

PhilRootcrops Turns 32



Dr. Jose L. Bacusmo gives his anniversary message to PhilRootcrops staff and visitors during the kick-off ceremony on March 2.

The Philippine Root Crop Research and Training Center (PhilRootcrops) based at the Visayas State University (VSU) in Baybay, Leyte celebrated its 32nd anniversary last March 2009. As the Center turned one year older, a month-long celebration was held with the theme “Exploring Rootcrops Emerging RDE Strategies for Food Security and Industry.”

The celebration kicked off on March 2 with an opening program and launching of photo gallery and exhibits at 8:00 a.m. This event was graced with the attendance of VSU’s top brass namely: the President, Dr. Jose L. Bacusmo; the Vice Presidents, Dr. Manuel K. Palomar, Dr. Oscar B. Posas, Dr. Roberto C. Guarte, Dr. Othello B. Capuno; and the immediate past President, Dr. Paciencia P. Milan. Staff from other offices, departments

and research centers also witnessed the occasion. As former PhilRootcrops directors; Dr. Bacusmo, Dr. Palomar and Prof. Algerico M. Mariscal gave their anniversary messages which focused on the realization and attainment of PhilRootcrops’ mission and vision. After the opening program, the visitors viewed the newly installed photo gallery at the training hall, and the lobby exhibits.

The activities lined-up for the entire month included the “Rootcrops Rock Festival” on the first week, the Training on Sweetpotato Production, Processing and Utilization on the second week. The Cassava Farmers’ Forum and PhilRootcrops Family Day were conducted on the third week, while the educational tours of the staff and laborers took place on the fourth week.

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Rootcrops Rock Kicks-off Anniversary Month

A kid-friendly activity that introduced children to the four major rootcrops and food products opened the PhilRootcrops anniversary celebration on March 2 and 3, 2009. Dubbed as “Rootcrops Rock”, the activity aimed to create awareness about rootcrops and encourage children to eat food products made from rootcrops because of their superior nutritional content. Forty-nine elementary (38 from VSU Foundation Elementary School and 11 from Alpha Christian School) and 82 high school students (13 from Baybay National High School, 43 from Plaridel National High School, 12 from Caridad National High School and 14 from Bunga National High School), all from Baybay, Leyte, took part in the activity.

Designed and facilitated by the junior Development Communication students with the supervision of their instructor, Ms. Avril de Guzman, “Rootcrops Rock” consisted of four simultaneous stations that seamlessly integrated the Center’s exhibits, food products, instructional videos and experts into the learning activity. The children started the activity with a tour of the Center’s exhibits followed by a video showing and a chance to ask questions from the Center’s scientists and experts. The activity was highlighted by a free taste of some rootcrop food products and ended with a quiz show about what they learned from the exhibits. “Rootcrops Rock” served as a class activity for Development Communication 135:

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DA Technicians from Cebu Attend SP Training

As part of the month-long anniversary celebration of PhilRootcrops, the Center conducted a 3-day training on sweetpotato production, processing and utilization on March 11-13, 2009 at the PhilRootcrops complex and the Department of Food Science and Technology. The training was attended by 17 Department of Agriculture (DA) technicians from the different Local Government Units (LGUs) of the province of Cebu, which include Badian, Catmon, Carcar, Daanbantayan, Danao City, Liloan, San Fernando, Sibonga, Talisay City, Toledo City and from the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPA). Dr. Necias A. Vicoy, Jr., Cebu's provincial agriculturist led the trainees.

The technicians were exposed to the different sweetpotato technologies through lectures, hands-on demonstrations and practicum on production, primary processed products like chips and flour, and other products such as Pinoy fries, SP chips, SP peanut cookies, SP candy, SP chiffon cake, catsup, jam, beverage and breads.

This training is an offshoot of the voluminous orders of sweetpotato planting materials in 2008 by

the province of Cebu during the implementation of the *Sinanduloy sa Kabusog, Sinanduloy sa Kahimsog* (SAKSAK) program spearheaded by Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia. The program encouraged the different LGUs to engage in sweetpotato production as a hunger mitigating measure to counteract the rice crisis, and to cope up with the soaring prices of staple food. In 2008, the province of Cebu ordered more than 200,000 sweetpotato cuttings from PhilRootcrops, which were distributed to the different municipalities. The LGUs effectively supported the drive; hence, the training on sweetpotato utilization was planned to hedge against oversupply. Ms. Zea A. Villaganas, the OPA - Cebu planning officer designate, arranged the training at PhilRootcrops especially on the processing aspect.

