabaybay of Sorsogon Provincial Office discussed the Procurement Procedures (Alternative Mode of Procurement Under Revised RA 9184) while Administrative Officer IV Lilibeth A. Jacob talked about



Participants listening intently to the topics being discussed.

RA 6713 or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials.

Acting Supvg. Grains Operations Officer (Facility Management) Ricardo O. Bayani and Grains Operations Officer II James Patrick S. Madrid meanwhile gave an overview of Approved COF Projects for 2020 and discussed the Preparation of Complete Staffwork and Project Proposal as well as Project Implementation.

## PM Embate seeks LGUs' cooperation

Prior to the onset of the procurement season, Rodrigo O. Embate Jr., then Provincial Manager of NFA Sorsogon has been going around the province seeking the cooperation and support of various local government units (LGUs) to NFA's programs such as the Procurement Program, the PALLGU (Palay Marketing Assistance for Legislators and Local Government Units), distribution and milling, among other activities.

One of PM Embate's accomplishments was the establishment of a buying station in Gubat, Sorsogon through the encouragement of LGU-Gubat under the leadership of Mayor Sharon Rose Glipo-Escoto. The Mayor was gracious enough to accommodate NFA Sorsogon's request for the best possible location for a buying station. She accompanied PM Embate to the different warehouses in the locality. Mayor Escoto suggested any of the following warehouses: GUFADeco (Gubat Farmers Development Cooperative), GSAC (Gubat St. Anthony Cooperative), and the building formerly occupied by the DPWH in Brgy. Bagacay. Considering the accessibility and the volume of palay that can be accommodated in the warehouse and the immediate availability of such, PM Embate saw GUFADeco as the best option thus NFA Sorsogon utilized the warehouse throughout the duration of the summer procurement season.



PM Embate with SGOO-POO Edgar G. Gadbilao in a courtesy meeting with Mayor Sharon-Rose Glipo-Escoto.

PM Embate proposed the PALLGU program to the LGUs, especially municipalities with vast production of palay like Irosin, and other municipalities with farmers who deliver their palay harvests to the NFA. For a wider reach of the program, PM Embate likewise sought the support of the Provincial Government through Governor Francis Joseph G. Escudero. The Honorable Governor who was very receptive to the program, tapped the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist and the Sangguniang Bayan Committee on Agriculture to consider and study the program while giving his insights and counter proposal.

The food agency has gained the support of Governor Escudero for the milling activities of NFA in the province. He called upon the local rice millers to mill the palay stocks of the NFA. With the dwindling buffer stocks due to the massive withdrawals of LGUs and other relief institutions, milling of palay stocks is a very important for the NFA to continue its distribution of rice for relief operations.

To ensure that the province will not run out of supply, PM Embate did not only enlist the help of the LGUs but went personally to the millers to encourage them to participate in the milling activities. Majority of the rice millers in the province, specifically in Bulan, Irosin, Gubat and Sorsogon City are now milling palay from NFA to bolster the rice supply in the province. **(MICHELLE L. CASTUERA, correspondent)**



PM Embate with Sorsogon Governor Francis Joseph "Chiz" G. Escudero, giving updates on NFA Sorsogon's operational activities.

## REGION VI

### CAPIZ

By: Mary Christie M. Hari-On  
correspondent

## NFA releases 66,158 bags of rice for COVID-19 relief operations

From March 16 to June 15, 2020, NFA Capiz released a total of 66,158 bags of well milled local rice to the local government units (LGUs) in the entire province of Capiz for relief operation due to COVID 19 pandemic.

NFA Capiz OIC Herrielle Jumagbas disclosed that the food agency is prepared to supply the rice requirements of Capiz and neighboring regions. NFA warehouses in the province have more than enough palay stocks procured from local farmers during the recent harvest season.

With the high demand for rice, NFA Capiz was authorized to mill 230,000 bags of its palay stocks or a rice equivalent of 144,900 bags of well milled rice that commenced in mid-April 2020 to augment its rice stocks.



Bolo Warehouse WSII Reggie Dorado supervises the release of 750 bags of NFA rice to the City Government of Roxas.

Due to COVID 19 pandemic, NFA Capiz has prioritized the release of rice to LGUs and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

To replenish stocks in its warehouses due to the voluminous issuance of rice during sales and transfer to other provinces, NFA Capiz also continued to procure palay from local farmers

## NFA Capiz procures palay amidst COVID-19 pandemic

To buy palay from farmers in far-flung areas in the province, NFA Capiz deployed its mobile procurement team amidst the scare of Covid 19 pandemic.

Since March the province of Capiz was placed under the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ). Due to limited transport facilities and border restrictions, local officials and farmer group leaders requested NFA to deploy its mobile procurement team to buy their produce.

The NFA mobile procurement team led by WSII Gazelle Jamandron served the farmers in the 1st and 2nd district of Capiz.

For the month of April 2020, NFA Capiz procured a total of 1,441 bags clean and dry palay. NFA bought palay at a price of P19.00/kg.

The local farmers in turn showed appreciation to NFA for responding to their request to buy their produce. Selling their palay to NFA helped the farmers a lot since most of them have no other source of income during the lockdown.



## Adm. Dansal meets Governor Contreras



NFA Administrator Judy Carol Dansal met with Capiz Governor Esteban Evan Contreras during a courtesy visit on January 17, 2020. The administrator was accompanied by Special Assistant to the Administrator, Atty. Raul Canon Jr., Region VI Director Dianne Silva, ARD Lolit Paz, Capiz OIC Herrielle Jumagbas, Region IV ARD Oliver Cambas and Neg Occ. PM Josephine Venus Castillo.

Gov. Contreras expressed gratitude for the support of the food agency to the provincial government. He cited the damages of Typhoon Ursula, approximately more than 2.37 billion pesos in agriculture, fisheries and infrastructure. He requested the continued assistance of the food agency in Capiz, in ensuring enough supply of rice especially during emergencies and calamities. He added that he had already proven that NFA Capiz is readily available especially during unfortunate or difficult times.

Administrator Dansal recognized the remarkable work attitude of NFA Capiz employees for bringing the best quality service to the Local Government Units in Capiz.

The Province of Capiz is one of the surplus provinces in Western Visayas in terms of palay production. Adm. Dansal said that NFA has enough fund to buy the palay produce of local farmers. Thus, farmers can be assured of a ready market for their produce and a better return on their investment.



## 2,064 bags of rice for typhoon victims

Typhoon Ursula brought havoc to the province of Capiz when it made its land fall in the City of Roxas on December 25, 2019, Christmas Day, leaving damages to NFA offices and warehouses.

NFA Capiz activated immediately its Operation Center 24/7 to quickly respond to any need for rice issuances.

On December 26, 2019, NFA Capiz OIC Herrielle Jumagbas quickly responded to requests for rice purchase and started release of NFA rice to the Local Government Units for distribution to affected families. The food agency released a total of 2,064 bags.

Capiz Governor Esteban Evan Contreras and representatives from Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office (PDRMO) and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) personally visited the Provincial Office to check the availability of rice and witness its repacking.



*Repacking of rice at the Farmers Event Center at NFA Capiz by DSWD*



*Capiz Gov. Esteban Esteban Contreras (R) meets Capiz NFA OIC Herrielle Jumagbas (with eyeglasses)*

## OIC Jumagbas meets Capiz Provincial Board

To enlighten provincial leader on the status of food security in the province during the pandemic, the Provincial Board invited OIC Herrielle V. Jumagbas as a resource person during their session last May 5, 2020.

During the session, OIC Jumagbas disclosed that as of April 30, 2020, NFA Capiz has a total inventory of 208,608 bags of palay and 10,649 bags of rice or a total rice equivalent of 142,072 bags. Combining the government, household and commercial stocks, the entire province has enough rice to last for 63 days based on its 5,880 bags daily rice consumption.

Capiz Vice Governor Jaime Magbanua presided over the session of the Provincial Board. The members wanted to be assured that the food agency has enough rice stocks during the pandemic.

Concerned about the food security status in the coming months, Provincial Board Committee Chairman on Agriculture Enrique Martin said that Capiz Governor Esteban Evan Contreras is asking for a reservation of 100,000 bags of NFA rice for the Provincial Government for its relief operation when the situation comes to worst.

Bothered by the reported rice transfer of NFA Capiz to other regions, the Capiz Provincial Board was concerned that the rice stocks here would be depleted. OIC Jumagbas said that NFA's rice transfers to other provinces and regions are already a commitment before the COVID19 outbreak. It was already in the NFA's marketing plan. Not all Capizeños consume NFA rice. Some have their rice



*OIC Jumagbas presents the rice situation before the provincial board*

## REGION VII

### BOHOL

By: Jhoel J. Lim  
correspondent



**KAPIHAN SA PIA.** PM Maria Fe H. Evasco (left) together with GOO I / Acting PIO Jhoel Lim attended Kapihan sa PIA anchored by Mr. Rey Anthony Chiu (right) of PIA Bohol to discuss NFA's programs/activities and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the community quarantine, NFA Bohol has released 27,022 bags of rice as of June 30, 2020 through various municipal LGUs, barangay LGUs and DSWD intended for family food packs and relief distribution. PM Evasco assured that Bohol has sufficient inventory of rice in the government, commercial and household sectors to sustain the daily consumption requirement of 9,920 bags in the province. NFA Bohol is also awaiting another schedule of 40,000 bags rice shipment from Mindoro or Iloilo to augment the NFA's rice inventory in the province.



**VISIT OF SEC. DAR.** NFA Bohol and other DA attached agencies participated in the 20th Ubi Festival held at the BAPC grounds organized by the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist and DA - RFU VII. DA Secretary William Dar graced the event, along with Asec. Noel Reyes, RED Salvador Diputado Jr., Acting Gov. Rene Relampagos and City Mayor John Geesneell Yap. Sec. Dar assured that DA will allot at least P380M worth of funds for farm assistance and various agri-related projects/programs for Bohol. He also announced that the Land Bank of the Philippines has approved a P2B omnibus loan term which will be availed by the Provincial Government of Bohol. The Secretary also attended the turn-over of farm agri-machineries, MOA signing on the proposed soil and water laboratory & extension services in Carmen and Tripartite MOA signing for Entrepreneurial Gulayan sa Paaralan (E-GPP) with DA, DILG and DepEd.



**GENERAL EMPLOYEES' MEETING.** PM Maria Fe H. Evasco (standing) discussed the various operational and administrative strategies/action plan in view of the State of Calamity due to COVID-19. PM Evasco encouraged cooperation particularly in the performance of their respective work responsibilities as frontliners in the food industry during this calamity/emergency. NFA Bohol assured sufficient inventory of rice to accommodate purchases of DSWD, LGUs and other relief agencies.

**PALLGU MEETING.** Bohol Governor Atty. Arthur C. Yap (right) and Provincial Administrator Atty. Kathryn Pioquinto convened all Provincial Government department heads to discuss strategies to ensure food security and sufficiency in the province. Amid the COVID-19, Gov. Yap encouraged the people to be productive by engaging in agriculture sector, particularly farming and food production. PM Evasco was invited to discuss the Provincial Government's intention to enter into PALLGU MOA with NFA Bohol for palay procurement.







**PNP COORDINATION.** PM Maria Fe H. Evasco welcomes PCMS Guiller Jamisola (right) and PSSGT Santos Alolino, Jr. (left) of PNP RIU 7 during their courtesy visit to inquire on NFA Bohol's rice inventory amid COVID-19. PM Evasco assured that NFA has sufficient inventory of rice to augment the province's rice requirements.



