

FPA holds stakeholder consultation on PROPOSED PIP REGISTRATION GUIDELINES

Words by Angelo Bugarin | Photos by Maria Theresa Oliveros



TO INFORM THE public on the content of the proposed guidelines and to seek their inputs on the subject to improve the efficiency, transparency and public involvement in this new policy, the Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA) held a "Stakeholder Consultation on the Proposed Guidelines for the Registration of Plant-Incorporated Protectants (PIPs) in Pest-Protected Plants (PPPs) Derived from Modern Biotechnology" on September 14, 2016 at the Board Room, 4th Floor, FPA Building, BAI Compound,

Diliman, Quezon City.

The promulgation of the aforesaid guidelines is in compliance with the DOST-DA-DENR-DOH-DILG Joint Department Circular (JDC) No. 1, Series of 2016, titled "Rules and Regulations for the Research and Development, Handling and Use of Genetically-Modified Plant and Plan Products Derived from the Use of Modern Biotechnology." Various stakeholders from fellow government agencies, private industry sectors, academe, and

non-government organizations (NGOs) have attended the said public consultation.

FPA Executive Director Norlito R. Gicana officially commenced the program with an opening remarks, followed by Ms. Jerolet C. Sahagun, Chief of the FPA-Laboratory Services Division (LSD), who discussed the historical background on how the FPA was able to come up with the PIP guidelines. Then, Ms. Sharmaine D. Tecson, Chemist III of the FPA-LSD,

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FPA-LSD Chief Ms. Jerolet C. Sahagun and FPA Exec. Dir. Norlito R. Gicana

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better of us. In an organization, this intolerance may be in the form of wanting to gain recognition, of bragging rights, of wanting to make an impression, and perhaps pursue a culture of fear. Whatever it may be, it won't be any good if everybody hates us.

Courtesy and respect are not esoteric principles that require a doctorate degree to understand. In fact, it is innate in us, as human beings, to be considerate and understanding of our fellows. Consideration, caring and courtesy are the three Cs of leadership. Let's be polite with each other. We would not have survived had we not become social beings, cooperating with one another to hunt prey — in prehistoric times — or to achieve that highly ambitious performance objective ---in modern times. Many of us may have forgotten that. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Life is short, but there is always time for courtesy." # *(This article is featured in this issue as per the directive of Exec. Dir. Norlito R. Gicana.)*

FPA ATTENDS 2016 *Smart Agriculture Forum*

Words and Photos by Suzettie Alcaide

ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2016, the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) organized the Smart Agriculture Forum to strengthen awareness and appreciation on investing in research and development to achieve the greatest crop yield, quality and production in the midst of the changing environment and ecological conditions. With the theme "Food Security Challenges in the Face of Climate Change and ASEAN Integration", the forum was attended by delegates from key government agencies headed by the Department of Agriculture (DA); local government units (LGUs); non-government organizations (NGOs); academic and research institutions; private companies involved in agricultural inputs, equipment and financial support; and international organizations.

The Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA) participated in the

forum which was held at the SMX Convention Center, Mall of Asia, Pasay City. The Agency was represented by FPA Executive Director Norlito R. Gicana together with Ms. Aida V. Ordas, Chief of the FPA-Pesticide Regulations Division (PRD) and Ms. Suzettie M. Alcaide, Senior Agriculturist of the FPA-Fertilizer Regulations Division (FRD).

Sec. Ernesto Pernia, Director General of the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) and Secretary for Socio-Economic Planning, was the keynote speaker of the event. He emphasized that the private sector is the engine for economic development and that there is a need to build strong partnerships with the said sector to advance Philippine agriculture. He also mentioned that in 2005, the Philippines ranked second in ASEAN, next to Thailand, in terms of budget share in agriculture. However, the growth rate is 0.13%, which indicates

that the budget allocated for agriculture is not translated into growth. He stressed that public and private sectors can work hand-in-hand to create opportunities in developing higher value chains, creating jobs, and providing a weather index crop insurance.