In the feedback during the closing ceremony, the participants acknowledged their weakness and lack of knowledge on the different aspects of sweetpotato production, processing and utilization. They also said that the training significantly improved their knowledge and skills. The training enabled them to address the challenges of food insecurity through sweetpotato.

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Cebu DA technicians listen to the field lecture of Dr. Erlinda A. Vasquez regarding the control of sweetpotato pests and diseases.

Rootcrop Researchers in 2009 FCSSP Confab

Two PhilRootcrops researchers, Prof. Villaluz Z. Acedo and Dr. Emma S. Data attended the Federation of Crop Science Societies of the Philippines (FCSSP) Conference in Silliman University, Dumaguete City on May 18-23, 2009. The conference was participated by about 500 researchers and scientists from the academe (public and private), national and international research agencies, and private companies. The conference theme was "Meeting the Challenges of Water and Energy Crises" and the keynote speaker was Hon. Segfredo R. Serrano, the Undersecretary for Policy and Planning of the Department of Agriculture.

Prof. Acedo presented a poster paper entitled "Growth and Development of 'VU2' Yam Nodal Cultures as Affected by Size and Types of Culture Containers". She also acted as moderator in one of the concurrent paper presentations.

One of the major highlights of the conference was the Best Paper Competition in several categories. Dr. Roel P. Suralta of the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) who was also a former PhilRootcrops staff, won the best paper award for the Upstream Research Category. His paper entitled "Shoot Dry Matter Production in Relation to Plastic Root Growth Responses of Rice to Transient Moisture Stresses" was co-authored by Drs. Yoshiaki Inukai and Akira Yamauchi.

PhilRootcrops Workers Take Time Out

The PhilRootcrops staff and field personnel took time out from their usual routine of work on two separate educational tours. After a year of continuous research, extension and instruction activities, these trips not only unloaded their physical and mental stresses but also opened doors for partnerships and fresh ideas.

The educational tour on March 22 – 24, 2009 brought the PhilRootcrops staff to some “must-see” sites in Bohol. The first stop was one of the biggest starch plants, PhilStarch in the municipality of Carmen. Although unable to see the actual operation of the plant because it was a weekend and processing was limited due to low water supply, the group was treated to a hearty cassava cake prepared by Mr. Eddie Diaz himself, the vice president of the company. The visit to a nearby 5 – hectare buffer cassava plantation in Sagbayan gave the staff on-the-ground information from the farmer while enjoying the Chocolate Hills backdrop. The next stop was Sagbayan Peak that provided sumptuous peek at the Chocolate Hills while enjoying the landscape of the resort. Evening was spent at JAV beach resort in Calape with a rich seafood dinner and karaoke music as highlights.

The second day started early to Tagbilaran City where the group met a couple who is interested in rootcrop-based products particularly the dried cassava grates. Owners of a bakeshop chain, Arnold and Jojie Labunog were the breakfast hosts and upcoming cooperators for cassava grates. Cassava puto from dried cassava was displayed in their bakeshop. They are still in the product development stage for some other cassava dried grates-based products. Jojie’s Bakeshop participated in the International Food Expo (IFEX) last May 17 in Manila, which introduced cassava grates product as its new product line. Another area visited was the famous



PhilRootcrops staff pose with Arnold and Jojie Labunog, owner of Jojie’s chain of bakeshops in Tagbilaran City.

Bee Farm in Panglao Island. Some herbal plants of the Bee Farm were brought home for propagation and potential use in rootcrop products. The group also had a sumptuous smorgasboard lunch while enjoying the river cruise at Loay. The last stop was the Central Experiment Station (CES) in Gabi, Ubay, Bohol. The National Cooperative Testing (NCT) cooperator, Ms. Amancia Medellin and the Department of Agriculture – Central Visayas Integrated Agricultural Research Center (DA-CENVIARC) superintendent, Mr. Antonio Du, briefed the group about the research activities of the Center and CES. PhilRootcrops staff was toured to the different experimental areas, and the tissue culture laboratory.

Bonding moments, lovely scenic places, sumptuous food, beautiful people and rich new ideas filled the 3 - day trip. Researchers, farmers, entrepreneurs, industrialists and partners all found it as one beautiful and enriching experience. The group went back to the office recharged and energized to carry on the tasks and challenges.

