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Potato Systems Research and Training Center Inc.
a project of Sunrise Potato Systems Institute

Chronicles of Transformation

Be Proactive



SPSI's Role in Empowering Communities: Accomplishments and Opportunities

Sunrise Potato Systems Institute (SPSI) and PSRTC have over the last 4 years shed much light on the challenges and the major constraints for the mountain farmers around Mt. Kanlaon. The thematic strategy of doing applied research for the development of improved technologies and crop varieties has driven our success. For farmers to access these new technologies, inputs are required. Mountain farmers are generally resource poor. Provision of crop inputs on credit by PSRTC has catalyzed adoption by farmers of these innovations. The use of the "Farmers Fund" now serves over 230 farm families. Marketing of these products based on quality levels to upscale and local markets in some major cities is now started as another way to support our farmers.

Looking ahead what are the challenges, or rather the opportunities?

- ♦ The programs of PSRTC must become self funded through entrepreneurship by both the PSRTC as well as the farm (Canlaon Potatoes & Flowers) on which it is based. Farmers must see benefits from the technologies and pay for them. Starting in 2021, SPSI will decrease the funding for PSRTC by 20% per year until the end of 2025, when the program is to be totally self sufficient from local sources. Entrepreneurship will be a significant part of the strategy going forward.
- ♦ PSRTC will share its technologies and model with other interested mountainous communities in other regions of the Philippines. This will be a significant task for the PSRTC team over the remaining 6 years with SPSI direct involvement.

This annual newsletter highlights so many impactful stories! I am truly grateful for how God orchestrated the events over the past more than 35 years in our lives to bring us to this point. Our community empowerment work along with all our academic/ research partners and Canlaon Bible Community Church (CBCC) –Lampara with Compassion International-Philippines has made this all possible.

– Peter VanderZaag, PhD.

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PSRTC's Response to the Need for Quality Planting Materials

Canlaon City was a significant potato growing area in the Philippines's Central Visayas Region. Potato production has drastically declined in the last 25 years primarily due to lack of quality planting material, bacterial wilt infection of soil and seed tubers, and tuber moth damage during storage. Farmers have been forced to use locally produced potatoes as seed tubers for decades resulting in serious degeneration that has almost wiped out local potato production. For sweet potatoes, which is a major crop being grown by farmers, the variety "C1" a white skinned and white flesh variety was the most popular variety. Farmers observed decrease in yields in the past 5-7 years due to overall degeneration. C1 has been grown for more than 20 years without replacing it with clean planting materials. This 2 examples, clearly showed the importance of clean planting materials for vegetatively propagated crops such as Potatoes and Sweet Potatoes.

Quality planting material of a good and adapted variety is a crucial factor for optimum yield. One of PSRTC's major activities is production of clean planting materials of potato and sweet potato through tissue culture and rapid multiplication techniques (RMT). Both methods can fill the gap to provide the needed germplasm through production of pathogen free planting materials, uniformity of planting materials and its availability at specified time.

Tissue culture is a process whereby a plant or a part of a plant are being grown in aseptic conditions under favorable conditions. In-vitro grown planting materials are planted in the greenhouse as mother plants which serves as source of apical cuttings. Depending on the crop and variety, new cuttings are available after 1 to 3 weeks which can then be established as new mother plants. The process is almost the same for potato and sweet potato. However, utilization of cuttings obtained from mother plants are different.

For potatoes, rooted apical cuttings can be used for production of G0 mini tubers which can be planted in the field for seed potato production or directly into table potato production. In the case of sweet potato, cuttings can be planted in the nursery to produce more cuttings or the cuttings can be directly planted in the field for root production.

The tissue culture and rapid multiplication techniques are central to the PSRTC program. Virus free tissue culture planting materials of our selected varieties of both crops were obtained from Northern Philippine Root Crop Research and Training Center—Benguet State University, La Trinidad Benguet. One clone of "Choi" was made pathogen free and indexed by the Bureau of Plant Industry, Baguio City. The mass multiplication is being done by PSRTC for farmers. As a result, new sweet potato varieties are now being grown by farmers in Canlaon City and other neighboring cities/municipalities.

Sweet Potato Production is a Profitable Business Enterprise: A Testimonial

“GO HOME AND PLANT KAMOTE!”