Afterwards, the forum, which was divided into three sessions, formally started. For the first session, the first speaker was no other than Sen. Francis Pangilinan. He discussed the legislative agenda to promote Philippine agriculture. According to him, the average annual income of a farmer is P23, 000.00, which is deemed unjust as Filipino farmers are continuously living in poverty. He said that in order for the economy to move forward, there is a need to address the issues of the agriculture industry.

Sen. Pangilinan proceeded to discuss a few bills that are being proposed relative to the improvement of the Philippine agriculture sector. First was Sagip-Saka, a bill to direct the government to purchase from competitive agricultural cooperatives. There is also a bill being proposed to separate aquatic resources and fisheries from agriculture, which aims to address poverty in coastal areas because fisher folks remain to be the poorest of the poor. He also discussed another bill, which aims

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Sen. Francis Pangilinan talks about the legislative agenda to promote Philippine agriculture.

FPA CONDUCTS NATIONAL ORIENTATION ON ISO AND MSP



"THE ESSENCE OF education is to learn continuously and to open ourselves to the new technologies of today." These were the inspiring words of Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA) Executive Director Norlito R. Gicana during the opening ceremony of the "Orientation on ISO 9001:2008 Quality Management System (QMS) and FPA Approved Merit Selection Plan (MSP)" on September 21, 2016.

Organized by the FPA-Field Operations Coordinating Unit (FOCU), FPA-Fertilizer Regulations Division (FRD) and FPA-Finance and Administrative Division (FAD), the activity aimed to shed light on what the ISO 9001:2008 is all about prior to application for ISO certification and to orient the entire Agency on the recently approved merit selection plan and system of ranking positions for 2016. Held at the FPA Central Office in Quezon City, the two-day activity was participated by officials and staff from the Agency's Central and Regional Offices nationwide.

ISO 9001:2008 QMS

The seminar on ISO was led by a group of experts from the Competitiveness Bureau (CB) and National Competitiveness Council (NCC) of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). Lead resource speaker Mr. Ariel Faraon, who was

introduced by FPA-FRD Chief Ms. Julieta B. Lansangan, is the project manager and lead program consultant of the Project Repeal: The Philippine Red Tape Challenge.

What is ISO 9001? According to Mr. Faraon's presentation, "it is a quality management system that can be adopted by any kind of organization...the system is focused towards the meeting of customer requirements and enhancing customer satisfaction." With over a million certificates issued globally, ISO 9001 is currently being instigated in 175 countries.

As a system designed to constantly enhance agency performance, the ISO 9001:2008 Quality Management System can eradicate bad culture, uncertainties, malicious practices, inconsistencies, errors, problems, inefficiencies and ineffectiveness. "Planning is the key," said Mr. Faraon as he emphasized that the ISO 9001 necessitates agencies to plan what to do; follow that plan; monitor, measure and analyse the execution of the plan; and improve the plan.

The ISO 9001 is based on the following quality management principles: 1) customer focus, 2) leadership, 3) involvement of people, 4) process approach, 5) system approach to management, 6) continual improvement, 7)

factual approach to decision making, and 8) mutual beneficial supplier relationship. Based on Mr. Faraon's presentation, "it is recommended that the principles be used by management to guide organizations to improve performance...the principles enable an organization to determine the right things to do and

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FPA Exec. Dir. Norlito R. Gicana



Mr. Ariel Faraon, Project Manager of Project Repeal

FPA JOINS R.A.C.E. TO SERVE FUN RUN IN SPIRIT OF **malasakit**

#MALASAKITISM – THIS WAS the one-word hashtag tweeted and posted by around 15,000 runners who participated in the 2016 R. A. C. E. (Responsive, Accessible, Courteous and Effective) to Serve Fun Run VI of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) on September 3, 2016 at the Quirino Grandstand, Manila.

Held in celebration of the 116th Philippine Civil Service Anniversary (PCSA) themed “*Sigaw ng Lingkod Bayani: Malasakit para sa Taumbayan, Kapwa, Kawani At Kalikasan*”, the rain-or-shine fun run was one of the many activities that the CSC has lined up to uphold compassion with action relative to public service, health, environment, and the Filipino public who are the principal clients of the government.