**COVID-19 RICE DISTRIBUTION.** NFA Bohol caters to the rice purchases of various LGUs for stock prepositioning and provision of family food packs to their residents whose livelihood were directly affected due to the suspension of work and business operation during the province-wide community quarantine.



**PRICE COUNCIL MEETING.** GOO I Jhoel Lim (2nd from left) attends the Price Monitoring Council Meeting chaired by Gov. Arthur Yap (standing) to discuss the respective agency-member's role in monitoring the supply and prices of basic commodities during the pandemic. DTI Asec. Asteria Caberte discussed Executive Order signed by Gov. Yap reconstituting the membership of the Bohol Provincial Price Coordinating Council (BPPCC) and the implementation of RA 7581 or The Price Act. DTI has also released the proposed price ceiling (PPC) of all basic commodities in Bohol for proper guidance of retailers and consumers.

**RECORDS DISPOSITION.** The records disposition team is welcomed by PM Maria Fe H. Evasco and PAO Pilita P. Barajan before conducting disposition of its valueless records. The team was led by GOO I Jhoel Lim, (far right) - designated records officer, along with Mr. Jhonley Joseph Item (extreme left) of NAP Regional Archival Network Cebu, Ms. Jennifer Adolfo (3rd from right) of COA Bohol and Mr. Anthony delos Reyes (2nd from left) of D'Lacoste as NAP's official buyer.



**PDC EXECOM MEETING.** NFA Bohol, represented by GOO I Jhoel Lim, attends the Provincial Development Council (PDC) Executive Committee Meeting held at the Ceremonial Hall of the Provincial Capitol. The PDC meeting is presided by Acting Governor / Acting PDC Chairman Hon. Rene L. Relampagos and attended by various national government agencies in the province to present their respective priority development programs and projects for 2021 that require the Council's endorsement to the RDC. For NFA Bohol, GOO I Lim discussed the agency's rice distribution and palay procurement program.



**EARTHQUAKE DRILL.** PM Maria Fe H. Evasco and staff participated in the Risk & Safety Management Lecture in coordination with the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction & Management Council (PDRRMC) and Telephone and Radio System Integrated Emergency Response (TaRSIER 117) in preparation for the 2020 nationwide simultaneous earthquake drill. Dr. Anthony Damalerio (not in photo), PDRRMC head, thanked NFA Bohol for the strong partnership in disaster preparedness and response especially during the 7.2 magnitude earthquake last 2013. He stressed the need for every Boholano community to be prepared at all times due to the province's vulnerability to earthquake with the presence of 6 active fault lines. The discussion focused on earth dynamics, seismic activity, earthquake hazards, disaster preparedness and response through the expertise of Mr. Neiman Flint Gatal (seated, left) and Mr. Jose Aleto Requeron (seated, right) as resource speakers who are both Registered Nurses. The PDRRMC staff/responders are highly trained from NYPD and San Francisco Fire Station of USA.



**GAD SEMINAR.** As part of the agency's Gender and Development health awareness, NFA Bohol invited Dr. Jeia Pondoc (seated, 2nd from right), City Health Officer to lecture the employees on the effects of COVID-19.

**PFAC MEETING.** PM Evasco administers the induction and oath-taking of newly-elected officers PFAC members led by Chairman Ducl Puraan (extreme left). PM Evasco and PISO Zita Mahinay welcome the new set of PFAC officers in the province for their 1st quarter meeting held at the PM's Office. The agenda included the members' concerns in their respective areas, support to NFA's palay procurement program, agency updates and election of new set of officers for 2020-2022.





## CEBU

By: Olma Marie M. Bayno  
correspondent

### Region 7 holds GAD orientation on COVID-19

In celebration of the National Women's Month, NFA Cebu in coordination with the Department of Health Central Visayas Center for Health Development conducted a GAD-Orientation on Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on March 6, 2020 held at NFA-Region VII Training Hall. The activity aimed to provide relevant information/rolling updates about the COVID-19 outbreak.

Dr. Jonathan Neil V. Erasmo (center, seated) of DOH-Central Visayas was invited as resource person to give light on the nature of corona virus, its transmission, symptoms and effects. He presented the global situation and the number



of reported confirmed COVID-19 cases as of March 04, 2020. He discussed the actions taken by DOH following the spike of the corona virus.

Dr. Erasmo also talked about the basic safety practices and self-protection measures and reminded

the participants to refrain from sharing unverified reports and/or false news to avoid misinformation. He urged the employees to abide and adhere to all safety measures and health protocols set by the Department of Health to avoid getting infected.

### COVID-19 Underscores NFA's Relevance, says RD Valdez



On March 30, 2020, the entire province of Cebu was placed under a state of Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ). It was a move that Cebu Governor Gwendolyn Garcia described herself as an "extreme decision" in the fight against the dreaded COVID-19.

With all the disasters that beset the country in 2020, the challenges however did not hamper the high spirits of the employees. They stood their ground and bravely faced the uncertainties brought about by the pandemic.

During these trying moments, the NFA community moved as one. The men and women of the food agency selflessly worked double time even on weekends for the benefit of the consuming public who rely on NFA for affordable and good quality rice.

In recognition of the heroism of the NFA workforce, Regional Director Rocky L. Valdez commended the ultimate sacrifice and extra effort shown by employees of Central Visayas Region. "During these extraordinary times, let us show to the public our agency's relevance and the unique brand of service we are capable of. While doing our jobs, let's do our share to prevent the spread of the corona virus by following guidelines by the IATF authorities during GCQ and ECQ", RD Valdez said.

"As instructed by the Administrator, let's make NFA conduct its business as usual especially operational activities and transactions. Remind our warehouse personnel to be always available to receive stocks from source regions and issue the rice requirements of LGUs, DSWD and other relief agencies even on weekends and beyond regular office hours, if necessary," Valdez added.

The Director stressed that now, more than ever, the role of NFA is highlighted as the country and the rest of the world take decisive actions to address a global pandemic. Through the years, NFA's presence has always been felt especially in times of crises and emergencies, so it has to be also emphasized during these times.

"Apart from observing physical-social distancing and other precautionary measures, all employees are advised to stay at home, except for those in the frontlines like Managers, Assistant Provincial Managers, Provincial Operations Officers, Warehouse Supervisors, Grains Operations Assistant, Grains Operations Officers, Quality Assurance Officers, Cashiers, Utility Workers, Drivers, Security Guards, Laborers and all other employees in Administrative/General Services," Valdez added.

"Continue to serve our stakeholders and most of all, let us all PRAY for each other's health and safety. Indeed, only by God's mercy shall we be protected and saved", he stressed.

### Cascade public health standards to prevent COVID-19

To ensure the safety and protection of NFA employees against the possible spread of COVID-19, Regional Director Rocky L. Valdez cautioned the employees of in a meeting following the declaration of Executive Order (EO) 052 placing the entire city of Cebu under General Community Quarantine by Cebu City Mayor Edgardo Labella.

"Cebu City residents are strongly advised to stay in their homes, and may only come out for work, to buy their essentials such as food and medicines, and to go to medical centers," RD Valdez said discussed the salient points of the community quarantine guidelines as contained in the EO.

He further read a portion of the EO which provides that "government work shall not be disrupted. However, he also said that government agencies operating within Cebu City are still encouraged to provide alternative work arrangements pursuant to Civil Service Commission Memorandum Circular No. 07, Series of 2020."

"Given the latest situation, we should adopt preventive measures and observe health and hygiene protocols," RD Valdez stressed

He asked the full cooperation of employees in the strict implementation of the said EO.



Director Rocky L. Valdez, alongside Assistant Regional Director Miguel S. Tecson and Provincial Manager Hilaria E. Ganzon speaks before NFA Region VII employees regarding office protocols on COVID-19

ARD Miguel Tecson meanwhile informed the employees about the memo issued by Administrator Dansal particularly the guidelines on skeletal force during work suspension due to COVID-19. He reminded the employees to abide by advisories/preventive health measures set by the government to ensure one's safety.

### RD Valdez updates media on NFA's inventory



In an interview with ABS-CBN DYAB Cebu Radyo Patrol, Regional Director Rocky L. Valdez assured the public that NFA Region VII has sufficient rice inventory amid the COVID-19 scare. "There is an adequate volume of rice in our warehouses ready to be distributed to our authorized outlets", RD Valdez said as he appealed to consumers not to engage in panic buying. He added that in Cebu, NFA has unit offices in Badian, Bogo, Sta. Fe & Tudela and five (5) warehouses in Metro Cebu. "We also have NFA warehouses in Bohol, Negros Oriental and Siquijor provinces where our authorized outlets, LGUs and government agencies providing relief assistance can purchase NFA rice" he said.

Valdez said that there are around 138,000 bags of rice stored in the various warehouses in Region VII. The region's existing inventory will be augmented with local rice from Regions IV and VI with about 940,000 bags & 170,000 bags, respectively. RA 11203 or the Rice Liberalization Law mandates the NFA to maintain a sufficient level of rice buffer stocks to be sourced locally, intended primarily for emergency and calamity operations.

**WAREHOUSE INSPECTION.** Regional Director Valdez (center) together with Assistant Regional Director Miguel S. Tecson (left) and NFA Cebu Assistant Provincial Manager Peter M. Go (right) visit the NFA GID Warehouse in Sta. Fe, Bantayan Island maintained by SGOO/WS II Genesis Zaspas. During the facility and warehouse inspection, RD Valdez commended Warehouse Supervisor Zaspas and team for their concerted efforts in keeping the warehouse clean and orderly and for strictly observing good warehousing practices.





### **Pulong-Pulong and turnover of projects**

*"Basta may ani, may kita."* Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary William Dar emphasized once again during the Pulong-Pulong and turnover of projects held on January 28 at the Negros Oriental Convention Center where he also announced that over 250 million worth of agricultural projects were programmed to be implemented for the province.

As DA-attached agency, the National Food Authority invite rice traders/grains businessmen to attend the event. NFA Provincial Operations Officer Emily L. Diputado, Provincial Economist Sheila Mary D. Mate and Acting Provincial Information Officer Ren Angelo L. Elevera joined the delegation of rice traders/grains businessmen, composed of: Mr. Edward Uy of Payalin Trading, Mr. Danford Sy of New Bian Yek Commercial, and Mrs. Victoria-Ang Gobonseng of Victoria Trading and Grains Retailers Confederation (GRECON) Vice President Jesus Dy. Also present were other DA-attached agencies, local government units (LGUs) of Negros



Secretary Dar (4th from left) distributes coconut seedlings to farmers.

Oriental and Siquijor, Municipal/ City agriculturists, state university presidents, media practitioners, students, and farmers.

Mr. Sy was given an opportunity to raise his concern regarding the mass varieties of palay in the province. Secretary Dar assured him that he will look into the situation because it has an impact on the procurement of palay from the farmers.

The event gave Negrenses and Siquijodnon a positive outlook for the coming years in the field of agriculture. With the signing

of memorandum of agreements (MOAs), proposed agricultural projects for coconut, rice farmers and fisherfolks, Treewardship Projects under the Greening Program, Students' Entrepreneurship Program and the financial assistance from the agency, everyone felt optimistic knowing that the Duterte administration through the Department of Agriculture is there to support them. Thus, everyone, especially the millennials can finally say, "It's time to plant." (REN ANGELO L. ELEVERA, correspondent)

## REGION IX

By: Margarette F. Ridad  
correspondent



**NFA-DA RMC.** Regional Director Rolando S. Rufo (left) joins other Regional Directors (RDs) of attached agencies of the Department of Agriculture (DA) in Region IX during the DA Regional Management Committee (RMC) meeting on January 21, 2020. The meeting was held at the Philippine Coconut Authority Research Center in Zamboanga City. DA-IX RD Rad Donn L. Cedenio discussed updates on EL Niño as other directors gave brief updates on the programs and operations of their agency to harmonize the functions and programs of different agencies for the growth and economic development of the local farmers in the region.