This is the usual expression for a student that failed, an athlete that did not perform well or a person losing the business. It implies that one is more productive in planting sweet potato (kamote). The term “kamote” or “nangamote” is being used when a student struggled or failed.



Levi Sarona with Sweet Potato Cuttings from PSRTC

I am not sure why Filipinos use kamote to refer to someone as dumb or poor. Maybe because kamote has long been considered as a poor man’s crop and planting kamote or laboring on the soil for that matter was a lowly undertaking, and was only for simpletons and those with no higher goals.

Levi Sarona and other farmers in Canlaon City are proving otherwise, as planting sweet potato is a profitable business. Levi and his wife Judgi from Nagalao, San Carlos City have 2 children. Levi has farmed for 25 years and grown potato, onions, cabbage, and sweet potato, growing at least 3 hectares of sweet potato per cropping season. They prefer to focus on sweet potato cultivation because of its low production cost. There is a sure income regardless of fluctuating prices. Sweet potato can be stored, hence damage is low compared to other vegetables that are highly perishable. He was able to buy a multicab, construct a house, and provide for his family needs out of his income from sweet potato.

PSRTC has contributed to the increase of sweet potato production through the introduction of new and improved germplasm. The evaluation of sweet potato clones for socio-economic acceptability was a huge success as PSRTC together with the farmers from different locations were able to identify good sweet potato varieties that were highly accepted in the market. From 17 varieties evaluated since 2016, 5 varieties (Benia Zuma, Immitlog, Haponita, Benquita, NSIC SP 30) were selected by farmers in 2018. In 2019, the selection was reduced to 3 (Immitlog, Haponita, and NSIC30). In the last quarter of 2019, more farmers are planting the clones, Immitlog and Haponita. These 2 varieties are mass multiplied and sold in Canlaon, Dumaguete and Bacolod markets. Remnants of some varieties are still being grown by farmers. Special thanks to Northern Philippine Root Crops and Training Center-Benquet State University for sharing this germplasm with PSRTC.

Levi, one of the farmer cooperators of PSRTC in the germplasm trials, was able to identify promising varieties. On June 26, 2018, he purchased 2 trays of mother plants each of the varieties Benia Zuma, Haponita, and Immitlog. Additional 5 trays of NSIC 30 from the greenhouse and 2 sacks of cuttings from the field were purchased on August 4, 2018. Each tray of mother plants cost Php 200 while cuttings from the field cost Php 200 per sack. He multiplied the different varieties in his field. Finally, he selected Immitlog and Haponita. He is also growing another clone he called “Miss Philippines” and other clones which he thinks could be a cross from the different clones. This claim is not yet validated.

Before he sold his sweet potato in Uptown through a Sales Agent. Since, August 2019, he goes with PSRTC’s marketing officer, Giovanni Nemenio to Dumaguete every Friday to sell his sweet potato directly to consumers. His income has significantly increased because he no longer pay 10% commission to Sales Agent for his products and he gets a higher price in Dumaguete.

Levi’s experience shows how a high yielding variety of sweet potato can increase farm income and profits. Planting kamote is profitable. Likewise, PSRTC has significantly helped farmers through evaluation of new varieties, provision of clean planting materials and assistance in marketing of their products.

PSRTC Propelling Community Empowerment in Farming Communities

Community empowerment is a systematic process of building capacities and assets at the individual and community level. Empowered community has the ability to ensure that their strategic needs (health, education, and livelihood) are met. PSRTC's goal in working with communities is stimulating empowerment by providing the different tools for them to become self-sufficient and is able to utilize various resources to provide their own needs. It serves as catalyst for development or progress in a community. To achieve this goal, PSRTC promotes agribusiness enterprise through separate funding windows. PSRTC encourages partnership to provide technical and other forms of support so that partner organizations or beneficiaries will become profitable and sustainable while providing support to other farmers or beneficiaries. Noteworthy are PSRTC's intervention on the activities, programs and working together for a common good, such as in the support provided to programs being implemented by Canlaon Potatoes and Flowers Co. (CP&F) and the Pula Potatoes and Vegetable Farmers Association (PPVFA).

Canlaon Potatoes and Flowers Co.