The fun run was participated by officials and employees of several government agencies, their family members, as well as private

individuals who opted to join the celebration. Spearheaded by the CSC-National Capital Region (NCR), the event was graced by Cariza “Aiza” Seguerra, Chairperson of the National Youth Commission (NYC) and Luis Alfonso Revilla and Rommel Niño Cañaleta of the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) team Mahindra Enforcers.

In light of this celebration, the Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA) actively joined the fun run by sending about 30 participants who competed for the 3-kilometer, 5-kilometer and 10-kilometer categories starting at 5:15 o’clock AM onwards.

According to the CSC, this annual activity is one of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives with the objective to raise funds for the *Pondong Pamanang Lingkod Bayani* (PLBi) program. This program benefits the families of public officials and

employees who passed away in line of duty or in the performance of their duties and responsibilities by providing financial assistance and scholarships.

The fun run concluded at around 9:00 o’clock AM and at the finish line, the participants congratulated each other for a successful activity. “Runners will not only promote *malasakit* for their health, but also *malasakit* for deserving public servants and the families they left behind,” the CSC stated.

Aside from the fun run, the CSC also conducted other equally relevant activities such as the Honor Awards Program (HAP) Rites for the 2016 Presidential *Lingkod Bayan, Dangal ng Bayan*, and CSC *Pagasa* Awardees; the Government Choral Competition; and the Coastal Clean-up Campaign and Mangrove Planting. #

The FPA staff who participated in the fun run posed for a group photo at the end of the activity.



IN FOCUS:

Production of the FPA Video Primer

On August 11, 2016, the video production crew of Mr. Christian Cabaluna visited the Region 3 with the FPA team led by Ms. Digna M. De Leon, FPA-PMID Chief and Mr. Antonio G. Cruz, Jr., Supervising Agriculturist of the FPA-Regional Office 3 to video-document the processes in the plantation, warehouse and dealer for the production of the FPA video primer.



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to the provisions of the Omnibus Rules Implementing Book V of Executive Order No. 292.

"The objectives are 1) to establish a system that is characterized by strict observance of the merit, fitness and equality principle in the selection of the employees for the appointment to positions on the basis of their qualifications and competence to perform the duties of the position to be filled and 2) to create equal opportunities for employment to all qualified and competent persons to enter the government service and for career advancement in the Agency," said Ms. Guntan.

Also discussed during the seminar were the phases of MSP (i.e., publication and posting and selection process); composition of the Personnel Selection Board (PSB); individual assessment criteria for original appointment and promotion appointment; system of ranking

positions; and personnel complement.

Other Matters

The "Guidelines on the Grant of FY 2016 Performance-Based Bonus (PBB)" was presented by FPA-FAD Chief Ms. Elizabeth T. Ramiro. The new features of the FY 2016 PBB are as follows: 1) harmonized implementation of the PBB with EO 201; 2) priority programs based on five KRAs of EO 43, OP Planning Tool, and EODB targets shall be suspended for FY 2016 PBB only; 3) PBB rates of individuals shall depend on the performance rating of the bureau/delivery unit where they belong; and 4) third level officials should receive at least "Satisfactory" rating under the CESPES.

The "FPA FY 2017 Budget" was presented by Ms. Maria Theresa B. Oliveros, Administrative Officer V of the FPA-FAD. Based on her report, the FPA's total budget proposal for FY 2017 is P112.34 million. "In FY 2016,

the budget approved was P79.39 million [and as] compared to the FY 2017 budget per National Expenditure Program (NEP) of P112.34 million, there was a total increase of P32.949 million or a 42% increase from this year's budget," as stated in the presentation.

Mr. Antonio G. Cruz, Jr., Supervising Agriculturist of the FPA-Regional Office 3, delivered a brief closing remarks to officially cap off the activity. He said that everyone is aiming for the certification of ISO 9001:2008 and that the QMS will be aligned with the Agency's SPMS. He added that once the FPA becomes ISO-certified, it will prove that the Agency is providing good and quality service. With the increase of the FPA budget for 2017, he said that this reflects that the Agency is working hard towards the fulfilment of its objectives and mandate and he congratulated all the officials and staff who contributed to this milestone. #

Happy Birthday and Farewell, Sir NRG!