The second educational trip on March 27 involved the laborers and those who did not join the Bohol trip. This educational tour within selected places in Leyte and Southern Leyte aimed to improve the knowledge and

information of the field workers by exposing them to the different agri-based technologies and community-assisted projects in Matalom, Maasin City and Sogod. Twenty-two laborers and 20 staff joined the tour. The itinerary included the Inderio’s Farm in San Salvador, Matalom as the first stop where the laborers were briefed and toured to the farm’s feedmill, piggery and poultry facilities. Mr. Oscar Inderio, the farm manager, said that they grow their own cassava and corn for the feedmill.

In Maasin City, the group went to the pilgrim site of Monte Cueva Church, and the Danao Reforestation Project. The latter which is about a 30-minute drive from the city has different species of fast growing and deciduous trees planted to rehabilitate the area. This reforestation project of LGU Maasin is now being developed into a forest park where sports, meetings, and a jamboree had been held.

The last stop was La Caridad Farm in Brgy. Buak Daku in Sogod, Southern Leyte. La Caridad which is owned and operated by Mr. Jun Gerona, a *magsasakang syentista* of the *Teknogabay* based in the Southern Leyte State University (SLSU), is a diversified yet integrated farm resort. It has rice production and vegetable production areas (also in container

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gardens), three tilapia ponds, and an initial exotic animals collection. The farm is landscaped and efficiently engineered with vegetables growing on stakes over a pond. It has a main kiosk where visitors can eat, rest, and are entertained; and trainings and briefings are conducted. It also has some overnight cottages for rent.

The laborers and staff learned from Mr. Gerona the art and practical science of farming where patience, ingenuity and arduous labor pay-off. His technical and management know how was enriched with the help of experts from SLSU and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR). He also gave useful tips on vegetable production like the use of good seeds, high yielding varieties, organic fertilizers from compost, and vermicasts for his vegetable container gardens.

The agri-eco landscape and farm productivity wowed everyone. In addition, interested staff and laborers received giveaways – seeds and planting materials of ornamentals.

Mr. Gerona emphasized that the secret to his farming success are his passion for farming, quest for new knowledge and indefatigably applying them in practical ways. At the end of the day, staff and field workers were enriched and inspired.

Con't PhilRootcrops turns...

Just like in 2008, the month-long celebration this year had been designed not only to disseminate technological innovations but also to build and strengthen partnerships within and outside VSU, i.e. with students, faculty and staff; entrepreneurs and industry; and development agencies. Commercial and institutional innovations are critical and have been consciously integrated into the celebrations and RDE activities as a whole.

Con't DA Technicians

With the leadership of Ms. Villaganas, the participants formed a sweetpotato core group, which will be responsible for fostering sweetpotato development in the province. In this connection, they requested for the assistance of PhilRootcrops in materializing this vision as they need technical and other types of backstopping for effective implementation of the sweetpotato program in the province of Cebu.

Con't Rootcrops rock

Science Reporting course which aims to apply various S&T popularization techniques on development topics.



PhilRootcrops laborers listen to the farming experiences of Mr. Jun Gerona, the owner of La Caridad Farm in Sogod, So. Leyte.

JD Tan Participates In Training / Conference

Dr. Julie D. Tan of PhilRootcrops was one of the participants in the “Training on Polymerase Chain Reaction: Techniques and Application of National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology – Department of Science and Technology (BIOTECH-DOST) DNA Application System (DAS) Kits last March 17-18, 2009 at the BIOTECH, University of the Philippines at Los Baños (UPLB), College, Laguna. This training was in preparation for the launching of the DAS kit. The Visayas State University (VSU) is identified as one of the testing centers of pathogenic microorganisms in food in the Visayas using the DAS kit developed by researchers of BIOTECH, UPLB through the leadership of Dr. Susana M. Mercado.

Dr. Tan also attended the 9th Annual Conference of the Microscopy Society of the Philippines (MICROSPHIL) with “Microscopy: Top-down and Bottom-up Approaches” as its theme. The conference was held at the De La Salle University, Taft Avenue, Manila on March 13-14, 2009; and was organized by MICROSPHIL. The Society aims to promote awareness on new scientific advancements which usually require advanced instrumentation capabilities and knowledge to advance research to infinite levels. Currently, MICROSPHIL has international membership with the Committee of ASEAN Microscopy (CAM) and the Committee of Asia-Pacific Society on Microscopy (CAPSM).

