



SOUTHERN TAGALOG *mandala*

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF NFA REGION IV

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NFA ADMINISTRATOR RODERICO R. BIOCO VISITS MINDORO AND GRACES THE INAUGURATION OF GID 6 WAREHOUSE

...FULL STORY ON PAGE 2



PRES. BONGBONG MARCOS APPOINTS RODERICO R. BIOCO AS CHIEF OF NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Malacañang Palace announced new appointments for several departments made by President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos, Jr. thru Presidential Communications Office Secretary Cheloy Garafil last January 11, 2023. Included in the said announcement was the new Chief of the National Food Authority, Roderico R. Bioco.

Following his appointment as Acting NFA Administrator by the President, the National Food Authority (NFA) Council recognizes him as NFA Administrator and subsequently confirms his appointment as Vice Chairman of the NFA Council, during its Regular meeting held on March 27, 2023.

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SANTOS LEADS NFA REGION IV

Piolito C. Santos, a seasoned Regional Manager with more than 42 years of public service, has been appointed to lead the entire Southern Tagalog Region of the National Food Authority (NFA), effective January 31, 2023. The appointment was made official through SO AO-2023-01-007 issued on January 26, 2023.

Santos, who previously headed the NFA Ilocos Region, managed the NFA Region IV twice, from September 2015 to January 2017 and from October 2020 to February 7, 2021.

In his previous roles, he consistently demonstrated his competence and goal-oriented approach, contributing significantly to maintaining the agency's good reputation and enhancing its operational activities in the seven (7) regions he has led. Santos started his career as a field clerk in the Isabella Provincial Office in 1981 and has remained enthusiastic and dedicated to serving the public under the agency's mission.



-CL Gutierrez (correspondent)

NFA ADMINISTRATOR RODERICO BICO VISITS MINDORO ISLAND



Administrator Roderico Bioco took two (2) days out of his busy schedule to visit the island of Mindoro which is one of the top palay producing areas in the Philippines in order to observe the practices of private rice processing businesses and improve NFA's operational system when it comes to facility efficiency on rice production.

Moreover, Mindoro is the main source of the rice stocks in Southern Tagalog as it is the biggest palay surplus area in the region providing almost 90% of the total regional palay procurement. With the completion of the construction of two NFA warehouses in 2022, more farmers in Occidental Mindoro benefit with these facilities as more palay deliveries can be catered by the branch.

On March 29, 2023, NFA Administrator Roderico R. Bioco with SAA Roger Navarro and AAO John Robert Hermano graced the inauguration ceremony and blessing of the third newly constructed 100,000 bags capacity warehouse (GID 6) at San Jose, Occidental Mindoro. The new administrator led the ribbon cutting, ceremonial acceptance of the warehouse and unveiling of marker witnessed by NFA Southern Tagalog Region heads namely RM Piolito C. Santos, ARM Atty. Marko C. Callanta, Branch Managers Mark Jing Tayactac, Lilibeth B. Agua, Dennis N. Mejico, Regional Engineer Bryan Atienza and the NFA Occidental Mindoro staff headed by BM Sherry Christine Milanes. The honorable Mayor Rey C. Ladaga of LGU San Jose, PFAC Vice Chairperson Carlos Morales, and some farmer leaders were also present at the event.

Administrator Bioco also met the employees of Occidental Mindoro Branch and informed them of the administration's plans and the status of the ongoing NFA Restructuring.

With the management's plan to digitize the systems and modernize facilities of the agency, Admin. Bioco with the NFA executives visited Five Star Ricemill, one of the ricemills in the province with modernized facilities, and was assisted by Mr. Jan Patrick Ramirez, one of the operational heads of the ricemill. They also inspected newly constructed NFA warehouse in Magsaysay on their way to Oriental Mindoro.

On their official travel to the neighboring province, they stopped by at NFA Oriental Mindoro warehouses located in the municipalities of Roxas, Pinamalayan and Naujan; and inspected the properties and facilities within the warehouse compounds. Admin. Bioco also took the chance to meet the branch employees at Calapan City and updated them of the current position of our agency.