On September 23, 2016, the FPA celebrated the 65th birthday of Executive Director Norlito R. Gicana as well as his retirement after 43 years in government service.



INFO CAMPAIGN ON MANILA BAY project held in Rizal

Words by Suzettie Alcaide, Jose Jim Blanco & Elizabeth Perlado

Photos by Leila Denisse Padilla



The participants posed for a group photo with the FPA team at the end of the activity.



The FPA team posed for a group photo with Engr. Jonathan Argueza (leftmost) and Mayor Kathrine Robles (2nd from left).

ON AUGUST 25, 2016, a team from the Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA) organized an information dissemination campaign in the Municipality of Baras, Rizal in compliance with the Department of Agriculture (DA) Mandamus and Supreme Court (SC) Order relative to the 2011-2015 Medium Term Operational Plan for Manila Bay Coastal Strategy (OPMBCS).

In line with the SC Decision under G.R. No. 171947, the FPA together with several government agencies are enjoined to clean, rehabilitate and preserve the Manila Bay by monitoring and eliminating industrial and agricultural wastes.

The FPA Team was composed of the FPA-Fertilizer Regulations Division (FRD) staff including Ms. Suzettie M. Alcaide, Senior Agriculturist and Ms. Maria Regina Lagance, Agriculturist II and the FPA-Field Operations Coordinating Unit (FOCU) staff including Mr. Jose Jim B. Blanco, Special Investigator and Officer-in-Charge for Rizal province and Ms. Elizabeth P. Perlado, Economic Researcher.

A total of 50 participants attended the said activity, representing the

19 farmers/fisherfolk associations focused on growing high-value commercial crops, livestock, rice and vegetables. It was held in coordination with the Baras Municipal Agricultural Office (MAO) led by Engr. Jonathan B. Argueza, Supervising Agriculturist. He was assisted by Mr. Samson Argueza, Farm Worker I, who served as the activity host and other MAO staff.

Baras Mayor Hon. Kathrine B. Robles graced the activity and acknowledged the effort of the FPA in educating the farmers on the conservation and preservation of Manila Bay and other natural resources. "This [project] will benefit not only the present but the future generation as well," she said.

The objective of the Mandamus is to lessen pollution loading in Manila Bay by 2017 in order to classify and maintain its water as Class SB, which is safe for fishing, swimming and conducting other recreational activities. Hence, the FPA within its mandate holds trainings on the proper use and handling of fertilizers and pesticides and their effects to the community and environment.

For this specific campaign, the FPA team conducted a series of presentations which tackled the following matters: 1) overview of the Manila Bay clean-up project and rationale of the information dissemination campaign; 2) situational updates on the status of the Manila Bay; 3) proper waste segregation; and 4) safe and judicious use of fertilizer and pesticide.

To better inform and educate the participants, relevant information materials such as *Gabay sa Tamang Paggamit ng Abono at Pestisidyo* brochures, *Lingap sa Masa* comics, and *Tulong-tulong sa Manila Bay Itaguyod: Programang Pangkapaligiran at Pangkinabukasan* booklets were distributed.

Towards the end of the campaign, Mr. Manuel Golla, Municipal Agriculture and Fisheries Council (MAFC) President, delivered a brief closing remarks expressing his and the participants' gratitude toward FPA for conducting this activity and committed that their learnings will be extended to all other farmers and fisherfolk in the municipality. #



The participants are composed of farmers and fishermen representing 19 associations in Baras, Rizal.



Mr. Nestor Ian Fiedalan
Project Repeal

understand why they are doing them.”