Trip to ASCOT for Training and Project Monitoring



ASCOT participants in the on Training on Process Documentation and Qualitative Research Methodologies pose with the trainers from VSU.

On April 26-30, 2009, the PhilRootcrops team composed of Prof. Algerico M. Mariscal, Mr. Selvano S. Dalion and Ms. Elsa M. Umpad; and Drs. Editha G. Cagasan and Rotacio S. Gravoso of VSU visited the Aurora State College of Technology (ASCOT) in Baler, Aurora. This is part of a series of activities of PhilRootcrops in an initial sweetpotato collaborative project in a "twining" context between ASCOT and VSU. The visit had the following purposes: set-up the sweetpotato trial in a farmer's field, establish the nursery for gabi and ubi, collect indigenous rootcrop materials for the Center's germplasm collection, and conduct familiarization training for the enumerators on the use of rootcrop instrument for benchmarking.

Drs. Cagasan and Gravoso were invited to serve as resource persons for the appreciation training on process documentation and qualitative research approaches. Seventeen faculty and RDE staff of ASCOT participated in the training together with ASCOT president, Dr. Eusebio V. Angara. Initial feedback placed the training as significant help to their RDE strategic planning that took place after.

The trip's targets were fully met. Prof. Mariscal established a sweetpotato trial in Brgy. Dikildit, Ma. Aurora with Mr. Rudolfo Montaniel, the Brgy. Captain, as the farmer cooperator. Field trial monitoring was assigned to the in-charge of the ASCOT Bazal campus which is the site of the rootcrop collection-cum-trial.

Mr. Dalion planted the gabi planting materials from PhilRootcrops in the screenhouse because the designated area was not prepared due to inclement weather conditions. The ubi planting materials were not planted for the same reason. However, the laborer in-charge was given instructions for the nursery establishment.

Ms. Umpad conducted a familiarization training on the benchmarking instrument to be used by the four enumerators hired to do the rootcrop benchmark survey.

The collection trips in Casiguran, Aurora yielded four additional accessions for the Center's taro germplasm collection.

In the debriefing, the team together with ASCOT Pres. Angara, and Dr. Eutiquio Rotaquio, the Director for

Cassava Farmers Forum Held for Leyte

The demand for cassava in the food, feed and fuel industries has significantly increased in the last decade. Before the 1990s, cassava simply served as a staple food for many Filipinos especially our Muslim brothers in the South. It has many and varied uses for food and industry. In the early 1980s, the fledgling cassava starch plants signaled the industrial importance of the crop for starch; 1990s ushered in uses for feeds and alcohol; and currently, for renewable energy sources.

San Miguel Corporation (SMC) is the first big user of cassava for feeds and alcohol. SMC started its cassava production program in the 1990s, particularly in the areas of Bukidnon and South Cotabato in Mindanao. SMC uses the contract growing scheme as strategy to encourage farmers and cooperatives to produce cassava. Under this scheme, SMC issues marketing agreement with assemblers like a private small and medium enterprise (SME) or cooperative where market for dried chips or granulated cassava is assured at a guaranteed price. A number of success stories come from cooperatives, private companies, farmers, assemblers / granulators in Bohol, Bukidnon and Zamboanga. Their reach is expanding all over the country.

A resurgence of cassava industry development in Leyte took place in mid-2008 with the initial marketing agreement between SMC, Early 7 Marketing, a handful of sugar planters in Ormoc and agrarian reform communities (ARCs) in Leyte. In the 1990s, cassava was grown for a starch plant in Kananga, Leyte which stopped operation due to transfer of location, and in mid-2000, for a small time assembler in Bato, Leyte. Presently, Ormoc has already 300 hectares planted to cassava. These include the areas of Mr. Agapito

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Three Trainings Conducted During the Second Quarter

As one of its core extension functions, PhilRootcrops conducted three trainings during the second quarter (April to June) of 2009.

The first training was on cassava production and conducted on April 19, 2009 at Brgy. Gubang, Baybay, Leyte. The participants were 28 members of the Philippine Army of the 19th Infantry Battalion (IB) based in Brgy. Gubang. This was in response to the request of 1st Lt. Marvin Caspillo, the commanding officer of the 19th IB, who had initial talks with Early 7 Marketing to supply cassava. He and selected members of the battalion attended the Cassava Farmers Forum held at PhilRootcrops on March 19. The plan is to utilize the military reservation areas in Matalom and Tomas Opus (19 and 23 has., respectively), for cassava production. This is viewed as avenue for peacekeeping and livelihoods. The training was followed by site assessments of the identified military reservation areas.