Canlaon Potatoes and Flowers Co. (CP&F) considers itself "An Agribusiness with a heart". Aside from serving as a demo farm for PSRTC, it also introduced programs that promote the welfare of farm workers. CP&F, with PSRTC technical support, initiated Share Cropping and Prosperity Fund for the workers. For the Share Cropping Scheme, CP&F designates specific area in the farm to farm workers to work on after duty hours. Farm inputs are provided by CP&F while the labor are provided by the workers. Cost of planting materials and marketing cost are shared and the net profit are also shared (50:50). This arrangement provides added income to the workers aside from their daily wage.

The Prosperity fund initiated on May 28, 2018 is a credit facility to help farm workers improve economically, meet their emergency needs and encourage them to save. All of the 13 workers and their families had benefited from the program. The loaned amount was used for school supplies, labor expenses for their own farms, purchase of animals (pigs, cows, goats, carabao), house repair, capital for business, deposit for purchase of motorcycle, purchase of computer and cellphone and to meet emergency needs. This initiative is very helpful to improve their stature in life. Loans ranged from Php 2,000 to 19,500. Weekly payment ranged from 109 -500/week depending on the amount of loan and the capacity to pay. Savings is 16-28 pesos per week. Savings can be withdrawn anytime when needed.

One outstanding example is the couple Atie and Nimfa. They have 2 small children. Atie is a sharecropper for 3 years. On his 1st year, he planted lettuce, and from his share he was able to construct a house of his own. Other crops planted were pole snap beans, broccoli, and sweet corn. Each cropping season, he has added income from the share crop of which he was able to buy 2 pigs and other family needs. Recently, he borrowed from the Prosperity Fund to construct an extension for their house.

Allan is a church worker and a part time worker in the farm. His wife works full time. They have 5 children and the 2 older children have families of their own. The 3 siblings are students and share cropping provides additional income to augment family needs. He is a sharecropper for 2 years and had grown pole snap beans, cabbage, lettuce and sweet corn. The extra income enable him to buy farm implements which he used for custom work with other farmers. From his Prosperity Fund, he was able to buy a carabao and part of the proceeds, he was able to use for down payment for motorcycle.

Poloy a sharecropper for 1 year had planted lettuce and yellow corn. His added income was used to buy sacks of rice and other family needs. His loan in the prosperity fund was used for house renovation.

PSRTC Propelling Community Empowerment in Farming Communities



**Regie Demonte Verde,
CPF Farm Manager
and
family-beneficiaries
of Prosperity Fund**





Pula Potatoes and Vegetable Farmers Association



Pula Potatoes and Vegetable Farmers Association (PPVFA) was awarded as the Most Outstanding Sectoral Representative by Dumaguete Cathedral Credit Cooperative (DCCCO) Multipurpose Cooperative on March 8, 2020 at Dumaguete City. This is in recognition of PPVFA's endearing programs and support to its members. From the initial membership of 27 farmers during its founding in December 12, 2016, the organization's membership has increased to 217 by March 2020. Aside from the numerical growth, its services has also increased through the years. In addition, the members availed of the Farmers Fund, trainings and other programs initiated by PSRTC. Likewise, the center also serves as home base of the organization.