**Management Committee (RMC).** Regional Director Rolando S. Rufo (left) facilitates the NFA RMC meeting on March 11, 2020 at the NFA Atrium, Regional Office IX. It was RD Rufo's 1st RMC meeting as Regional Director of NFA Region IX. It was also the 1st attendance of Assistant Regional Director Maria Lewina A. Tolentino (2nd from left) since they were assigned in the region on February 13, 2020. RD Rufo relayed to the committee what transpired during the Regional Directors' Meeting held in Palawan on March 2 to 6, 2020. He also discussed Administrator Dansal's instructions on NFA's financial and operational situations.

### **NFA plays important role as member of Regional IATF-EID**



RD Rufo (right) conducted on March 13, 2020, the first of the series of meetings regarding NFA operational activities amidst the Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and the impending implementation of the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ).

Last March 20, 2020, Zamboanga City Mayor Maria Isabelle C. Climaco signed Executive Order (EO) No. BC 553-2020 putting the city under Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) in solidarity with Proclamation No. 922 signed by President Rodrigo R. Duterte last March 8, declaring the Philippines under a State of Public Health Emergency due to the threat of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The ECQ was subsequently followed by the provinces of Zamboanga Sibugay, Zamboanga del Norte, and Zamboanga del Sur towards the third week of March.



NFA Zamboanga del Sur PM Jess M. Casimiro (standing) during the Emergency Meeting with Gov. Victor J. Yu and other frontline agencies on March 13, 2020.

As such, The National Food Authority (NFA), being the agency mandated to secure availability of rice in times of calamity, was tasked to be a member of the Regional Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) particularly on Logistics and Resource Management of the Disaster Response Group.

Before the entire nation area was put under ECQ, Regional Director Rolando S. Rufo conducted a meeting last March 13 with the Assistant Regional Director

and the Regional Staff to discuss the possible safety measures to implement inside NFA premises to prevent the spread of COVID-19. RD Rufo's initial instruction was the purchase of thermal gun scanner. All employees, job orders, and stakeholders entering the compound with body temperature above 38 degrees Celsius will not be allowed to enter the office compound. Alcohol dispensers and sanitizers will be provided at the office entrance and front gate for sanitation and disinfection. Temporary suspension of Time In/Out through biometric technology, instead, employees used personal ball pen to log in/out on record book and counterchecked by the Security Guards. The Office adopted the work scheme prescribed in the ECQ guidelines.



On a Sunday, March 22, 2020, PM Jordan L. Valente (right), together with his NFA Zamboanga Sibugay (ZS) team issued the first batch of palay for milling to ensure continuous supply of NFA rice for distribution to Local Government Units (LGUs) and other government institutions/relief agencies. As of March 31, NFA ZS distributed a total of 6,582 bags of local rice.

RD Rufo continuously kept in touch with the executives of NFA Region IX and instructed them to ensure availability of NFA rice. Since there is high demand for NFA rice by the LGUs and other government institutions/relief agencies, NFA coordinated with other frontline agencies and secured food lane vehicle pass for priority in the delivery of NFA rice within the region to properly position government stocks.

The Regional Bids and Awards Committee (RBAC), headed by ARD Maria Lewina A. Tolentino, also fast-tracked by facilitating the Procurement of Handling and Allied Services, Milling and Trucking Services, and Empty Sacks. Since the RBAC members could not report to the Regional Office due to the ECQ, the bidding transactions were conducted through teleconference.

Being a region with a ratio of 50:50 surplus and deficit provinces, NFA Zamboanga Sibugay headed by Provincial Manager Jordan L. Valente and NFA Zamboanga del Sur headed by PM Jess M. Casimiro, are conducting milling activities 24/7 to help supply the rice requirement of the entire region. For the period March 16-31, 2020, NFA Region IX distributed a total of 28,983 bags of NFA rice to LGUs and other government institutions/relief agencies.





**NEW RFAC IX OFFICERS.** Regional Director Procopio B. Trabajo II pose with the new set of Regional Farmers Action Council (RFAC) IX Officers for CY 2020-2022. The RFAC Officers also convened on January 24, 2020 to discuss the issues and concerns affecting the farmers after the approval of the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL). The RTL resulted to influx of imported rice in the market, also causing the ex-farm price of palay to go down to as low as P10/kg. NFA Region IX made the commitment to procure their palay harvest and increase buying stations to better serve the local rice farmers.

### NFA Region IX joins Women's Month celebration

The NFA Region IX joined the city government and the Local Council of Women during the kick-off celebration of Women's Month at KCC Mall last March 9, with the theme "We Make Change Work for Women". The celebration highlighted the empowerment of women as active contributors and claimholders of development. It was participated in by the Gender and Development (GAD) focal person from the city government, religious and business sector, indigenous community, the security force, national government office, medical field, and academe.



ARD Tolentino (4th from right) and Zamboanga City PM Juliet C. Sali (2nd from right) hand over the cash donation intended for the breast cancer patients of Zamboanga City.

In Zamboanga City, female employees of the NFA donated cash for the medical needs of breast cancer patients. It was handed to the Local Council of Women by Assistant Regional Director Maria Lewina A. Tolentino and Provincial Manager Juliet C. Sali during the fund-raising symposium on women empowerment. This is a yearly undertaking to support the Breast Cancer Survivors' Organization of Zamboanga City. A film showing on women empowerment was presented on March 13, 2020 at the NFA Atrium.

In Zamboanga Sibugay, female employees promoted health consciousness and started a Zumba dance last March 6. Male employees participated. However, due to the Enhanced Community Quarantine, the zumba was temporarily suspended.

Most activities for the remaining two weeks of March were cancelled due to the threats of COVID19. Despite this new set-up, the executives of NFA Region IX, (which is 50% manned by women) remain stationed in their respective places of assignment. Due to exigency of service, the employees continued their work through various means allowed by CSC to support Regional Director Rolando S. Rufo in delivering public service to the people and to ensure the availability of NFA rice. Salute to ARD Maria Lewina A. Tolentino of NFA Region IX, PM Juliet C. Sali of NFA Zamboanga City Office, PM Umisalam D. Sarip of NFA Zamboanga del Norte, and all the empowered women frontliners of NFA Region IX!



**BLESSING OF STAFF HOUSE.** After the First Friday Mass held at NFA Atrium, Regional Office IX, Father Serge Dela Noche blessed the NFA Staff House and its newly constructed Executive Room and Twin Room on February 7, 2020.

### ZAMBOANGA

By: Gerocaipil B. Estabas  
correspondent

#### RICE DISTRIBUTION TO LGUS AND RELIEF AGENCIES.

NFA Zamboanga City continuously distributes rice to local government units (LGUs) and emergency relief agencies for their relief operations. Since the declaration of the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) due to the threat of COVID-19, government relief agencies, in cooperation with NFA, continued to exert their best effort in the distribution of relief packs to the affected families who lost their income as a result of the ECQ. From March 20 to 31, 2020, NFA Zamboanga City released a total of 968 bags of NFA rice to various LGUs and relief agencies.



**CALAMITY RESILIENT.** In response to the declaration of the city government of Zamboanga in putting the City under Enhanced Community Quarantine effective March 20, 2020, NFA Zamboanga City Provincial Manager Juliet Sali called a meeting on March 18 and discussed the need to implement a skeletal workforce for the duration of the quarantine. The Operations Center was also activated immediately and the employees were told to keep their cellular phones open 24/7 as they would be on call and obliged to report when their services are needed. PM Sali emphasized the NFA's mandate to respond in times of calamity and crisis.

#### FILM SHOWING ON WOMEN'S MONTH.

The employees of NFA Zamboanga City and NFA Regional Office IX watched a movie on women empowerment in the afternoon of March 13. This was part of the month-long activities in celebration of the National Women's Month for 2020. But due to the threat of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), all Gender and Development (GAD) related activities and meetings were cancelled to prevent the spread of the virus.



### ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR

By: Aissa Abegail A. Dael  
correspondent



**SYSTEM MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE.** NFA Zamboanga del Sur OIC for Marketing Operations, Atty. Henry S. Cariño II (standing) and Aissa Abegail Dael, designated Information Officer, attended the System Management Committee Meeting at the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Regional Office Function Hall, Tawagan Norte, Labangan on March 12, 2020. Atty. Cariño discussed the NFA's palay procurement program. The semi-annual meeting serves as a platform between NIA and the rice farmers, together with other attached agencies under the Department of Agriculture (DA). Present during the meeting were representatives from the DA-Regional Office IX, Philippine National Police, Irrigators' Association Presidents, and Barangay Captains from the municipality.





**LAUNCHING OF RICE FARMERS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND FARM MACHINERIES.** Representing the National Food Authority, Assistant Regional Director Rolando S. Rufo along with some employees attended the launching of the Department of Agriculture (DA) Rice Farmers Financial Assistance and Turnover of Machineries and Equipment on January 31, 2020 at Dao Complex, Pagadian City. The activity was spearheaded by DA Secretary William D. Dar. Governor Victor J. Yu and 1st District Congresswoman Divina C. Yu were also present. Others in photo are (L-R): NFA-Zamboanga del Sur (ZDS) Incoming Provincial Manager (PM) Jess M. Casimiro, Regional Operations Officer Rogelio Antonio B. Lumo, NFA ZDS outgoing PM Samuel A. Natavio, and ARD Rufo.

#### NFA REGION IX EXECUTIVES JOIN DA COORDINATION MEET.

Department of Agriculture (DA) IX Regional Executive Director Rad Donn L. Cedeño (4th from left) called the Coordination Meeting at DA Regional Office, Lenienza, Pagadian City on March 2, 2020. to discuss issues concerning the drop in palay price as well as the necessary preparations for the NFA palay procurement program. The meeting was attended by NFA Region IX Executives headed by Assistant Regional Director Maria Lewina A. Tolentino (5th from left), NFA Zamboanga del Sur Provincial Manager (PM) Jess M. Casimiro (2nd from right), NFA Zamboanga Sibugay PM Jordan L. Valente (3rd from right), NFA Zamboanga del Norte PM Umisalam D. Sarip (4th from right) and NFA Zamboanga City PM Juliet C. Sali (3rd from left).



#### ZAMBOANGA SIBUGAY

By: Maribeth A. Nuega  
correspondent



**COURTESY CALL.** NFA Zamboanga Sibugay Provincial Manager Jordan L. Valente (left) pays a courtesy call to Zamboanga Sibugay Provincial Governor Atty. Wilter Yap Palma (middle) on January 15, 2020 at the Provincial Capitol to explain the NFA's palay procurement program and the LGUs' assistance in providing logistics in hauling the farmers' palay harvest from the farm to the NFA warehouse. Also in photo is Grains Operations Officer II (GOO II) and Acting Information Officer Maribeth Andan Nuega.

**MILLING OPERATIONS.** NFA Zamboanga Sibugay Provincial Manager Jordan L. Valente (left) and Senior Enforcement Investigation Officer John E. Yañez inspect the conduct of first test-milling operations on January 23, 2020 by one of the private rice millers in the province. NFA Zamboanga Sibugay is one of the surplus provinces of the region in terms of rice production.