The second training was conducted on April 27- 29, 2009 at the Aurora State College of Technology (ASCOT) in Baler, Aurora as part of the VSU-ASCOT collaborative project particularly for the institutional development of ASCOT. The training was participated by 17 RDE staff and was part of the capacity building activities. It focused on two major topics: process documentation which was delivered by Dr. Editha G. Cagasan, and qualitative research approach focusing on focused group discussion (FGD) by Dr. Rotacio S. Gravoso. The participants were grouped into four and they really put their hearts into the FGD exercises. Outputs were then presented to the group, and were reportedly continued after the training. Acknowledgement of positive impact was shown by further request for related trainings.

A cassava training was integrated into the Mindoro Marinduque Romblon Palawan (MIMAROPA) educational tour last June 16-18. Six visitors came

from MIMAROPA or Region IV-B: two from DA Regional Research Division Office based in Marawoy, Lipa City; two from LGU Romblon; and the other two from Romblon State College. Their interest is on the cassava production technology because MIMAROPA Research Division received project funds from DA-GMA corn program for the establishment of a cassava nursery in Odiongan, Romblon. The training modules exposed the participants to lectures on nursery cultural management practices; and pest management. They also had tours to different PhilRootcrops facilities such as the Processing Laboratory, the Tissue Culture Laboratory and the Central Analytical Services Laboratory, the Center's experimental areas and the cassava production areas in Brgy. Sumanga, Ormoc City. They were amazed to see the cassava plantation in Ormoc City at different growth stages. They also had the opportunity to see the actual process of making cassava chippy.

Biotechnology Workshops for the Media and the Researchers

The Philippine Root Crop Research and Training Center – Visayas State University (PhilRootcrops-VSU), the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA), the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture–Biotechnology Information Center (SEARCA-BIC), the Program for Biosafety Systems (PBS), and the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD) jointly sponsored biotechnology workshops for media practitioners and researchers at the Sabin Resort Hotel in Ormoc City last May 12-14.

The first workshop on May 12 was mainly directed to media practitioners particularly in the Visayas-Mindanao areas. This workshop on “Creating Public Awareness and Understanding of Biotech Crops” oriented 14 broadcast

and print media practitioners on the role of biotechnology in addressing food security. The basics of crop biotechnology and biosafety regulatory mechanisms injected in lectures and workshops helped the participants clearly understand the science and how to impart biotechnology information to target audiences.

The media workshop was also attended by researchers and extensionists from State Colleges and Universities (SCUs) such as the Visayas State University (VSU), the Southern Leyte State University (SLSU), the Eastern Visayas State University (EVSU), University of San Carlos (USC) in Cebu as well as line agencies of the government like the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) and the Institutional Biotechnology Committee (IBC) of Region 8.

A two-day training-workshop on “Risk Assessment and Social Marketing of Biotechnology Products in Eastern Visayas” followed on May 13-14, 2009. Twenty five researchers and five media men were updated on the basics on biotechnology and its applications, biosafety protocol, monitoring, risk assessment and social marketing of biotech products.

The resource persons in both workshops are highly acclaimed experts from ISAAA, SEARCA-BIC, PCARRD, University of the Philippines at Los Baños (UPLB), VSU and the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Basically, these workshops are part of the PhilRootcrops-VSU and Institute of Plant Breeding-UPLB initiatives to address the sweetpotato virus disease in a project entitled “Development of Sweetpotato Varieties Resistant to

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Con't Cassava farmers forum

Pongos (Early 7 proprietor) and others who participated in the program which are now planted with the high yielding varieties such as Lakan, Rayong 5, KU-50 and Rayong 72.

In order to disseminate and expand this program, a Cassava Farmers' Forum was held at PhilRootcrops on the 19th of March, 2009. The participants in the said forum were 17 development facilitators (DFs) and staff of Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR); 16 selected farmers from different municipalities of Leyte like Baybay down to Matalom on the western side and from Lapaz, Abuyog and Mahaplag on the eastern side; 15 members of the Alpha and Bravo Company of the 19th Infantry Battalion (IB) of the Philippine Army (PA) based in Gubang, Baybay, Leyte; four representatives from Early 7, two from LandBank; two from Gawad Kalinga based in Ormoc City; and some PhilRootcrops staff. The DFs

of DAR will act as the front liners of the dissemination activities among the agrarian reform communities (ARCs) whose areas qualify for commercial cassava production. The criteria for this include quality of applied land, strength of the organization, and leadership.