After their hectic itinerary, Admin. Bioco left a message of commendation to the officers and staff of the branch offices for their contributions to the buffer stocking mandate of the agency. With the data and observations on facilities and practices, the good administrator believed also that Mindoro is a key production unit of NFA strategy for food security.

-CL Gutierrez (correspondent)



VISIT AT FIVE STAR RICE MILL



FACILITY INSPECTION AT ORIENTAL MINDORO



NFA ATTORNEY TAKES OVER THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL MANAGER POSITION

On February 15, 2023, a turnover ceremony was held at the NFA Regional Office IV/Batangas Branch Office Building in Balagtas, Batangas City to signify the acceptance of Atty. Marko C. Callanta as the new Acting Assistant Regional Manager of NFA Region IV. The former Acting ARM Roy Q. Untiveros, who will now be the ARM of NFA Central Luzon, handed over the Symbolic Key of Responsibility to Atty. Callanta in the presence of RM Piolito Santos, branch managers, and regional/branch employees.

Atty. Callanta began his NFA career as an Attorney IV in 2015 and was later appointed as the Officer-in-Charge of the Adjudication Division in 2019. Prior to his current designation, he served as the Acting Chief Personnel Specialist of the Human Resource Development and Service Division.

-CL Gutierrez (correspondent)



PRES. BONGBONG MARCOS APPOINTS RODERICO R. BICO AS CHIEF OF NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

The NFA's new Administrator, Roderico Rayo Bioco, is a known expert in the field of agriculture with decades of experience as a corn, cassava and livestock farmer, an industrialist building major corn postharvest facilities in the country and an agricultural policy advocate, protecting the welfare of our smallholder corn farmers.

He obtained his BS Mathematics degree from Ateneo de Manila University in 1989 and specialized in Statistics from the University of the Philippines in 1988-89. While in college, he was also very active in social work, student activism, and sports, being a member of the college football varsity.

Prior to his appointment as the new Administrator, he was the CEO of Mindanao Grains, a corn processing company based in Bukidnon that he established in 1999 to address the perennial problem of corn farmers with a goal of establishing a financially sound business model bound by a real social commitment. He founded the Philippine Maize Federation, Inc. (PhilMaize) in 2001, a national organization of corn farmers and cooperatives.

Roderico Bioco was also a former president of the Bukidnon Giant Bamboo (BGB) Resources Corporation, former chairman of the Bukidnon Kaamulan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc., and former governor of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry - Northern Mindanao.

In 2000, he organized corn farmers throughout the country to recommend for favorable policies in government, addressing the welfare of our more than 400,000 corn farmers. He built the Reina Mercedes Corn Processing Center in Isabela Province in 2010 with the objective of reducing the post-harvest losses of smallholder farmers. The 2,000mt per day grain drying and 75,000mt storage project which services 20,000 ha of corn and benefits 10,000 farmers is the biggest post harvest facility for corn in South East Asia.

Rod Bioco also helped the government craft policies on corn production and postharvest projects, ushering in the shift to biomass mechanical dryers, as well as initiating major hydro and irrigation programs, including the: Jalaur River Dam project in the province of Iloilo; the east of Cagayan river in Isabela; and the Pulangi V of Bukidnon.

Lastly, he is the current Chairman of the Philippine Red Cross - Bukidnon Chapter since October 2016, and as Vice Chairman from July 2013 to October 2016.

As he leads NFA, Administrator Bioco believes that modernizing the agency's facilities will ensure more local farmers will deliver their produce to the agency and eventually, contribute to the country's buffer stocks, ensuring the country's food security.

SOURCE: www.nfa.gov.ph; www.philstar.com



**RODERICO R. BICO
NFA ADMINISTRATOR**

RM SANTOS REPRESENTS NFA REGION IV AT BAYANIHAN FESTIVAL



RM Piolito C. Santos, representing NFA Region IV, attended a momentous event in province of Occidental Mindoro in celebration of the first harvest festival dubbed as "Bayanihan Festival in Sablayan" last April 26, 2023 at Panikian Lake, Sablayan, Occ. Mindoro.