**NFA JOINS TF-ELCAC.** NFA Zamboanga Sibugay Provincial Operations Officer Roy Camacho Olegario (6th from right) represented the NFA during the 2nd Serbisyo Caravan held at Pulidan, Barangay Hall, Titay on January 24, 2020. This is a whole nation approach to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (ELCAC) by creating a Provincial Task Force headed by the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Office of the Provincial Governor to help rebel returnees. The task force is composed of non-government agencies, government owned and controlled corporations, state universities and colleges, local government units, and private groups. The guests were former DA Secretary Manny Piñol and DSWD Undersecretary retired Major General Rene Glen Paje.

#### ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE

By: Judess Shahaene O. Reformina  
correspondent

**PNP'S ASSURANCE OF SECURITY.** NFA Zamboanga del Norte Provincial Manager Umisalam D. Sarip (left), in a meeting with the Philippine National Police (PNP) personnel on March 18, 2020. SPO3 Aristobal Allado and SPO3 Al Algoño visited NFA in Dipolog City to monitor the situation and rice inventory of NFA Zamboanga del Norte warehouses. The PNP assured PM Sarip to help secure the NFA facilities, personnel, and stakeholders. They alerted all PNP checkpoints to prioritize transaction/delivery of NFA rice during the implementation of the Enhanced Community Quarantine.



**SUFFICIENT STOCKS ASSURED.** NFA Zamboanga del Norte Provincial Manager (PM) Umisalam D. Sarip (left) denies allegation of price manipulation and rice hoarding in an interview by Dyna Diestro of ABS-CBN local station on January 10, 2020. PM Sarip explained that there was no significant increase in the prevailing prices of rice in the market as the Province's rice inventory based on the Commercial Stock Survey conducted recently, showed sufficient commercial, household and government rice stocks. PM Sarip appealed the public saying that the NFA has sufficient stocks, being mandated to respond during calamities and emergencies.





By: Hazel B. Belacho  
correspondent

### NFA-10 prepares milling of palay

Two activities are critical to achieve National Food Authority's main mandate which is buffer stocking: The first test was procurement where NFA-10 passed being able to buy palay surpassing the regional target at 103% accomplishment.

The second phase of NFA's test is providing and making the rice available by milling the palay that the agency purchased from local farmers.

To prepare the region in achieving the said mandates, NFA Region-10 Director John Robert R. Hermano held a briefing on NFA milling operations last January 17 at the NFA Training Center in Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City.

Participants were composed of warehouse supervisors, quality assurance officers, operations officers, and other personnel who are also members of the grains classifiers' pool from the provinces of region 10.



With the implementation of RA 11203 NFA rice stocks are now reserved primarily for relief operations during disasters and calamities through the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Office of Civil Defense (OCD), local government units (LGUs), and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) for prisoners and inmates' subsistence allowance, and for the employees of identified government agencies covered under the mandatory rice subsidy program.

NFA is also expected to distribute rice allowance equivalent to P600 per month or 20 kilograms of rice to each 4Ps beneficiary. The agency will be obligated to establish an inventory to suffice the rice requirement for this program.

"As the first quarter harvest is approaching, by February, we have to vacate some of our warehouses to accommodate more palay deliveries, thus we will be converting our procured stocks into rice form and will be sending rice stocks to some provinces in the region to augment their buffer stocks. Be prepared to be deployed anywhere in the region as milling supervisors," Director Hermano reminded the participants.

NFA milling supervisors are obligated to ensure two things: first, the quality of the milled rice output; second, the right quantity (volume) of milled rice recovery delivered to NFA warehouses consistent with the terms of the milling contract that NFA made with the millers.

To instill vigilance that the rice recoveries are produced with the right milling quality and volume, Director Hermano demonstrated to the participants how to analyze milling results. Likewise, Provincial Standards Quality Assurance Officer Florencia Sitoy refreshed the participants on how to conduct a milling degree test using the alcohol-alkali staining method.

The NFA, since the passage of the Rice Tariffication Law, has now been focused on achieving its mandate to maintain 15-30 days buffer stock.

### 138K bags of NFA rice for relief

In response to the COVID pandemic, NFA Region 10 has served a total of 138,342 bags of 50 kilograms rice requirements of government relief agencies from March 19 to June 2, 2020 broken down as follows: 38,352 bags to Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and its local units in the region; 99,870 bags to the Local Government Units (LGUs), and 120 bags to legislators, namely Senators Cynthia Villar and Grace Poe.

In one of the Sanggunian Panlalawigan Session hearings he attended, NFA-10 Regional Director Engr. John Robert R. Hermano explained, "Itong bigas ng NFA na ipinamimigay ng DSWD at LGUs ngayon ay sariwang bigas, newly milled from the palay we procured from our farmers in the region since last harvest season. Well-milled degree rice ito katulad ng commercial rice na binibenta sa merkado sa halagang P40-45 bawat kilo."

Director Hermano assured the public of judicious release of good quality government subsidized rice being distributed by DSWD and LGUs.

Under the Rice Tariffication Law (RA11203), the NFA is no longer allowed to import rice as it is mandated to maintain sufficient buffer rice stock through procurement solely from local farmers.



### NFA, Bantay Presyo Task Force-NorMin Implement Price Freeze



Regional Director John Robert R. Hermano meets with Regional Bantay Presyo Task Force members to provide a technical briefing on rice classification. The NFA used to be the lead agency on matters involving the grains business under Presidential Decree No. 4 before the implementation of RA 11203.

Along with other guidelines to ensure that no individuals and corporations will take advantage of the COVID-19 pandemic, a Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2020-01 of DA, DTI and DOH or "Price Freeze under a State of Calamity throughout the Philippines due to the

Coronavirus Disease 2019" was implemented on basic necessities starting March 8 until May 15, 2020. As the lead agency under RA 11203, the Department of Agriculture-Regional Office-10, represented by Carlota S. Madriaga, Regional Technical Director for Operations, called for a meeting to strengthen the conduct of price monitoring on rice pursuant to The Price Act.

Director Hermano was also invited to lecture on how to determine the milling degree and percentage broken of rice which is vital in the conduct of price monitoring especially in times of calamities and emergencies.

"It will be recalled that under RA 11203, major functions of NFA such as enforcement and regulatory functions, as contained in PD No. 4 which created NFA, were removed. The RTL stripped NFA of its role in supply and price stabilization to control the inflow of rice imports and at the same time stabilize commercial rice prices," Director Hermano emphasized.

The technical briefing and meeting held on April 29, 2020 at DA-RFO 10 conference room was attended by the members of the enforcement team from Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA), Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI), and City Price Coordinating Council as represented by its chair, Atty Edgardo Uy.

### Paglaum Multi-Purpose Cooperative completes payment of FLGC III amortization early

National Food Authority Misamis Occidental, led by Provincial Manager Umisalam D. Sarip, conducted an Ugnayan with farmers in cooperation with Paglaum Multi-Purpose Cooperative on August 14, 2020 at Paglaum Conference Hall, Plaridel, Misamis Occidental.

NFA Region 10 Assistant Regional Director Rafael V. Marasigan with concerned regional staff and Misamis Occidental section chiefs with the Paglaum MPC Board of Directors graced the activity.

A certificate of appreciation was given to Paglaum MPC General Manager Gadwin E. Handumon in recognition of his commitment and support to NFA Region 10 as FLGC stakeholder.

General Manager Handumon, an innovative, transformative and an internationally-known cooperative leader, admirably led Paglaum MPC, which first ventured in palay trading, to success. Formed in 1992, with 35 hopeful members, and a meager P2,000.00 initial capital, the



PM Sarip (second from Left) awards a Certificate of Appreciation to Gadwin Handumon of Paglaum Multi-Purpose Cooperative. The ceremony was held on August 14, 2020 at PAGLAUM MPC Conference Hall, Plaridel, Misamis Occidental.

cooperative was transformed into a P100M cooperative with 30,000 members today.

In 1998, in recognition of its noble role in helping local farmers uplift their economic condition as well as making palay trading highly successful, Paglaum MPC was one of the recipients of NFA projects on Farm Level Grains Center (FLGC), implemented throughout the country, awarded with postharvest

facilities which included a rice mill, a warehouse, and a dryer.

The Paglaum MPC, one of the few cooperatives that successfully implemented FLGC project and sustained progressive operations nationwide, paid the amount of P67,519.98 last July 6, 2020 to complete its full payment of P4,300,207.90, which should have been due by July 2025. (JUDIE ANN D. BONGAWAN, correspondent)



### Briefing on palay, corn classification

The National Food Authority Region X conducted re-orientation/briefing on palay and corn classification on August 7, 10, 12 and 13, 2020 for the provinces of Bukidnon, Misamis Oriental, Lanao del Norte and Misamis Occidental.

The orientation team was led by Assistant Regional Director Rafael V. Marasigan together with Regional Economist (RECO) Ida Corazon F. Eli, Regional Standards Quality Assurance Officer (RSQAO) Emilio S. Ramos, Provincial Standards Quality Assurance Officer (PSQAO) Florencia B. Sitoy, and Acting Regional Information Officer (RIO) Shellanie D. Hampac. The orientation/briefing is a reiteration of the NFA's SOP on Stock Classification Control System issued last June 9, 1994. Other related palay procurement policies and reminders were also given emphasis including actual palay classification to ensure that all Quality Assurance Officers (QAOs) are well-equipped and updated.

The first batch was held at the NFA-Valencia warehouse participated in by NFA-Bukidnon QAOs and



QAOs and WS-II during the re-orientation/briefing

Warehouse Supervisors II (WS-II) last August 7, 2020. The second group of participants were the QAO and WS-II of NFA-Misamis Oriental held on August 10, 2020 at the NFA Region 10 training hall. The third orientation took place on August 12, 2020 at the Multipurpose Hall of the Provincial Office of NFA Lanao del Norte in Tubod, Iligan City, along with their QAOs and WS-II. The last batch was attended by NFA-Misamis Occidental conducted on August 13, 2020 at the provincial office in Gango, Ozamiz City.

The briefing was aimed to define the responsibility of the classifiers on the classification of stocks they procure. The coding system was developed for the strict implementation of the procurement of palay this coming procurement

season.

ARD Marasigan stressed that "classifiers should not sacrifice quality over the quantity of palay". He emphasized that there will be no violations and sanctions to worry about as long as QAOs strictly adhere to our existing procedures and standards.

The NFA has been sourcing palay since its inception from individual farmers and farmer organizations. During procurement, strict quality standards must be observed. The task of classifying stocks during procurement is the responsibility of classifiers, who inspect and classify all deliveries of palay and corn kernels from farmers to ensure the quality of NFA's buffer stock. **(SHELLANIE D. HAMPAC, correspondent)**

### Lanao Norte employees receive seeds from DA-10



In line with DA's Plant Plant Plant Program, 26 employees of National Food Authority-Lanao del Norte received a total of 108 mini packs of various vegetable seeds last May 28, 2020 from the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office 10.

The provincial office's employees availed of the opportunity to jumpstart urban pocket gardening during the community quarantine.

"We are very grateful to DA-10 for the seeds. Now we will be able to grow our own fresh vegetables and save money on groceries which we may use for other expenditures," the recipient-employees said.

The Plant Plant Plant Program is one of DA's projects to improve the country's food security amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

**COVID-19 RICE RELIEF.** The Office of Senator Mary Grace Poe-Llamanzares withdrew ten (10) bags of NFA Rice last May 20, 2020 from GID-I Bara-as, Tubod, Iligan City Warehouse for of Brgy. Demologan, Bacolod, Lanao del Norte who were deeply affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

NFA Lanao del Norte released a total of 23,324 bags of rice from March 19 - June 26, 2020 for COVID-19 relief operations.