The sessions included a video presentation prepared by SMC and Early 7 on the industrial prospects of cassava, and the Leyte industry program, respectively. An open forum followed where a number of issues and queries were taken. The LandBank Technology Promotion Center representative, Mr. Manuel B. Buenaventura, also presented financial assistance windows. A number got interested; and requested for planting materials, and immediate training on cassava production technology as they were ready to start. Other ARC's requested for site validation to ensure that the areas are suitable for cassava production.

Other interested groups are the military personnel of the 19th IB of PA. According to 1st Lt. Marvin Caspillo, the commanding officer, they are willing to commit about 20 hectares of their military reservation area in Matalom and 10 hectares in Tomas Opus to this program. They are interested in the program as a vehicle for peace and livelihood opportunities which can be offered to the rebel returnees.

Con't Trip to ASCOT

Research and Extension, decided to hold a farmers' field day during the harvesting of the sweetpotato trial in August. Dr. Angara also requested the VSU team to conduct another round of training for qualitative research approaches considering the very positive response of the staff. He also invited the team to put up an exhibit for the 400th founding anniversary of Balser on August 19.

PhilRootcrops Anniversary Month Pictorials



Ribbon cutting during the March 2 opening program



Briefing at the Photo Gallery Exhibit



Students visitors from CVISCAFT, Calapi



Brainstorming of the SP training participants



Center's staff at the famous Panglao Island in Bohol



Invited VSU staff during the "Rootcrops Rock" activity



Jumping session of the Center's staff at the Chocolate Hills

Farmer Cooperator Recognized on 70th Birthday

Mr. Teofilo P. Magos, more popularly known as Nong Pilo, has been a long time active partner of PhilRootcrops in the conduct of farm trials on rootcrops particularly sweetpotato or *camote*. He celebrated his 70th birthday on March 6, 2009 with a party held in his residence in Barangay Rawis, Dulag, Leyte. It was attended by his family, relatives and friends. The Center's staff did not miss the opportunity to join him in this important milestone in his life when they received the invitation from Nong Pilo. PhilRootcrops Director, Dr. Julieta R. Roa together with Dr. Rolinda T. Sanico, Dr. Editha G. Cagasan and Mr. Ulysses Cagasan went to Dulag to personally greet him. Nong Pilo was all smiles but teary-eyed because he was very glad that

representatives from the Center came to celebrate with him.

During the short program wherein his children gave tribute to him, Dr. Roa presented him a certificate of recognition from PhilRootcrops. The citation in the certificate awarded to him reads as follows: "for a lifetime achievement as the *camote* farmer-trader which secured the role of Dulag as a major *camote* growing area in the Province of Leyte. He led farmers in supplying *camote* to various initiatives, acted as resource person in *camote* workshops and served as an active cooperator of PhilRootcrops on-farm trials". Nong Pilo was on the verge of tears when he received the certificate and expressed his sincere gratitude for the recognition given to him.



Mr. Teofilo P. Magos is teary-eyed as he and his wife pose with the certificate of appreciation given by PhilRootcrops during his 70th birthday.

New Approved Projects for PhilRootcrops

Two new projects of PhilRootcrops were approved for implementation in June 2009 by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) with a total budget of P1,032,960. These projects are the "Potential of Rootcrops as Source of Electrical Energy" with Dr. Daniel Leslie S. Tan, as the project leader; and the "Suitability of Different Sweetpotato Varieties for Flakes Production" with Dr. Julie D. Tan, as project leader. These projects will have a duration of 2 years, and are expected to produce the following outputs: microbial fuel cell (MFC) from rootcrop waste water and the characterization of isolates present in the rootcrop waste water for Project 1. On the other hand, Project 2 is expected to produce a small-scale drum dryer for the production of sweetpotato flakes and come-up with the best sweetpotato variety suited for flakes production.

Con't Biotechnology workshops ...

Sweetpotato Virus Disease Complex (SPFMV) Through Agrobacterium-Mediated Transformation" that was started in 2006. Knowledge and understanding of the science of biotechnology, and its role in addressing agriculture problems are critical to facilitate application or adoption of research outputs including that for the sweetpotato virus-resistant biotech research.

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