This was the first harvest of an agricultural project and a pioneering partnership of the Municipality of Sablayan and Tao Seeds under Rice to Rise (R2R) Program. Tao Seeds is known for its mission to develop and to produce the best hybrid seeds in the country and uplifting the lives of Filipino rice farmers while R2R Program is a platform where key players in the rice value-chain strategically work together to provide the needed support to small farmers.

During the event, Mayor Walter D. Marquez of Sablayan, Mayor Angelina F. Tria, Dr. Frisco M. Malaban - Consultant of Office of the Usec. for Rice Industry Development, TAO Seeds Business Unit Head Joseph Arlan Fajardo, VCA Manager Nelson C. Paraguison, and Mr. Artemio Cazareno - Regional Seed Coordination & Agricultural Center Chief II were also present.

As 86% of NFA Region IV's buffer stock comes from Occidental Mindoro, RM Santos took the opportunity to express NFA's appreciation to all farmers for their patronage in selling their palay to the agency and the LGU leaders for their continuous support of the noble mission

to provide sufficient buffer stock sourced from local farmers, ready in times of calamities and emergencies.

RM Santos also provided updates regarding the administration's plans to establish state-of-the-art Rice Processing Centers with modernized facilities, such as mechanical driers, silos, rice mills, through a mother and daughter station setup. The mother station would be the bigger facility supporting 10 daughters or smaller facilities, making it more cost-effective. The administration also plans to implement digital transformation through the SARAI Project (Smarter Approaches to Reinvigorate Agriculture as an Industry in the Philippines), which will provide most of the intelligence function/data through an action-research program, funded by the Department of Science and Technology - Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic, and Natural Resources Research and Development (DOST-PCAARD). The project is in partnership with other departments of UPLB to provide and deliver new technology using remote sensing from satellites and to develop new applications not only for NFA but also for Filipino farmers.

During the event, the harvested "Hatao Dinorado" was also introduced, which was cooked and served during lunch, and used as an ingredient in rice delicacies distributed to the participants to prove its quality.

-CL Gutierrez (correspondent)



BRANCH OFFICES CHAMPION NFA PALLGU PROGRAM

The NFA Branch Offices in the Southern Tagalog Region have started the year 2023 with several initiatives, including LGU coordinations, ugnayan meetings, and house-to-house campaigns. These efforts aim to bolster the region's palay procurement accomplishments for the first semester of 2023, encourage LGUs and legislators to support them under the PALLGU Program, and express support for government projects that showcase the quality of NFA rice.

With the aim of providing more support to local farmers, branch heads introduced the Palay Marketing Assistance Program for Legislators and Local Government Units (PALLGU) to LGUs in their areas of responsibility. They explained that the provision of a certain amount from their office budget would benefit local farmers in the form of an additional incentive (P1.00-3.00/kg) to NFA's buying price of P19.00/kg.

Last year, the LGUs of Siniloan in Laguna, Tagkawayan in Quezon, and Sablayan in Occidental Mindoro signed a MOA to participate in PALLGU with NFA. The said LGUs added P1.00/kg to NFA's buying price. LGU Siniloan provided a premium of P403,000.00 to NFA Laguna, LGU Tagkawayan gave the NFA Quezon Branch P500,000.00 premium and LGU Sablayan gave P4,500,000.00 to NFA Occidental Mindoro.

This year, the City Government of Calapan pledged P2.00/kg, enough to cover 20,000 bags of palay amounting to a premium of P2,000,000.00, to support the farmers of Calapan City. RM Santos personally visited Calapan City Hall with NFA Oriental Mindoro officials to sign the MOA on March 23, 2023, with Mayor Marilou F. Morillo. With LGUs Infanta and Victoria in Laguna, Mayor Filipina Grace R. America and Mayor Dwight C. Kampitan provided support for the farmers, amounting to P500,000.00 (P2.00/kg incentive) and P100,000.00 (P3.00/kg incentive), respectively, through NFA Laguna.

-CL Gutierrez (correspondent)



NFA REGION IV PARTICIPATES IN KADIWA NG PANGULO PROGRAM

On other activities, NFA Region IV branch offices participated in KADIWA NG PANGULO Program which aims to promote the direct marketing platform designed by the Department of Agriculture (DA) that provides consumers access to quality and safe food items, while ensuring farm producers have ready market.