The ISO 9001:2008’s structure, as discussed by Mr. Nestor Ian Fiedalan of the Project Repeal, has eight Clauses that need to be fulfilled. These are: 1) scope, 2) normative references, 3) terms and definitions, 4) quality management system, 5) management responsibility, 6) resource management, 7) product realization and 8) measurement, analysis and improvement. According to the presentation, “Clauses 1, 2 and 3 are introductory statements and not part of the auditable requirements...the applicable and auditable requirements are those specified in Clauses 4 to 8.”

An important requirement of the ISO under Clause 4 is the quality manual, which includes the scope of the Quality Management System; justifiable exclusions; documented procedures or references; and description of interaction between processes. “The quality manual should have clear objectives and outcomes...the FPA already has a system which will be packaged and contained in this manual,” explained Mr. Faraon. Other general requirements include quality policy; quality objectives; documented procedures and records; and



Ms. Kahlil Christa De Silva
Project Repeal

documents and records necessary for effective planning, operation and control.

The latest edition of this system is ISO 9001:2015, which has a more complex set of requirements than the 2008 edition. Mr. Fiedalan briefly discussed the ten clauses of ISO 9001:2015, which include: 1) scope, 2) normative references, 3) terms and definitions, 4) context of the organization, 5) leadership, 6) planning, 7) support, 8) operations, 9) performance evaluations and 10) improvement.

Certification of ISO 9001 is being conducted by independent certification bodies and an ISO-certified organization receives a renewable three-year certificate. Within this period, the organization will be audited for certification, surveillance and re-certification. “If after three months, non-conformities were not corrected (via the corrective action procedure) by the client, the ISO 9001 certificate will be revoked by the certifying body,” as stated in the presentation.

Towards the end of the seminar, Ms. Kahlil Christa De Silva of the Project Repeal discussed what their initiative is all about. With the strategy to crowdsource proposals, establish repeal system and cut



Ms. Josephine S. Guntan, Administrative Officer V of FPA-FAD

regulatory costs, the Project Repeal is aimed at “reduced cost of compliance for people and businesses; savings for the economy, measured in PhP millions annually”. Malaysia, Indonesia, Russia, New Zealand, Germany and many other countries are implementing the same initiative.

The scope of Project Repeal covers: 1) amendment [addition, deletion and/or change of certain provisions of a rule or regulation], 2) consolidation [integration of multiple, similar regulations into one legal document], 3) delisting [removal of invalid rules and regulations from an agency’s website and roster of active issuances] and 4) repeal [full elimination of a rule/issuance because it has been deemed no longer necessary]. “At the end of the day, the goal is to simplify processes,” said Ms. De Silva.

Merit Selection Plan

Ms. Josephine S. Guntan, Administrative Officer V of FPA-FAD, led the presentation on “Orientation on the FPA Approved Merit Selection Plan-System of Ranking Positions (MSP-SRP) 2016”. Approved by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) on August 15, 2016, the FPA MSP-SRP is pursuant

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Ms. Elizabeth T. Ramiro,
FPA-FAD Chief



Ms. Maria Theresa B. Oliveros,
Administrative Officer V of FPA-FAD



Mr. Antonio G. Cruz, Jr., Supervising Agriculturist of FPA-Regional Office 3

NEWS GRAB: Making time for courtesy & respect

Words by Bong R. Osorio (COMMONNESS, Business Life, The Philippine Star)

BASIC COURTESY AND good manners need not be the exclusive claim of public figures, celebrities and the rich. In fact, in most everyday transactions, common courtesy could go a long way towards reducing stress and improving efficiency. Within an organization, such civilities smoothen out what otherwise could be common sources of tension among staff, between the boss and employees, and even among its executives.

The father of modern management, Peter Drucker, believed in the power of politeness. "Good manners are the lubricating oil of organizations." Bad manners, lack of civility and poor taste bear negatively on the morale and efficiency of any organization. Whether we look at a private corporation, a non-government organization, a government agency or the operations of a sari-sari store or karinderia, having a kind word and the patience in dealing with other people can spell the difference between attaining goals and going kaput.