PPVFA Officers During the Regular Officers Meeting



Rodolfo Dulla,
PPVFA President



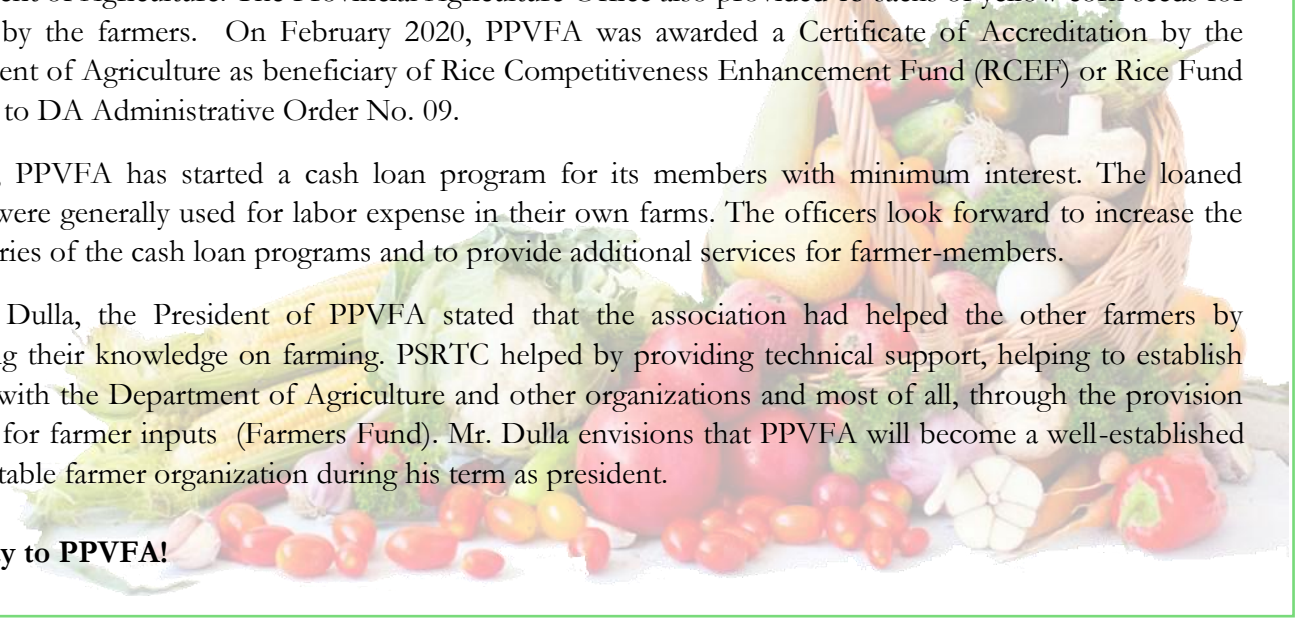
PPVFA Officers and Adviser During DCCCO's
Awarding Ceremony

Agribusiness venture within the organization and linkages was encouraged. As of December 2019, PPVFA has a Gross Income of 122,961.00 with a Net Income of One Hundred Six Thousand and Eighty Two Pesos (Php 106,082.00) from membership fee, monthly dues, custom work, and proceeds from Rice Seeds that were provided by the Department of Agriculture thru the Canlaon City Agriculture Office. The organization closely work with the government and is a recipient of 5 cows, 1 floating tiller, and 1 rice reaper from the Department of Agriculture. The Provincial Agriculture Office also provided 15 sacks of yellow corn seeds for planting by the farmers. On February 2020, PPVFA was awarded a Certificate of Accreditation by the Department of Agriculture as beneficiary of Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) or Rice Fund pursuant to DA Administrative Order No. 09.

Recently, PPVFA has started a cash loan program for its members with minimum interest. The loaned amount were generally used for labor expense in their own farms. The officers look forward to increase the beneficiaries of the cash loan programs and to provide additional services for farmer-members.

Rodolfo Dulla, the President of PPVFA stated that the association had helped the other farmers by improving their knowledge on farming. PSRTC helped by providing technical support, helping to establish linkages with the Department of Agriculture and other organizations and most of all, through the provision of credit for farmer inputs (Farmers Fund). Mr. Dulla envisions that PPVFA will become a well-established and reputable farmer organization during his term as president.

Mabuhay to PPVFA!



Private Credit for Farm Improved Level Production

PSRTC introduced the “Farmers Fund” as a credit facility for farm inputs. Farmers call this fund: “Canadian”. The center itself is also commonly called “Canadian” recognizing, the people behind the program, the Canadians that visited Pula and initiated the programs that enhanced farm productivity and profitability.

The Farmers Fund addresses the farmer’s need for capital for farm inputs. This is a non-collateral loan available to farmers with minimal interest to address the lack of capital to purchase farm inputs and other needs. Initial capital was provided by Peter and Carla VanderZaag in June 2017. Additional funds were provided by SPSI Board members: Larry & Anne Kell and Ralph and Yvonne Kikkert in 2018.

PSRTC was able to increase the Asset value of the Farmers Fund, from Php125,162 in 2017, to Php 1,612,340 as of December 31, 2019. There are now 239 farmers that have benefited from the program wherein the number of loans made per farmer is up to 6 times. Majority of loans were for fertilizer and other farm inputs such as seeds and pesticides. Others were for potato seed, pipes, sprayer, set up of diffuse light store for seeds in Cabagtasan, purchase of utensils for food processing and other needs. The fund was also used to finance the marketing of flowers, seed and table potatoes.