The Kadiwa ng Pangulo (KNP) is a spill-over of the DA's marketing strategy dubbed Kadiwa ng Pasko, which addressed the high cost of agricultural commodities during the holiday season. The KNP is just one of the programs of the Marcos administration that address the rising food prices due to global inflation. It also gives farmers, fisherfolks as well as micro-, small-, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) rent-free venues to sell their produce and increase their income.

It is a market linkage facilitation program that has removed the unnecessary layers in the trading cycle. Less middlemen adds to the selling value of the products with consumers benefitting from freshly harvested crops and other food items at fair cost. It also capacitates the food growers to be agripreneurs.

NFA Oriental Mindoro participated the said activity held at Pola, Oriental Mindoro on November 29, 2022 and same with NFA Palawan on December 15, 2022 at Department of Agriculture Compound, Bgy.Sta.Monica, Puerto Princesa City.

On March 1, 2023, NFA Batangas Branch participated in the launching of the "Kadiwa ng Pangulo" Program in Batangas at the Sto. Tomas City Hall, March 1, 2023. President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. graced the launching ceremony and during the launching event, 319 batangueños availed good quality NFA rice at PhP 25.00/kg (30 bags sold). - CL Gutierrez (correspondent)

NFA REGION IV RELEASES RICE STOCKS FOR ONE-TIME RICE ASSISTANCE FOR GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL & WORKERS

After the Office of the President issued Administrative Order No. 2 in December 2022, the NFA management carefully prepared rice stocks and guidelines before releasing them to the concerned government agencies. On April 12, 2023, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) released PHP1,182,905,000 to the National Food Authority (NFA) for a one-time rice assistance grant to qualified employees and workers of national government agencies.

The grant will benefit 1,892,648 government workers, including Job Order (JO) and Contract of Service (COS) personnel with the grant of one

-time assistance at a uniform quantity of 25 kilograms of rice to all qualified government workers/employees who are still in the government service and/or engaged by government agencies as of Nov. 30, 2022.

On April 14, 2023, the NFA management released guidelines regarding the One-time Rice Assistance (OTRA) in coordination with the DBM on funds allocation of government agencies. The branch offices in the Southern Tagalog Region immediately started issuing rice stocks in their respective areas, with a total of 598 bags of 50 kilograms being issued in Region IV as of April 31, 2023 for the said activity.

-CL Gutierrez (correspondent)

IN BATANGAS - 22 BAGS



IN PALAWAN - 55.50 BAGS



IN POLILLO - 121 BAGS



IN ORIENTAL MINDORO - 14 BAGS



IN MARINDUQUE - 271.50 BAGS/ QUEZON - 55 BAGS



IN OCCIDENTAL MINDORO- 59 BAGS



NFA REGION IV CONDUCTS ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY

REGIONAL OFFICE & BATANGAS BRANCH

The NFA Regional Office and Batangas Branch Office celebrated the 2023 National Women's Month with the theme "WE FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETY".

In observance of the National Women's Month this month of March, the employees participate in different activities to show support on women empowerment such as wearing purple every Wednesday and the use of Philippine Commission on Women's Lupang Hinirang Music Video in honor of great Filipino Women and sharing of trivias about women every Monday morning during Flag Ceremony.

The employees also have zumba sessions every Wednesday and Operation Clean and Green every Friday to promote fitness and wellness and cleanliness of the surroundings for a better working environment.

On March 24, 2023, a seminar entitled "Gender Awareness and Sensitivity and RA 9262: The Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004" was held at the NFA Region IV Conference Room in Balagtas, Batangas City. PCPT Pauline Pecaso Fernando and PCPT Mary Ann De Villa Espina from the Batangas Provincial Police Office (BPPO) were invited as resource speakers to discuss the said law and gender sensitivity.

RM Piolito Santos emphasized the importance of the seminar in raising awareness of Republic Act 9262 and in knowing how to protect victims.