### CAMIGUIN

By: Zenelyn D. Kwong  
correspondent



### Bag to bag inventory count

To ascertain the physical existence and condition of all items falling under Inventory Items for Sale and Empty Sacks as recorded in its Books of Accounts, National Food Authority-Camiguin conducted a bag to bag count of stocks on May 29, 2020.

NFA's SOP number GM-WH12 requires NFA Camiguin to conduct a bag to bag count instead of a volumetric count. SOP under Methods of Counting states that a bag to bag count with 100% weighing shall be conducted if the aggregate inventory level of the warehouse during the supposed date of actual counting is 5,000 bags and below and no bag to bag count was made within a period of six months.

The semi-annual inventory count was witnessed by the Provincial Inventory Committee chaired by Provincial Manager Leo V. Damole. Representatives from NFA Regional Office X and Bukidnon-based, Commission on Audit were invited to observe but none of them made it to the activity due to the prevalent COVID-19 Pandemic.

### Emergency procurement to boost buffer stocks

To satisfy the crucial rice requirements of local government units (LGUs) in the province, NFA-Camiguin boosted its buffer stocks by having the Regional Bids and Award Committee resort to bidding under emergency procurement.

Among the included in the fast tracked bidding were trucking/hauling services to timely bring in NFA rice from NFA Misamis Oriental to Camiguin.

With the implementation fo Rice Tariffication Law, NFA is now required to maintain rice buffer stocks an optimum level of inventory at all times. It must also be sourced from local farmers, and to be used primarily for emergency situations and calamities like the pandemic, coronavirus disease (COVID)-19.

Unfortunately, NFA Camiguin does not have its own palay reserve since the island is not a rice producing area. Rice supply in the province has to be sourced from surplus areas like Bukidnon which contributes about 80% of NFA Northern Mindanao's regional palay buffer stocks inventory.

NFA Camiguin offices allot its buffer stocks for their relief operations to purchasing LGUs or government agencies. As of May 5, 2020 NFA Camiguin's COVID-19 related rice releases to LGUs which started on March 20 total to 4,801 bags.



### NFA assures sufficient buffer stocks

In an urgent meeting on March 16, 2020, NFA Camiguin Provincial Manager Leo V. Damole (center) assures Governor Jurdin Jesus M. Romualdo (right, in blue) that the transfer of NFA Rice to the province is being accelerated to immediately augment the island's buffer stock in preparation for possible emergency situation brought about by Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

NFA Camiguin has been in close coordination with its trucking service provider to speed up from source provinces.





## Camiguin implements bio-security measures against COVID-19



In response to the call of time for cleanliness and sanitation to avert the spread of COVID-19, NFA Camiguin carried out biosecurity measures within its premises.

Protocols include wearing of face mask inside NFA compound while individuals and vehicles going inside the agency's grounds must pass through disinfection.

NFA Camiguin provided guards with an infrared digital thermometer to check temperatures of people entering the compound.

The agency strictly imposed the "No Spitting" policy within the warehouse. The office also established a sanitation station where all employees and visitors can do proper hand washing. Alcohols were also made available.

With all these practices as well as social distancing and proper cough etiquette, NFA Camiguin has already contributed to the government's efforts against the spread of COVID-19.

## Be RICEponsible

With fists held on their left chests, members of the Camiguin Provincial Agricultural and Fishery Council (PAFC), as practised for the past six (6) years, recited in unison the "Panaad sa Pagdaginot sa Humay" during their meeting on January 29, 2020, which was attended by NFA Provincial ISO Zenelyn D. Kwong.



## Four-day compressed workweek

Pursuant to Civil Service Commission (CSC) Memorandum Circular No 10 series of 2020 which took effect retroactively on March 16, NFA Camiguin adopted the Four-day (Compressed) Workweek effective May 25, 2020. Under the said Alternative Work Arrangement (AWA), NFA Camiguin served its stakeholders from 8:00 am to 7:00 pm; thus, the 40-hour workweek requirement was complied.

Employees worked only four days a week but their respective schedules were arranged in a manner that the office would be manned sufficiently every day. There were also a few who opted to stay with the regular working schedule of five (5) days a week.

It is one of the multiple AWAs that the CSC has laid down for government agencies.

AWA's were implemented to limit the number of employees present at the workplace considering the present situation of COVID-19 pandemic where physical distancing and staying home as much as possible are highly advised.

On June 29, 2020 NFA Camiguin resumed to regular working schedule.

## REGION XI

By: Cheryl Anya C. Bughao  
correspondent

Regional Director Lester Romeo E. Malana meets with the farmers of Napal-Conel Road Irrigators Association, Inc. (NACORIA) during an Ugnayan to discuss the agency's massive palay procurement activity and encourage them to sell their palay produce to NFA. He said that if they opt to sell their wet palay, they are welcomed to use the NFA grounds as solar drying pavements.



**LIVELIHOOD TRAINING.** Provincial Manager Jasmin C. Lintag of Sarangani Province / General Santos City Provincial Office demonstrates the step-by-step preparation of the steamed pumpkin cinnamon bun as one of the activities during the month-long celebration of 2020 National Women's Month.



**FINANCIAL LITERACY.** Senior Accounts Specialist John I. Ladaran of SarGen Provincial Office conducts a Financial Literacy Program or Financial Health 101 to the employees of Regional Office XI and SarGen Provincial Office. The activity was conducted to determine the status of financial health of the employees, identify causes and solutions to financial health problems. At the start of the program, a diagnostic sheet to evaluate financial health was given to each employee. SAS Ladaran is a certified financial consultant and a farmer by heart.



## South Korea donates 600MT rice for quake victims in Mindanao

The Republic of Korea through the Implementation of the Tier 3 Program under the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) donated 600 MT of rice or 15,000 bags of 40kg/bag of rice for the victims of 6.63 magnitude earthquake in Mindanao, specifically Davao del Sur and North Cotabato.



The volume will be shared by the two provinces that were severely affected by a series of earthquakes. Davao del Sur will get 7,500 bags of 40kg to be distributed to 10 municipalities, same with North Cotabato. The NFA will turn-over the donated rice to the DSWD which will prepare a distribution or allocation plan for the pre-identified beneficiaries.

NFA Region XI initially distributed 3,000 bags of 25kg to the victims of the calamity in Davao del Sur spearheaded by Administrator Judy Carol L. Dansal.

The 600 MT rice donation is part of the emergency food assistance of South Korea's Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (KOREA-MAFRA) to the Philippine government through the NFA, where it is a member agency.





## NFA, GenSan LGU sign MOA on warehouse utilization



Regional Manager Malana (middle), GSC Mayor Rivera (right) and Assistant Regional Manager Ferlie C. Ancheta (left) sign the MOA between NFA and Gen. Santos City LGU on warehouse utilization.

NFA XI Regional Manager Lester Romeo E. Malana, Assistant Regional Manager Ferlie C. Ancheta and General Santos City Mayor Ronnel C. Rivera signed the Memorandum of Agreement on the utilization of NFA Gensan GID 3 warehouse by the LGU-GSC to store its procured 7.5 million kilos (300,000 bags of 25kg) of imported rice intended for distribution to its constituents severely affected by the imposition of general or enhanced community quarantine.

The use of NFA-owned warehouse, which has a capacity of 100K bags of rice of 50kg/bag, by LGU Gensan shall be for free as part of the full assistance, cooperation and mobilization of necessary resources among government agencies and local government units (LGUs) for disaster response aid during the COVID-19 pandemic.

NFA General Santos City Office is serving both the rice requirements of General Santos City and Sarangani Province, sourcing additional stocks from nearby surplus provinces of Region XII.

## REGION XII

By: Sherryl V. Polo  
correspondent

### Enslaved by the pandemic health protocols

FREEDOM at last for Acting Regional Manager Miguel S. Tecson after the completion of his 14-day quarantine period last July 10, 2020. Acting RM Tecson was welcomed by Acting Asst. Regional Manager Jasmin C. Lintag together with NFA Regional Office XII staff and employees, who, for the first time, will be meeting him, face to face, since his arrival last June 27.



### Taking one step at a time

The power duo of RM Miguel S. Tecson and ARM Jasmin C. Lintag believed small changes can add up to better fitness of the employees while maintaining a healthy and covid-free environment. They have spearheaded NFA Rehiyon Dose's first-ever "Operation Kalog/Linis Bakuran" with the employees and off duty security guards.

Since then, their so-called "Fridaysical" became a regular activity to ensure well-maintained Regional Office surroundings. They have also started their own version of DA's plant, plant, plant program. Veggies like Ginger "Luya", Lemon Grass "Tanglad", Sweet Potato "Kamote", Basella "Alugbati" and Watercress "Kangkong" were initially planted.

## Road to fulfilling NFA's mandate better than ever.

The process of realizing the 100,000 bags capacity Warehouses in Kilada, Matalam and Baguer, Libungan has already started. Soon, NFA will have these additional warehouses cater more palay deliveries from farmers in the area and the neighbouring municipalities.

NFA North Cotabato employees led by Assistant Provincial Manager Robelito R. Campued met with the informal settlers occupying the NFA lot in Kilada, Matalam, Cotabato to finalize the timeline for the settlers to vacate the lot in Kilada within two months. The dialogue was also attended by Brgy. Chairperson Rowena De Leon and LGU Representative Rannie Sanchez.

They also inspected the on-going geotechnical and topographical survey being conducted at Baguer, Libungan, Cotabato together with Acting SGOO Coreen Syvel Ochia. This was after Geodetic Engr. Rene Lamban



and party of Lamban Surveying Office together with ROO Richard L. Balbin and Engineering Assistant Regine F. Nono. conducted the relocation survey and pegging of permanent concrete monument.

### Unwearied services amid the Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic shook the whole world and changed everything in an instant. It halted everything – leisure, work, even the mere movement of people were restricted. Others complained because they felt their so-called "freedom" was violated; others see it as the government's containment effort to avert the spread of the virus.

In times like this, the National Food Authority (NFA) finds the opportunity to once again show its significance in the provision of the country's food staple. With the numerous impositions of level-up community quarantines, majority of the population were forced to stay at home. Local Government Units (LGUs) were also in a hurry to secure the much-needed rice requirements intended for their relief operations. Mandated to ensure availability of food security stocks sourced out solely from local farmers and processed it for distribution during emergencies, NFA needs to deliver...and fast.

NFA Provincial Offices under NFA Region XII, like any other NFA offices nationwide, exerted all efforts to serve and provide the Local Government Units (LGUs) rice supplies that will form part of the food packs that will be distributed to their constituents. Not much, but of great help to sustain those who have nothing.

With the clock ticking and the urgency to process the initial volume of 553,500 bags palay stored in its warehouses throughout the region, the NFA RXII Regional Bids and Awards Committee (RBAC) conducted a negotiated procurement under emergency cases for palay milling services. While everyone stayed at home quarantined, NFA employees undermined the risks and continued to report for work, even on weekends and holidays, to ensure unhampered delivery of services. The dedication and hard work of each employee especially those responsible for the quality of rice, made sure that all rice recoveries from both the NFA Owned Rice mill and contracted Private Millers adhered to NFA's quality standard specifications. To date, NFA Region XII had already released 119,515 bags of 50 kg rice to Local Government Units, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and other agencies for their relief

operations and DA's "Kadiwa on Wheels" program. 37,601 bags came from North Cotabato, 35,479 bags from South Cotabato and 436,435 bags from Sultan Kudarat. 98,141 bags of this were released for the month of April alone. More than ever, NFA has once again proven its worth this trying time.