This August 2019, the Farmers Fund provided initial capital to the Marketing Program. The farmer beneficiaries has expanded from Barangay Pula, Canlaon City and Sitio Cabagtasan, Brgy Codcod, San Carlos City into other areas such as Barangay Malaiba, Barangay Linothangan, Barangay Mabigo of Canlaon City and Barangay Quezon and Barangay Nagalao of San Carlos City. The program dubbed by farmers as “Canadian” has gained wide scale popularity among farmers. Two examples are as follows:



Jovanie Ortiz with fertilizer from
“Farmers Fund”

1. The Ortiz Brothers of Sitio Minabuntod, Barangay Pula. In the past, the area where they lived was forested but the forest cover gradually decreased due to increased population and conversion into farmlands. The land owned by their parents was subdivided for the 5 siblings who established their respected families in the area. The previous generation practiced Kaingin, a slash and burn type of cultivation. Now, they do not have wood even to be used for firewood, hence they have to buy firewood or use a gas stove.

Their parents do not use fertilizer and pesticides for growing crops. However, after the typhoon, maybe sometime in 1969, there was severe loss of topsoil brought about by the strong rain. Afterwards, they observed that crops were poor, hence the need to apply fertilizer. They minimized this problem by practicing contour farming.

Farming is the only source of income for all their families. Previously, they are dependent on financiers (also Sales Agent) for their farming needs and also for emergency as sickness, etc. During lean months, they also borrow to purchase rice and other needs. At harvest, their products are given to financiers who market them. From the gross sales, they deduct 10% as commission plus hauling and other marketing costs. From the net income, they deduct all the debts. Normally, at the end, they have to borrow again to be able to plant a new crop.

(continued on next page...)

Private Credit for Farm Improved Level Production (continued...)

It is good now that there is a “Canadian”, so they still have money after harvest and sales of their product. There are still instances that they borrow from the financier to buy rice or emergency needs. This time they decided to plant malabar spinach or basella, locally known as “alugbati”, because they can harvest twice a week and the income can augment for family needs while waiting for their main crops.

The brothers have a large tract of land that were uncultivated before. When they started to avail of the “Canadian”, their income increased as all farm inputs were provided. They only repay for the production expenses at harvest. Their increased income was rolled back to finance the uncultivated areas. Now, they have other farmers that work on their farms which they finance partly from the Farmers Fund, as more or less they can provide some of the farm inputs.

They also said that some farmers prefer to stay with the financier rather than the “Canadian” for “Utang na Loob”. This is a deep sense of gratitude wherein farmer feels indebted to the financier, because the financier provides not only farm inputs but also other needs of the family.

2. Rodolfo Dulla. Mr. Dulla served Barangay Pula for more than 20 years as Barangay Council and 3-term Barangay Captain. According to him, about 90% of the farmers have increased their farm profitability because of the availability of credit facility for farm inputs. Personally, he had borrowed 3 times from the fund. He tried to pay immediately after harvest to help sustain the operation and to be able to help more farmers.

Gradually, the Farmers Fund has helped reduced the dependence on financiers/traders. Farmers reduced their borrowings from the financiers. They either stop or reduce the amount borrowed from them. In his case, he used to borrow Thirty Thousand Pesos (Php 30,000) per cropping. Now, he only borrow Five Thousand Pesos (Php 5,000). This was done mainly to ensure that his product will have priority when sold by the financier. Financiers prioritize farmers that owe them money. This is some sort of “Suki system” or patronage system.

The financier also serves as Sales Agent and market their products. It is hard for a farmer like him to sell his own products because he has no contacts or buyers. Whereas, with the sales agent, marketing is facilitated and sometimes, he has buyers already before harvest time. However, he looks forward to a day where he can directly market his products for a higher income.

For Mr. Dulla, the Farmers Fund has many beneficial effects that goes beyond the farm where crops are grown but extend likewise to the different aspects of community life as farm families are becoming more prosperous with less indebtedness.

Jessica Nemeno providing the requested farm inputs



Rodolfo Dulla in his corn field



Creating Market Opportunities for Farmers

Agricultural marketing involves moving an agricultural product from the farm to the consumer. This involves the planning, organizing, directing and handling of agricultural produce in such a way as to satisfy farmers, intermediaries and consumers. Marketing is one of the major problems for farmers. In the Canlaon setting, marketing of farm products normally goes through a sales agent who demands a commission of 10% plus determines the farm gate price, which fluctuates widely based on supply and demand. If the products are unsold, they are left to rot and dumped as garbage, and the farmer bear all the losses. Hence, having alternative market outlets beyond Canlaon City has a great potential to increase opportunities for farmers to market their products at better prices.