Underlying the call for good manners is really a quest for that highly elusive concept of respect. Nowadays, there's very little of it going around. Sure, respect may be something a person earns along the way in terms of one's abilities; competence on the job; or the way one carries oneself. But respect for the person as a human being is the most basic of our values as moral and spiritual beings. In our haste to pursue whatever goals we may have set our minds to, we have forgotten that every person we come into contact with deserves, at the very least, compassion and understanding; never mind if we have little time left in our organization to try to make a big

impression and leave some kind of legacy after our time is done.

American journalist Judith Martin, better known as Miss Manners, has been crusading against the lack of etiquette in our daily lives, particularly in the work environment. Through her syndicated column, she has tried to put back civility in interpersonal relationships. I wonder how Miss Manners would react to the boorishness and crass behavior that abound around us today. Some leaders think being an SOB is part of their job description; they may have the smarts and think themselves superior to their constituents in whatever level, but that kind of attitude creates an environment of fear and loathing among people.

Having a bastos leader can be quite a painful experience. Badmouthing and berating people and adversaries in public, naming and shaming, yelling and cussing at anyone within earshot, putting down and insulting anyone who tries to put in a word or two of retort, can be more excruciating than having to put up with a slave master with a whip. Unfortunately, there are many such leaders, especially in our once feudal culture where "bossmanship" comes with the right to oppress or to scare.

Tragically, these same boors are, most likely labeled righteous, sincere in their beliefs that they are doing the right thing. I know of one gentleman boss, for instance, who has a perverse view of the world and his organization. While practically everybody in his group puts up with his tantrums and antics, he has not been exactly lovable, and just about everyone has nothing but contempt for him. Yet, he sees himself as the fatherly "savior" of his people who, he

believed, would have had nowhere to go had he not gotten them to join his team.

In another instance, one senior executive voiced out his opinion of his staff, and admitted that he didn't think they were up to appreciating and understanding the topics in a seminar; to think that his staff was composed of lawyers and engineers. Without respect, this executive's goals for his organization are doomed.

Etiquette is simply a result of behavior shaped by good breeding. It means growing up in a home nurtured by love, trust and respect. Clearly, kabastusan at home and at the office betrays the kind of upbringing these people had. This uncouth behavior is not only true of leaders, but of fellow workers and colleagues as well. There are many horror stories flooding organizational grapevines about them.

What does it take to be civil and respectful of other people? Will doing so detract from the pace and efficiency of a transaction or an interpersonal relationship? Will it prevent an organization from achieving its objectives? Drucker believes in its power to improve an organization, not only because it "lubricates" relationships, but also because it makes it more efficient. Don't you wish our leaders heed Drucker and not just pay lip service to his lessons?

We are known to be a hospitable people, very accommodating and generally shy. To our guests and visitors, we bend over backwards just to make them feel at home. Yet among ourselves, we forget that we deserve just as much hospitality — and courtesy — as our guests, if not more so. Somehow, our bigotry gets the

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presented the details of the proposed guidelines for PIP registration and Ms. Sheena Thea A. Alcantara, Chemist II of the FPA-LSD, facilitated the open forum.

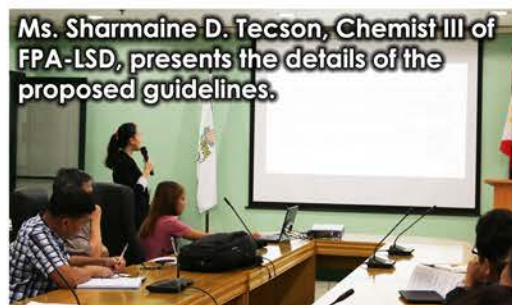
During the open forum, there were several issues and concerns raised by various stakeholders which include: a) applicability of the proposed guidelines if the plant is not grown in the country and only the edible by-products is brought in the country; b) criteria or basis for approval and disapproval of PIP registration aside from compliance to the documentary requirements; c) criteria or basis for granting full or conditional PIP registration; d) coverage of the proposed guidelines to include "pesticidal substances"

derived from the use of modern biotechnology that are not plant-incorporated to cover future innovations in biotechnology; e) alignment of the validity of PIP registration to that of Biosafety Permit being issued by the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) which is five (5) years; f) allowing data of PIP testing generated from abroad in the absence of local data; g) creation of Biotechnology Policy and Technical Advisory Committee (BPTAC); and h) timeline for the approval and issuance of this PIP guidelines. Dir. Gicana and Ms. Sahagun answered and clarified all of these issues and concerns raised by the stakeholders.