Meanwhile, the once essential role of NFA – regulatory functions, seemed to also matter now that the prices of rice in the market suddenly shoot up. In as much as NFA would want to help, RA 11203 or Rice Tariffication Law, after its implementation, stripped off NFA of such power. Nevertheless, NFA's resiliency helped the government bring its services directly to the people.



NFA employees' resiliency keeps the NFA operations going amidst the pandemic.





Rice stocks in tonner bags are being loaded to a hauling truck for transport to PPA, Makar Wharf, Gensan in a 24-hour operation

## NFA ships 80,000 bags of rice for Zambo, Sulu and Basilan

NFA Region XII shipped 35,000 bags of NFA rice from NFA South Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat to help augment the buffer stocks of NFA Sulu and Basilan last February 12-18 at PPA, Makar Port, General Santos City.

The shipment was conducted after the completion of the delivery of an initial volume of 45,000 bags for Zamboanga City to ensure affordable, available and accessible food staple should there be natural or man-made calamities and emergencies. The rice stocks transported from the designated NFA warehouses of Sultan Kudarat and North Cotabato by a private service provider was loaded onto MV Rosario V on January 21-29.

Under the leadership of Regional Manager Nestor Rey E. Alcosoba and Asst. Regional Manager Arthur A. AllerNFA Reg. XII, was able to procure 1,046,174 bags of palay from local farmers in 2019, or equivalent to 97% accomplishment of its target.

## NORTH COTABATO

By: Law Robert Boyles  
correspondent



**KEEPING TABS.** A routine inspection was conducted by APM Robelito R. Campued at NFA Kabacan Buying Station headed by SGOO/WS II Elizabeth Tan. APM Campued and SGOO Tan briefly discussed updates of the on-going transfer of rice recoveries from NFA contracted millers with GOA II Narciso F. Sobejana during his visit. They also discussed strategic moves to minimize cost and time of inter & intra regional & provincial dispersal/distribution based on the marketing plan.



With the marching order to “procure, procure, procure”, Kabacan and Kidapawan buying stations of NFA North Cotabato Provincial Office heeded the call, paid attention to it and got started.

Kabacan buying station under SGOO Elizabeth F. Tan, GOA II Narciso F. Sobejana and GOO II Argel Aganon are now accepting palay deliveries from local farmers. Kidapawan Terminal Warehouse under SGOO Agnes L. Mayormita, GOA II Meredith J. Daray and Acting PSQAO Dennis Flores had also procured clean and dry palay. NFA is now buying palay deliveries from local farmers up to 19.00/kg.

## SOUTH COTABATO

By: Julius C. Cortez  
correspondent

Good price and quality service prompted farmers to come to NFA South Cotabato’s rescue now that farm gate prices are lower than NFA’s support price. Both Acting SGOO/PAO Cristina Carcel and SGOO/EA Pres. Engr. Joel A. Celda together with Acting Classifiers Russel Are and Rodolfo Lictawa of FLGC Banga warehouse and Lipma Warehouse in Banga and Norala, South Cotabato were all excited up as they started to receive deliveries from local farmers.



NFA South Cotabato through the initiative of PM Nelson Pongol Sañada and APM Maximo Masa always made sure that protection of the compound and the employees are being prioritized during the pandemic.

In compliance to DOH health protocol, they implemented various biosecurity measures that included provision of 2 lavatories located at the main gate and main office and foot mat with sanitizer. Hand driers were also installed.



To protect the health and welfare of employees, the office provided face masks, alcohol and face shields for them to feel more secured and protected as they continue to work as efficient and effective amidst the threat of COVID-19.

As the agency shifted its mandate from PD4 to RA 11203, the NFA was left with maintaining food security stocks for emergency and disaster relief at any given time. Thus, appropriate and effective buffer stocks management and operations to ensure quality and efficient stock flow were implemented.

NFA South Cotabato Provincial Office conducted a Briefing on Grains Quality Assurance Management and Review of SOP#TS-SQ06 re: Classifiers Coding System recently to refresh grains classifiers on Grains Standard Specification spearheaded by GOO/ACTING PSQAO Marietes Distor.

“What we need today are Classifiers with conscience, will not compromise good with evil or promise of wealth. Classifiers whose character and commitment has been steeled to serve the public”, PM Nelson P. Sañada emphasized. He reminded classifiers that ensuring the quality of palay to be procured, is their sole responsibility.



## SULTAN KUDARAT

By: Lucila Taghap  
correspondent

NFA Sultan Kudarat recorded 1,665 bags of palay as procurement operations continued at the buying stations in Dansuli, Isulan and SPGC Compound, Tacurong City. The agency, while sustaining its mandate helps the farmers market their produce when commercial prices go down. As the harvest has just begun, they anticipated more deliveries this cropping season.



**PREPAREDNESS.** A courtesy visit to Mayor Bermudez of the Municipality of Columbio by NFA-SK staff to discuss the NFA’s Procurement Program. The good mayor gave his support and offered their Municipal Level Grains Complex (MLGC) to be used as a storage facility for palay that will be procured from farmers in the municipality. Columbio is almost 30 kms. away from the nearest buying station of the province located at SPGC Compound, Tacurong City.



## EDO

By: Ronald Paul S. Gracia  
correspondent



NFA-NCR Regional Director Carlito G. Co during his actual inspection and evaluation of the proposed 80-ton truck scale to be installed at EDO. Accompanying RD Co were EDO Provincial manager Engr. Jaime DC. Velasco, Provincial Standards Quality Assurance Officer (PSQAO) Jose Candedeir and Provincial Operations Officer (POO) Randy Rivera



The proposed location of the 80-ton truck scale to be installed at EDO replacing the 60-ton truck scale which will eventually be transferred to Cavite Provincial office.

### EDO's first palay procurement and milling in decades

With the emergence of Metro Manila as a Mega Region complemented by high rise buildings, super highways, gigantic malls and over population being considered the center of commerce, education and entertainment, who would ever thought that an NFA District Office, East District Office for this matter, covering the territorial jurisdiction of the whole Province of Rizal and the Cities of Pasig, Marikina and Antipolo, will be able to buy Palay and mill it as our NFA Rice.

Within the Region's peripheries are the provinces of Bulacan, Laguna, Cavite and Rizal where EDO is located. Rizal is becoming an increasingly good residential option for city-bound professionals and students who opt to stay at close proximity to the center of action (Manila) yet far enough to allow occasional peace and quiet (which is becoming increasingly hard to get nowadays). Agricultural lands are fast being transformed into subdivisions, residential areas and commercial hubs, and lands dedicated to palay farming are getting smaller and smaller.



PSQAO Jose Candedeir inspects the first rice output.

However, at the southern portion of the Province of Rizal lies the Municipalities of Jalajala, Pililla, Morong, Tanay, Baras, Cardona and Binangonan where there are still lands devoted to Palay farming. Based on the data of Rizal Provincial Government there are 32,276 hectares devoted to agriculture where 5,805 hectares are intended for Rice Production with an average annual production of 26,894 cavans or 1,344.7MT per year.

### NFA-NCR to update old truck scale

To personally inspect and evaluate the location of the proposed 80-ton truck scale to be installed at East District Office which will replace the existing 60-ton truck scale, NFA-National Capital Region Regional Director Carlito G. Co visited NCR-East District Office last February 21.

This development plan was discussed by RD Co during his visit to EDO to formally introduce Engr. Jaime DC. Velasco as its new provincial manager. RD Co explained that by replacing the existing 60-tonner truck scale with the 80-tonner truck scale, NFA will definitely save on handling cost by at least one (1) move which can amount to hundreds of thousands of NFA financial resources during peak operations or warehouse receipts.

In a 60-tonner truck scale, 1,000 bags of NFA rice loaded in a trailer truck need to be reduced by at least 200 bags before it can be weighed as it cannot carry the 50,000 kilogram (50 tons) of rice and the estimated 25 tons weight of the trailer truck. The reduction in load of about 10 tons will cost the agency additional move and handling cost.

On the other hand, the 80-tonner truck scale can easily carry the total 75-ton weight of the 1,000 bags of NFA rice loaded in a trailer truck. This idea emerged on the premise that NFA needs to cut down on operational cost, and the upgrade of the truck scale can surely save cost on handling. More so, the 80-ton truck scale will ensure a 100% weighing of load and variance of weight from truck scale and platform scale will be eliminated.

A subsequent plan is to transfer the 60-ton truck scale from EDO to Cavite Provincial Office where there is also palay procurement, receipt of NFA purchased local rice from other Regions and withdrawal of accredited retailers and other traditional outlets like local government units and national government agencies.

In the meantime and while waiting for the upgrade of the existing truck scale, EDO will continue to use its 60-tonner truck scale and platform scales to weigh incoming receipts and withdrawals from NFA accredited retailers.

## CDO

By: Maynard Martinez  
correspondent

### APTERR Rice



L-R: NFA Administrator Atty. Judy Carol L. Dansal, DSWD Secretary Rolando D. Bautista, DA Secretary William D. Dar and Korean Ambassador to the Philippines Dong-Man Han.

To accept the donation of 950 MT APTERR rice from the Republic of Korea through its Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, a ceremonial turnover was held at NCR-Visayas Whse on April 24, 2020.

The event was attended by Honorable Korean Ambassador to the Philippines Dong-Man Han, DA Secretary William D. Dar, DSWD Secretary Rolando D. Bautista, NFA Administrator Atty. Judy Carol L. Dansal and officials of NFA-NCR headed by Dir. Carlito G. Co, ARD Evelyn Medalla, CDO Manager Grace M. Figarola, NDO Manager Arnel Alfonso and NFA employees.

350 MT or 8,750 bags (40kg/bag) of the donation will be distributed to the victims of Typhoon Quiel in Region 2 through DSWD while the rest will be distributed to Taal volcano eruption victims in Batangas, and also to victims of earthquake and typhoon in Mindanao.

### Unloading of APTERR Rice

A total of 8750 bags with 40 kg/bag equivalent to 350 MT APTERR (ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve) rice donation from Korea thru MAFRA-Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Affairs were unloaded at NCR-CDO Visayas Warehouse on March 25-27, 2020. NCR Director Carlito G. Co visited during the unloading and representatives from GMOD, TRSD and CDO Finance witnessed the 3-day unloading operation.



**TAAL VOLCANO ERUPTION.** NFA NCR-CDO Visayas Warehouse issued 736 bags NFA rice on January 18, 2020 to Caritas Manila intended for distribution to the displaced families affected by the Taal volcano eruption.



**DSWD.** On January 7, 2020, A total of 1,410 bags were loaded to five (5) trucks at Visayas Warehouse as partial withdrawal from the 3,336 bags paid allocation of the Office of Civil Defense c/o Usec. Ricardo Jalad intended for relief operations of DSWD.



# HIGHLIGHTS OF NFA'S 2019 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## ENSURING FOOD SECURITY

The National Food Authority (NFA) ensures continuous supply of affordable and safe staple food in all areas of the country especially during calamities/emergencies.

The approval of **Republic Act 11203**, "An Act Liberalizing the Importation, Exportation and Trading of Rice, Lifting for the Purpose the Quantitative Import Restriction on Rice, and for other Purposes" on February 14, 2019, changed the mandate of the NFA from a Trading and Regulatory Agency to a Buffer Stocking Agency. RA11203 likewise removed the regulatory powers of the NFA including its importation activities. As an initial compliance with the law, effective March 5, 2019, NFA ceased performing its regulatory functions over the international and domestic trading of rice

The law also stipulates that NFA shall source its buffer stock solely from local farmers. As defined under the IRR, "buffer stock" refers to the "optimal level" of rice inventory that shall be maintained at any given time to be used for emergency situations and to sustain the disaster relief programs of the government during natural or man-made calamities. On maintaining an "optimal level" of rice inventory to be held as national buffer stocks, the NFA shall adopt an inventory equivalent to 15 to 30 days of national rice consumption, pending the result of an independent body on the "Optimal Level of Buffer Stocks".