The Marketing Program of PSRTC is still at infancy. It was made possible through the generous support of Irene Haupt and Raymonde Boucher from Victoria, Canada who supported the purchase of a truck to transport farmers products. Their initiative was supported by friends and the Seniors Group from their church who likewise contributed to this new venture. The Hino truck was purchased on August 20, 2019 and the marketing program started by last week of August 2019.

The goal is to increase farm income by reducing marketing cost by eliminating the sales agent. PSRTC also strives to improve the quality of the products being marketed to consumer by teaching farmers the proper sorting and selection of products intended for the target city market, initially in Tabo sa PAO Market, Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental. PSRTC is a member of the Tabo Market Association that was organized by the Provincial Agriculture Office for farmers to be able to sell their products directly to consumers. Additionally, farm products especially sweet potato, are also delivered to Bacolod, Talisay and Silay City in Negros Occidental and shipped by boat to Siquijor province. New clients are coming to PSRTC based on the good reports that are spreading.

Farmers are the backbone for food supply in the midst of this Pandemic of COVID 19. As a commitment, the marketing of produce to Dumaguete and Siquijor was on-going in spite of travel restrictions and the anxiety caused by this situation. A Travel Permit was requested, so that PSRTC can perform its function to provide food to its consumers and be able to market products of farmers. May God provide strength to all farmers to be able to continue providing food for the population and be able to do their utmost contribution to minimize the impact of this pandemic on the now beleaguered population. May God heal the Nations and People.



Launching of the Marketing Program



Truck loaded with farm produce for
Dumaguete City

SENIOR UNIVERSITY BSC STUDENTS: ON THE JOB TRAINING AT PSRTC

On-the-job training (OJT) allows student to learn in real working environment and experience working in an institution. This provides valuable experiences in preparation for their future career.

PSRTC is one of the best sites where students can do hands on trainings in various aspects of crop management. Karen Kay Sarao and Epe Hisona from Foundation University, Dumaguete shared their experiences to their professors and fellow students. They learned knowledge and techniques from the laboratory, greenhouse and field. They successfully did tissue culture and rapid multiplication techniques for potato, sweet potato and some species of ornamental plants. They did soil media preparation, soil sterilization and making carbonized rice hull to be used in the greenhouse for sowing cabbage, broccoli, and lettuce. Likewise, transplanted and harvested some crops in the field. In the field, they experienced how to drive a tractor, operate a dual rice/corn thresher, bush cutter, install irrigation pipes, and the use of power spray.

Their experience was not limited to the requirements for passing a course, rather it was an avenue for a working relationship between the 2 institutions. PSRTC staff visited Foundation University to provide assistance on their tissue culture laboratory. Likewise, the 2 students continued to link with PSRTC's marketing program.

Hence, the OJT gained not only agricultural experience but also a FAMILY!



A Year in PSRTC

Regional Outstanding Gawad Saka Corn Farmer

Victoria Demonte Verde, Director of PSRTC was selected as 2019 Regional Outstanding Gawad Saka Corn Farmer by the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office-7 and Regional Agricultural Fishery Council-7. The awarding ceremony was held on September 10, 2019 at Cebu City.



Certificate of Learning Site by the Agricultural Training Institute

Canlaon Potatoes and Flowers Co. (CP&F) was accredited as a Learning Site by the Agricultural Training Institute with Certificate Number: LSA-2020 -01-023 effective from January 16, 2020 to January 10, 2025. The learning site will be jointly operated by CP&F and PSRTC. CP&F will serve as a Demo farm while PSRTC will do the research and community development work for farming communities. This recognition will strengthen the training and education component of the center. The awarding of certificate of accreditation was held in Bohol on January 30, 2020.

Field day at Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI), La Granja, La Carlota City

Three PSRTC staff attended the Field day organized by Bureau of Plant Industry, La Granja, La Carlota City on July 24, 2019. Demonstration on recent development in agricultural production was done. There was also a showcase of different crop varieties that are being multiplied in the center.



Big brother and small brother extension model on farm tourism.