The speakers explained the different types of protection orders that authorities can provide to abused women and children, as well as how to apply for Temporary Protection Order (TPO) and Permanent Protection Order (PPO). They also discussed the "battered women syndrome" (BWS) and its phases, a psychological trauma that results from ongoing physical, psychological, and/or sexual abuse typically inflicted by an intimate partner. The speakers emphasized that respect starts within the family and that proper education on how to respect others should be taught at home to prevent violence and other crimes.

On March 28, 2023, the Batangas City Agriculture Office, together with Glomaria R. Ramos, Noreen Faith B. Andar, Sharmaine N. Vitto, and Roshell C. Gregorio, conducted a livelihood seminar entitled "Enhancing Skills Towards Social Transformation Through Livelihood Seminar/ Workshop" at the same venue. During the workshop, the employees learned how to make dishwashing liquid and hand sanitizer, which are affordable and low-budget businesses for starting entrepreneurs

-CL Gutierrez (correspondent)



LAGUNA BRANCH

The NFA Laguna Branch Office organized a series of talks on women empowerment and gender issues, with guest speakers from the San Pablo City Police Station in Laguna. On March 15, 2023, Assistant CAD PNCO, PCpl Lester Levinson C Cuasay, led a lecture and discussion on RA 6725, which aims to prohibit discrimination against women in terms and conditions of employment. PMSg Ma Danica Eve A Camado, CAD PNCO, also gave a talk on March 15, 2023 on RA 9710, or the Magna Carta of Women. The following week, on March 22, 2023, Assistant CAD PNCO, PCpl Edmor S Abiertas, discussed RA 8353, The Anti-Rape Law of 1997, in order to raise awareness on this important issue.



OCCIDENTAL MINDORO BRANCH

The NFA Occidental Mindoro Branch actively participated in the celebration of the 2023 International Women's Month. On March 8, 2023, the branch joined the event hosted by the Philippine Commission on Women and UN Women, which was live-streamed on Facebook. The event was centered on the theme "Breaking the Code: Equality for All through Technology and Innovation" and was graced by keynote speakers Vice President Sarah Duterte and Ms. Karen Davila. The discussions revolved around policies and programs that could be implemented to further advance women's rights in technology, innovation, and ICT. In support of gender equality, the employees wore violet shirts during the event



OCCIDENTAL MINDORO BRANCH

To celebrate the 2023 National Women's Month, the NFA Occidental Mindoro Branch Office organized various activities such as Purple Wednesdays, which encouraged employees to wear violet shirts in support of gender equality, and a sports event to promote fitness and teamwork among staff members. The branch culminated the month-long celebration by conducting a seminar on RA-7877, also known as the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995. The event was held through both face-to-face and virtual platforms, and the resource speaker was PEMS May A. Bautista from the Calapan City Police Station.

QUEZON BRANCH

The employees of NFA Quezon Branch participated in the celebration of the 2023 National Women's Month by wearing purple shirts every Wednesday, participating in a cleanup activity in the NFA compound, and planting crops to promote environmental sustainability and reduce pollution and the impact of global warming.



PALAWAN BRANCH



NFA Palawan Branch conducted a seminar on fire safety called "Empowering Women in Fire Prevention" on March 15, 2023, as part of the National Women's Month celebration. The seminar was led by FO3 Remon F. Hortillano, a fire arson investigator, and was done in partnership with the Bureau of Fire Protection. The seminar aimed to raise awareness about the importance of fire prevention, provide basic knowledge on fire behavior, and equip the participants with necessary skills and knowledge on fire suppression in case of emergencies. This seminar was organized as a GAD activity to support the empowerment of women.

CONGRATULATIONS!

2023 AGRICULTURAL CERTIFIED PESTICIDE APPLICATOR (EXTERMINATOR CATEGORY)

As per FDA Regulation, CPA-Exterminators are the ones allowed to handle pest control administration with liquid and powder pesticides. The following employees passed the Agricultural Certified Pesticide Applicator (Exterminator Category) Examination for the year 2023.

| | | |
|---------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
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| LAGUNA | : | LOU MAVERICK J. PILEA |
| OCC. MINDORO | : | EDGAR D. GANTE, JR. |
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