Given the major changes in NFA's functions, implementing the law requires adjustment in the agency's functional and organizational structure.

## PROCUREMENT

### Palay

As of December 31, 2019, the NFA procured a total of 14,634,895 bags or 731,745 metric tons of palay, a 101% accomplishment of the year's target of 723,000 metric tons. This is 669,961 metric tons or 1,084.36% higher than the accomplishment last year of 61,784 metric tons. The high procurement level for the year was due to the higher buying price of NFA at P19.00/kg compared with the low prevailing prices, and the influx of imported rice in the market contributing to the decrease in palay prices. The agency procured palay from local farmers nationwide, mostly from Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog and Cagayan Valley regions.

### Buying Stations

Aside from the stationary buying stations, a total of 395 mobile buying stations were strategically set up across the country to cater to farmers in palay production and far-flung areas. The NFA deployed mobile procurement in areas in Ilocos Sur, Kalinga, Cagayan, Nueva Vizcaya, Batangas, Camarines Norte, Masbate, Sorsogon, Antique, Southern Leyte, Zamboanga City, Zamboanga del Sur, Pagadian, Ipil, Sibugay, Zamboanga del Norte, Dipolog, Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Misamis Oriental, Misamis Occidental, Lanao del Norte, and Maguindanao.

## Distribution

The NFA distributed a total of 14,198,798 bags or 709,940 metric tons of rice, equivalent to 69% accomplishment of the year's target of 20,514,200 bags or 1,025,710 metric tons. Though NFA's market participation decreased starting the month of August until December, the total volume distributed for 2019 is 119,561 metric tons or 16.84% higher than the accomplishment last year of 590,379 metric tons.

### Tagpuan Day Rice Responsive Program (TDRRP)

The NFA conducted tagpuan/rice sale through community-based outlets in areas which are not serviceable by the regular NFA outlets. As of December 16, 2019, the food agency sold 1,591 bags of rice thru various tagpuans nationwide.

### Risk Management and Disaster Response

The NFA released rice to LGUs and other relief-giving organizations totaling 33,014 bags or 1,651 MT.

## NFA INVENTORY

As of November 30, 2019, NFA maintained an average inventory of 9,469,940 bags or 473,497 metric tons good to last for **14.53** days, based on the average national consumption requirement of 651,860 bags or 32,593 metric tons. However, these stocks are good to last for **157.67** days, considering the NFA's national average daily sales (ADS) or distribution of 152,627 bags or 7,631.33 metric tons.

## FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The Food Development Center (FDC) performed 127 physical and sensory evaluation, 2,102 chemical analysis, 33 micro analytical, 944 microbiological quality and 18 package testing evaluations, to determine the safety and quality of white rice, brown rice, corn grits, other cereals, and various food and food products. Other activities included the testing of packaging materials and label evaluation; heat penetration and heat distribution test to establish and/or evaluate adequacy of thermal processes of canned goods; shelf life testing of various packaged products; and the conduct of seminar / training.

### Research and Development

- Final progress report on Arsenic in Rice, Mycotoxin in Rice, Heavy Metals in Rice, LRME

### Quality Assurance

- Four pilot plant projects
- 15 inspections of food manufacturing plants and issued compliance certificates

### Training Programs

- 12 training courses for the food industry and government agencies.
- 10 training course materials developed/improved
- Three training courses evaluated.

### Industry Liaison

- 474 clients' technical needs and requirements evaluated. 1,237 FDC technical reports to stakeholders
- ISO Compliance
- 12 Quality Assurance activities for testing laboratories.
- One audit report for ISO 9001:2015

Operational accomplishment of the Food Development Center (FDC) representing services to clients amounted to P3,775,069.56. Income from collections received from clients' requests for FDC services (RFDCS) was P1,551,038.50.

## TECHNICAL RESEARCH AND SERVICES

### Engineering Services

### Post-Harvest Facilities Inventory

- Construction and maintenance of storage facilities and office buildings

### Completed Projects

- Construction of one-storey Provincial Office Building with roof deck in Puerto Princesa, Palawan – 100% completed
- Construction of perimeter fence in Puerto Princesa, Palawan – 100% completed

### On-going Projects

- Construction of 45 Thousand Bags Capacity (TBC) Warehouse (completion) in Bantay, Ilocos Sur – 45.2% accomplishment.
- Construction of 100 Thousand Cavans Capacity Warehouse (TCCW) in Alang-Alang, Leyte – 88% completed.

## INDUSTRY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

### Ugnayan with Stakeholders

- 902 ugnayan with farmers covering 1,421 municipalities with 42,324 farmer-participants and 2,426 local government units. About 5,604 individual farmers and 2,002 farmer organizations were accredited.
- Issues and concerns frequently raised and acted upon/answered were on procurement activities, government support price for palay; availability of stocks for calamities; cooperative development incentive fund (CDIF); etc.

### Registered/Licensed Grains Businessmen

In compliance with RA 11203, the registration and licensing functions of the NFA already ceased operation effective March 5, 2019, thus, reports for these activities are for the months of January and February 2019 only.

- NFA registered and licensed 25,597 applicants, 791 of them availed of the three-year (2019-2021) advance-license scheme. Total Registration/Licensing (R/L) collections on grains business activities amounted to P64,491,959.09 which included collection from mobile licensing at P3,830,766.1 and from advance license collections at P1,080,745.95.
- A total of 2,165 metal plates were issued/sold for P433,000. The R/L fees collected was at 42.43% of the annual targeted collection of P152M.

## SECURITY SERVICES AND INVESTIGATION

- Administrative fines/penalties collected by the NFA's Security Services and Investigation totalled to P379,330.00 only.

### NFA Kontra Abuso Hotline Services

As of December 31, 2019, the task force received 963 reports from the public and grains businessmen, 808 of which are text messages, 142 calls, and 13 emails.

## COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE FUND (CDIF) UTILIZATION

CDIF utilization went to the purchase of NFA rice (49.61%) amounting to P1,044,138.14; purchase of farm inputs/fertilizers (24.26%); payment of loan amortization, insurance, etc. (26.01%); and purchase/repair of post-harvest facilities & production facilities (0.13%).

CDIF balance of 1,522 farmer organizations nationwide amounted to P44,650,701.87. The highest recorded CDIF balance was in Regions 3 & 4, at P10,461,955.51 and P9,931,352.96, respectively, which comprises 45.67% of the total CDIF balance. The lowest CDIF balance is in Region 7, amounting to P4,450.98, Cebu being a low-rice production area.



**CORPORATE PLANNING & MANAGEMENT SERVICES****Information Technology/Systems Development/SOPs**

- Training of RAOs and PAOs on Data Privacy Act of 2012 for HURIS.
- Firewall appliance, as required in the HURIS access, was installed and configured.
- Electronic Integrated Financial Operation and Management Information System (e-IFOMIS) is at 97.27%.
- SOPs submitted to the Office of the Administrator for revisions/approval: (1) SOP on Property Inspection; (2) Amendment/Addendum to SOP on FOBB - Suspended per AO-2019-C-001 dated 02/26/19; (4) SOP on the Grant of Local and Foreign Scholarship-Amendment/Addendum to the Specifications of Authority on Financial Matters.
- Approval of the SOP on Revised Palay Procurement.

**Corporate Planning**

- Arranged/facilitated the NFA National Planning Conference held on October 21-22, 2019 in Nasugbu, Batangas; prepared the corresponding Marching Orders and highlights of the conference.

**A. GCG Concerns**

- Performance Scorecard Report
- NFA's Quarterly Report on Government PPAs for 2018
- Official 2018 PBB Result
- Designation of NFA Compliance Officer for GCG
- Exemption from GCG Memorandum Circular No. 2015-04 (Reorganization, Rationalization and Personnel Planning in the GOCC Sector)
- Final report on the Presidential Administrative Order No. 13, Series of 2015 (Removing Non-Tariff Barriers and Streamlining Administrative Procedures on the Importation of Agricultural Products)
- Inputs on NFA's accomplishments for the State of the Nation Address

**B. RA 11203**

Prepared NFA comments/positions on the following:

- NFA's compliance to RA11203 and its IRR.
- Transfer of FDC to the Department of Agriculture
- Meeting on Optimal Level of Buffer Stocking
- Guidelines on the Reorganization process

**C. As Secretariat on Management Meetings:**

- Prepared reports and updates on MANCOM and Joint MANCOM & RDs meetings
- Report to Privatization Management Office (PMO) re: Status of NFA account on MINPROCOR properties
- NFA Public Investment Program (PIP) for FY 2021, 2022 and 2023 submitted to DA.
- Prepared pronouncements of the new DA Secretary regarding the eight paradigms to level-up Agriculture, namely:
  1. Modernization must continue
  2. Industrialization is the key
  3. Promotion of export is a necessity

4. Consolidation of small and medium-size farm
5. Infrastructure development should be critical
6. Higher budget and investment for Agriculture
7. Legislative support is necessary
8. Roadmap development is a must

D. Comments on the Draft Substitute Bill re: Warehouse Receipt Law

E. Letter-reply/comment re: Joint Resolution directing the DA & NFA to directly purchase palay from local farmers for the rice subsidy program of DSWD, DILG, DND, DOTR, DENR and LGUs.

**Corporate Development and/or Evaluation****Divestment of Assets**

All assets proposed for divestment will be subjected for further review and evaluation pursuant to RA 11203.

**Evaluation**

1. Request of RDC XII for the transfer of administrative and operational concern of General Santos City to Koronadal City and the construction of NFA Region XII Regional Office in Koronadal City, approved by NFA Council.
2. DMCI offer to rent the NDO property in ACA-Valenzuela approved by the EXCOM.
3. Revised MOA on the proposed Deed of Exchange between NFA and the LGU of Tagudin, Ilocos Sur.
4. The Land Management Bureau (LMB) confirmed the approval of the Presidential Proclamation applied by NFA for its Regional Office in Sta. Ana, Davao City.
5. Denied the intention of the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) to purchase a lot portion in NFA Cabanatuan as piece-meal divestment of said property is disadvantageous to the NFA
6. Request of Bangsamoro Administrative Region in Muslim Mindanao to use as office the NFA building inside the BARRM complex
7. Status of NFA lots occupied by PNP in Bataan, Butuan and Zambales.
8. Fair Market Value of properties for divestment updated.
9. Guidelines in computing cost estimates of the fair market value of properties provided to field offices.
10. List of NFA properties for divestment with description, pictures and location submitted to DOF; as well as 5-year divestment plan, categorized as to titled and those with issues.

**Meetings/Hearings Attended:**

- Internal Budget Hearing for the FY 2020 DA Plan and Budget
- Philippine Rice Industry Roadmap – TWG workshop.
- Legislative Executive Advocacy Program (LEAP)

**INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES****I. Audit Engagements**

- Special Audit on Rice Distribution in Regions III (Nueva Ecija & Bulacan); Region V (Naga & Legaspi); Region XIII (East District Office, Central District Office, South District Office, North District Office & Cavite)
- e-IFOMIS TOLA Module Implementation in Batangas Provincial Office and Laguna (roll-out ongoing)
- Milling Committee Report for the Validation on the Alleged Misclassified Palay in NFA Maguindanao.
- Fact-Finding Investigation Team to conduct investigation on alleged NFA issues/irregularities raised during the Senate Hearing on the country's rice situation/rice supply and other issues in Regions I to XV.
- COA Findings re: Construction of two-storey Records Center Extension Building at NFA-ACA Compound.