Vickie Joy Demonte Verde and Victoria Demonte Verde participated in this training on April 23-25, 2019 at ATI-7 Training Complex, Cabawan District, Tagbilaran City, Bohol. The training showcased several farmers and learning centers, who are successful in their trade. Sharing their success stories, unique technologies, the principles they adhere to and problem solving helped all participants see opportunities for their enterprises.

Certificate of Accreditation by the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Canlaon City

PSRTC Inc. was awarded a Certificate of Accreditation by the City of Canlaon for satisfactorily complying with the requirements for accreditation as per Local Government Code and promulgated by the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Memorandum Circular No. 2019-72 dated March 20, 2019. This accreditation would allow PSRTC, a non-government organization to become a partner with the LGU in programs of mutual interest.



A Year in PSRTC



New Partnership/Linkages

PSRTC sought to establish partnership with different organizations to address shared objectives and be able to collectively focus to make lasting progress on issues related to education, community and economic development. Partnership will be able to utilize resources from each partner organization effectively at reasonable cost. PSRTC's new partners for 2019 are the following:

a. **Dumaguete Cathedral Credit Cooperative (DCCCO) Multipurpose Cooperative.** PSRTC partners with DCCCO to encourage members of Pula Potatoes and Vegetables Farmers Association and PSRTC to save and invest and also avail of other services of a cooperative such as savings and loans for agricultural and other purposes. DCCCO conducted a financial literacy seminar for the farmers at PSRTC.



b. **La Carlota City College, La Carlota City.** A Memorandum of Agreement was signed on November 27, 2019. The agreement was for students' research and training; and possible collaborative research and other activities of mutual interest.

c. **Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC).** A Memorandum of Agreement was signed on November 29, 2019. PCIC provides crop insurance coverage to crops, livestock, non-crop agricultural assets and life insurance to farmers. PSRTC will act as Underwriter for PCIC to extend Palay and Corn Crops, Credit and Life Term and as Solicitor for Livestock, High Value Crops, Non-crop Agri Assets Insurance services to farmers. This additional services that will be extended by PSRTC will surely benefit farmers.



d. **Carlos Hilado Memorial State College.** A letter was submitted to the College President Dr. Renato M. Sorolla thru Mary Jane Grace B. Nacionales, Director for Extension and Community Services on November 11, 2019 for possible collaboration. Initial trial on processing sweet potato into different products was done. The partnership will focus on processing of sweet potato.



A Year in PSRTC



e. **Technological University of the Philippines.** The collaboration is on processing sweet potato into flour. The plan is first to manually produce flour from the different sweet potato varieties. Then, on how to mechanize the process and a prototype will be made to try if it will work for mass production.



f. **Foundation University.** A Memorandum of Agreement was signed regarding "On-the-Job Training" for senior students in the BSc Agriculture program, which started from December 2019.

g. **Tripartite Industrial Peace Council of Negros Oriental (TIPC).** This organization aims to promote industrial peace and unity in the province by organizing a council composed of labor, management of private and business organizations and government. On December 3, 2019, they invited all organizations concerned for an awareness campaign and to organize a Canlaon City Tripartite Industrial Peace Council (CCTIPC). There was an election for Board of Trustees for the management and labor sector and set of officers for CCTIPC. Vickie was elected as member of the Board of Trustee for the Management Sector and the Treasurer for the CCTIPC.



h. **Philippines Carabao Center.** An orientation was conducted by the Philippine Carabao Center based at La Granja, La Carlota City on April 11, 2019.

Existing linkages/partnership are: Canlaon Bible Community Church; Northern Philippine Root Crops Research and Training Center - Benguet State University; City Agriculture Office; Provincial Agriculture Office; Bureau of Plant Industry; Energy Development Corporation with Villa Iowa Farmers Association; F&C Agro Sales; Negros Oriental State University; Visayas State University; Department of Trade and Industry; and Regional Organic Agriculture Confederation.

Basic training on tissue culture

A tissue culture training for banana, strawberry, and chrysanthemum was conducted at Benguet State University, La Trinidad, Benguet on August 12-16, 2019, and attended by Vickie Joy Demonteverde. The training involved a theoretical and hands-on learning experience in culture media preparation, plant establishment and propagation in the laboratory, the transfer and acclimatization of the plants to the green house, and the sanitation protocols involved in each step.

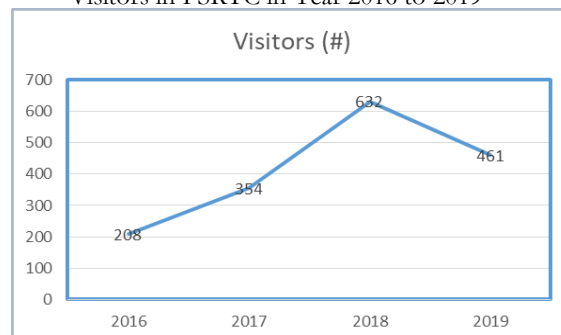


A Year in PSRTC

Field Trips and Visits

There were a total of 461 visitors to PSRTC this 2019. This excludes the farmers that came as beneficiaries of the Farmer's Fund. The visitors were from the government offices, private companies, chemical companies, academe, farmers, students, and other visitors who come for inquiry or visit. There were 4 field trips (1 Grade VII students, 2 farmers group, trainees from OISCA); and farmer's meetings and orientation.

Visitors in PSRTC in Year 2016 to 2019



Since 2016, PSRTC has been a site to visit in Canlaon City. In 2016, most of the visitors were trainees from different parts of Canlaon City, Sitio Cabagtas or Guihulngan City with only one field trip from Barangay Hinakpan, Guihulngan City. In 2017, there were lot of trainings conducted with 3 field trips from farmers of Vallehermoso, Dumaguete City, and Guihulngan City. In 2018, there were meetings mostly for group formation and team building activities for PPVFA and CPF workers. There were 4 field trips (High School students, Farmer group, Graduate Students, Sponsors from Hawaii). Finally, in 2019, there was an increase in visits by government and non- government organizations while seminars/meetings were mostly with partner agencies.

Education for holistic development of farmers and their children.

Bible Studies are regularly held for farm workers and beneficiaries of Compassion International-Philippines. A total of 120 bible studies were conducted for different groups (adult, teens and kids of sponsored families and families of farm workers) an with an average attendance of 48 per week. In other times, Bible Studies for the beneficiaries were held in Canlaon Bible Community Church such as Nutrition Month and other special activities. The beneficiaries were also recipient of the education, medical and dental checkup and participants in the Summer Camp. The Pula Cluster joined the Thanksgiving Service on December 22, 2019.



Sharing the PSRTC experience to other countries.

PSRTC extends support to other partner organizations that are new SPSI Centers. First, is with Tumama that works with poor mountain farmers in Zhaotong, Yunnan, China. The second is with the Chakma and Tripura Tribes of Chittagong Hilltracts in Bangladesh. Vickie of PSRTC went to Bangladesh on October to assist in the planning and development of a "Community Empowerment Program in the Underprivileged Hilltracts People". The program was approved by SPSI and was implemented this January 2020.



Be Proactive

Change is Constant. Globally and locally, society and our lifestyles continue to change. The recent Pandemic of Covid 19 has resulted in drastic unprecedented change of global economy and the way we live our individual lives. We are now in quarantine and every one is ordered to stay home. While the future is unknown and we do not know exactly what will happen next, I can only speculate. Surely, this pandemic will leave an impact on many, if not all, facets of society - on how we learn, how we work, and how we socialize and communicate and how we do business. It is a challenge, we need to face individually and as a society.

As a PSRTC Team in service to the agricultural community and the society as a whole, we need to be proactive. We need to anticipate future problems, needs, or changes so we can be responsive and still deliver on our mandate.

Farmers will feed all of society and are to be the stewards of a large portion of our planet's ecosystems. PSRTC needs to continually reevaluate and improve technologies that can adapt to change for both nature, and consumer needs. We must also understand and share that our individual responsibility and commitment goes way beyond our farms, crops and livestock. We play a vital role in our communities and society. Farming has the power to shape and change our society. Hence, farmers like us, have to be entrepreneurial, industrious, versatile and determined to be able to respond to the ever changing and challenging world.

- Victoria Demonteverde, Ed.D.

BE PROACTIVE

"If you're proactive, you don't have to wait for circumstances or other people to create perspective expanding experiences. You can consciously create your own"

-Stephen Covey

Let's be PROACTIVE....

Be solution—focused

Be accountable

Be honest

Be humble

Be consistent

Be with the right people

Be the best of what we can be!



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*To: SPSI, Partners,
Supporters and Farmers*

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT!

From: PSRTC Family