**II. Tolerable Allowance**

- Issued 226 certifications for Stock (Grains and MTS) Accountabilities of NFA officials and rank and file employees for purposes of retirement, resignation, death benefit claims, travel abroad, maternity/sick leave and/or reassignment.

**III. Reports**

- Lingap Para Sa Mahihirap Fund Utilization
  - National and Regional Consolidation of Doable Action Plan for the Years 2019-2020 of Stock Accountable Officers' (SAOs) Stock Shortages as of December 31, 2018
  - Consolidate status of SAOs accountabilities as of March 31, 2018, June 30, 2018, September 30, 2018, and December 31, 2018.
  - Evaluation of Field Office warehouse nominees for Best Managed Warehouse in Different Categories
  - Regional Summary of Shortages – per Status of Accountability as of June 30, 2019.
2. Audit Procedures:
    - a. Risk-Based Audit
    - b. Review of Walkthrough of audit engagements
      - i. Procurement
      - ii. Drying
      - iii. Milling
      - iv. Dispersal
      - v. Distribution

**PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

1. Prepared/published 53 news and photo releases on NFA accomplishments, activities, issues and concerns and other related issues. These merited publication in various national dailies or broadsheets and tabloids.
2. Photo and video coverage on the following events:
  - Market visit/participation of DA Secretary William Dar at Muñoz Market
  - NFA Christmas party at the Local Utilities and Water Administration (LUWA)
  - NFA 47th anniversary celebration and other NFA internal affairs/events
  - Freedom of Information (FOI): Processed two requests
  - Replied to 560 queries on NFA Facebook Account

- Maintained NFA Facebook Account.
- Twitted and re-twitted news and tweets re: NFA particularly on rice distribution, palay procurement, employees' protest on NFA abolition and Ugnayan.
- Posted/reposted press releases and news articles related to NFA, Rice tariffication and lobbying against Senate Bill 1998.
- Shared/posted 173 news articles/press releases
- Monitored NFA Twitter account @bigas\_NFA
- Monitored and clipped 1,800 news items on NFA corporate and agri- related issues and concerns and provided copies to concerned NFA officials.
- Coordinated the following: Malacañang Hotline 8888: relayed/endorsed one hundred forty seven (147) complaints to concerned office/officials/employees; followed up and ensured prompt compliance on complaints and endorsed same to the Office of the President.
- Prepared Communication Plan in compliance to instruction of DA Secretary William D. Dar for all offices under DA to submit existing and forthcoming Communication Plans.
- Prepared new NFA Logo for NFA letterhead and sign boards for field offices and other materials.
- Consolidated Monthly Visibility Reports submitted by field offices for submission to the Office of the Administrator.
- Supervised (including writing and editing) the production of the NFA Provident Fund, Inc. flyer and primer.
- Assisted in the preparation of the final draft ARTA as member of the Technical Working Group (TWG)
- Assisted in the editing of the NFA Corporate Governance Scorecard as member of the Technical Working Group (TWG)
- Prepared design and layout of various information materials requested by other NFA departments and offices.

**HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT****NFA Personnel Complement**

As of December 31, 2019, of the 4,436 authorized plantilla positions, 3,696 positions were filled-up: 492 positions at the Central Office and 3,204 positions at the Field Offices. And of the 285 authorized co-terminus with the incumbent (CTI) positions nationwide, a total of 267 are still with the agency.

For the year, NFA facilitated the participation of 207 NFA officials and employees in six internal and ten external trainings.

**LEGAL AFFAIRS**

For the year, 16 activities pertaining to Document and Legal Research, Adjudication, and litigation were undertaken.



FEATURES

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

CONTRIBUTION TO THE ECONOMY:  
(For the year Ended December 31,  
2019)

NFA has contributed **P13,912,479,335.27** to the country's economy in terms of the following increase in economic activities.

PARTICULARS	AMOUNT
1. Palay Procurement	13,124,823,691.43
2. Rent Expenses	70,966,785.91
3. Transportation & Deliveries Expenses	625,606,723.39
4. General Services	36,431,390.79
5. Janitorial Services	17,700,453.01
6. Security Services	348,824,035.69
7. Drying	66,096,445.02
8. Milling	12,142,872.89
9. Handling	463,571,234.97
10. Tax Withheld from Employees' Compensation	117,004,295.15
11. Tax Withheld from Suppliers of Goods & Services	338,414,960.79
TOTAL	15,221,582,889.04

HOTLINE 8888:

A Platform for Citizens' Grievances

By: Loreta Umali

Hotline 8888 was institutionalized through Executive Order No. 6 issued by President Rodrigo Duterte on August 1, 2016. It operates 24/7, which allows the public to report red tape, corrupt practices or poor government frontline service delivery in all government agencies including government-owned and controlled corporations.

The complaint center is being managed by the Office of the Cabinet Secretary which coordinates with concerned government agency for the immediate action or resolution on the complaint or grievances through a Ticket Reference Number (TRN) aired by the public as well as provide feedback to the complainants within 72 hours. A ticket is considered closed or resolved once the agency acted on the complaint and informed the complainant on the action taken through a written report submitted to the Hotline 8888. The hotline is currently being serviced by the Civil Service Commission Contact Center ng Bayan 16565.

For the year 2019, the National Food Authority received a total of 306 complaints lodged at the 8888 Complaint Center.

The most number of complaints were recorded in the months of September and October with a total of 75 and 72 complaints, respectively. Majority of the complaints were about the Palay Procurement Program of the Agency specifically the parameters for palay classification. The complainants claimed that said parameters were in

contradiction with the President's pronouncement to procure "ALL" the palay produce of the farmers at P19.00/kg.

Most NFA field offices encountered furious complainants, claiming that the food agency failed to buy the palay produce of the farmers because of the poor classification declared or assessed by the grains classifiers and warehouse supervisors.

But there were complainants who expressed gratitude to the concerned NFA offices after receiving favorable response for their complaints. In like manner, a Commendation Ticket is sent to the concerned NFA Offices.

Of the 306 complaints received by the food agency in 2019, four (4) Commendation Tickets were given to the following provinces: twice for Romblon Provincial Office (January & September 2019); North District Office (September 2019) and Nueva Ecija (September 2019).

Since the Hotline 8888 became operationalized in 2017, a total of 639 complaints were already received by the NFA.



Debt – Management

Particulars	Balance as of December 31, 2019 (In Million Pesos)
I. Short-Term Credit Lines	2,403.817
II. Bank Commission	0.032
III. Long-Term Loans (Domestic)	3,056.494
IV. Documentary Stamp Tax (DST)	344.955
TOTAL BANK LOANS	5,805.298



NFA : Facing the Challenges  
of the COVID-19 Pandemic

By MA. CYNTHIA DL. SUAREZ

When Covid 19 escalated into a pandemic in the country in the first week of March 2020, following the recorded local transmission of the virus, President Rodrigo Duterte placed the country under a state of public health emergency through Proclamation No. 922 on March 8, 2020. Due to the outbreak of Covid 19, the entire Luzon and some parts in the Visayas and Mindanao were locked down and was placed under the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ).

This led to the passage of Bayanihan to Heal as One Act, or Republic Act No. 11469 on March 25, 2020 granting the President additional powers to implement necessary measures to prevent the spread of the disease.

An Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID), was immediately reconvened where a National Action Plan was crafted to effectively and efficiently implement and decentralize the system of managing the COVID-19 situation in the country. A National Task Force (NTF) was created to handle the operational command while the National Incident Command (NIC) administers the daily concerns and operations.

The National Food Authority has once again played a crucial role since it handles rice, the staple food of the Filipinos. Among those in the frontline, the food agency was one of the 21 agencies organized by the NTF tasked to address response operations and resource management and logistics.

NFA organized its own Covid 19 Task Force chaired by Administrator Judy Carol L. Dansal; the National Task Group on Response Operations led by Acting Dep. Adm. Rex C. Estoperez for Marketing Operations; and the National Task Group on Resource Management and Logistics by Dep. Adm. for Finance and Administration Tomas R. Escarez.

At the field level, the NFA's Luzon Task Group is chaired by Region I Director Yolanda R. Navarro; Visayas Task Group by Region VI Director Dianne R. Silva; Mindanao 1 Task Group by Region X Director Robert John R. Hermano; and Mindanao 2 Task Group by Region XI Director Lester Romeo E. Malana.

The NFA Task Force coordinates with the IATF-NTF-Covid 19 regarding the agency's role and contribution in the crisis management: provides relevant information and analysis, promulgates and supervises the implementation of rules and regulations within its jurisdiction, and undertakes other tasks that may be deemed necessary.

As a frontliner, NFA ensured unhampered delivery of services. Administrator Dansal ordered the field offices and warehouses to remain open 12/7 even during holidays and weekends following the work arrangements prescribed by the IATF and the Civil Service Commission with the strict observance of the health protocols. Shuttle services were provided to enable employees to report for work amid lack of public transport while ensuring their protection from transmission of the virus.

The need for rice has increased for the relief operations of local government units (LGUs), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and other relief agencies. With the good quality of NFA rice at Php 1,250 per bag (wholesale) much lower than commercial rice, the demand increased especially in the National Capital Region, the epicenter of Covid 19.

NFA continuously replenished rice stocks in its warehouses across the country. For NCR alone, a total of 188,950 bags were delivered through weekly rice caravan from Northern and Central Luzon from March 26 to May 27, 2020.

Milling operations were fast tracked. But it was not easy due to several restrictions that time. Adm. Dansal met with the agency's rice milling contractors to address operational issues such as the mobilization of their mill operators, laborers, drivers and other employees; border regulations issued by LGUs, procurement of the mills' fast-moving parts and other consumables and the difficulty in marketing their ricemilling by-products such as rice bran or "darak" and rice hull or "ipa"

NFA facilitated the issuance of IATF IDs for the rice mill employees and laborers and IATF stickers for the trucks used in rice deliveries especially in Metro Manila.

Adm. Dansal recommended to the IATF to allow Manila-based suppliers of the needed ricemill spare parts to operate. NFA also issued a certification to be presented to the checkpoints, for the unimpeded transport and purchase of parts for the immediate repair of ricemills.

On the sale of "darak" and "ipa" which serve as NFA's payment-in-kind (PIK) for milling services, NFA has made adjustments in the "guaranteed milling recovery" (GMR) to help rice millers recoup their "lost income".

The NFA was able to distribute a total of 4.4 million bags across the country since the start of the lockdown on March 15 up to June 30, 2020; giving priority to LGUs and relief agencies.

NFA continued to procure palay from local farmers not only to build its buffer stock but more so, to provide a ready market for the farmers' produce. Mobile procurement teams were deployed especially in production areas to collect farmers' produce. The 558 buying stations nationwide remained open to accept palay deliveries from farmers.

The challenges of Covid 19 are great. It may be a long road before a vaccine is discovered. But with the spirit of bayanihan, a core essence of the Filipino culture; and believing that "kayang-kaya basta't sama-sama," taking the road to recovery and normalcy may not be a herculean task afterall.

FEATURES



As art is a mirror to life, A statement on the positive outlook of the Filipino people despite all the trials and tribulations that surround them. It is as well, a homage to our fellow Filipino construction workers risking life and limb here and abroad to construct cities.

**"COMING INTO BEING"**

Taguig City, Philippines

Artist: Daniel dela Cruz

Photo by: Bert Manalo