After the open forum, Dir. Gicana gave thanks to all the participants for attending and actively participating in the discussion. He hoped that all participants were enlightened on the Agency's responses relative to the various issues tackled during the open forum. He assured the participants that all their concerns will be addressed and included in the proposed guidelines. He also informed the group that after the stakeholder consultation, the guidelines will be subjected to final review of the Policy and Technical Advisory Team wherein their recommendations will be presented to the FPA Board for approval. #



Stakeholders from various sectors actively express their ideas and insights on the proposed PIP registration guidelines.



Ms. Sharmaine D. Tecson, Chemist III of FPA-LSD, presents the details of the proposed guidelines.



Ms. Sheena Thea A. Alcantara, Chemist II of FPA-LSD, facilitates the open forum.

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- WHO:** All FPA staff in the Central and Regional Offices are welcome to write.
- WHAT:** You can contribute news article/s (with photos) about relevant and newsworthy FPA-related activity/ies in your region/division.
- WHEN:** Your contributions can be published every quarter.
- HOW:** Send us your contribution/s anytime through e-mail at fpacentral77@gmail.com and you will be informed if your contribution/s is/are selected to be published in the quarterly newsletter. **Thank you!**

to alleviate poverty in far flung areas and to reduce food wastes due to lack of storage and transport facilities by mandating companies to donate good quality food for the poor. Sen. Pangilinan emphasized that in order to ensure food security, farmers and fisher folks have to be secured first.

The second speaker was Dr. Noel Padre, Director of the DA-Policy Research Service. He talked about the DA initiatives to prepare the Philippine agriculture sector for ASEAN integration. Some of which are: 1) strengthening regulatory services and enhancing product standards to ensure product quality and safety; 2) improving rural infrastructure to enhance productivity, connectivity and integration of production areas to markets; and 3) promoting diversification of production and livelihood options and 4) expanding markets like intensification of sustainable organic agriculture development.

The last speaker for the first session was Dr. Fernando Bernardo of the Coalition for Agriculture Modernization in the Philippines (CAMP). His topic was about food security in the Philippines, its problems as well as its solutions. He said that the problem in achieving constant availability and sufficiency of food arises from several reasons such as high population rate, frequent typhoons, peace and order problems, socio-economic problems in rice production, and problems in

shipment of agricultural supplies and food in the country. He stressed that the key solution lies in vital policy advocacies and strategies and strong partnerships of national government, provincial government, regional state universities and colleges (SUCs), and private sector to revitalize agricultural extension.

He also presented the following policy advocacies: 1) convert Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) to Bureau of Agricultural Extension (BAE) with the functions of providing national policies and guidelines in developing proposals and equitable co-financing for viable annual extension programs; 2) sustain adequate annual budget; and 3) strengthen regional SUCs and PhilRice regional branch stations to develop site-specific technologies and to provide strong support to provincial extension programs.

The second session focused on the innovative technologies and improvements in the value supply chain to achieve inclusive growth. The speakers of this session were Mr. Christopher Pile of Yara Fertilizers Philippines; Ms. Cindy Lim of Syngenta Asia Pacific; Ms. Jenny Costelloe of Grow Asia; Mr. Mashhood Siddiqui of Syngenta Philippines; Mr. Michael Caballes of Allied Botanical Corporation; Ms. Ruth Novales of Nestlé Philippines; and Mr. Recher Ondap of Bayer Philippines, Inc.

Mr. Pile presented their company's Crop Nutrition Approach aimed at increasing food production in the Philippines. It has three components: 1) crop knowledge; 2) application competence; and 3) portfolio combination. Ms. Lim, on the other hand, discussed the private sector's initiatives in achieving food security and sustainable agriculture. She emphasized that the key for sustainable agriculture is the unity of the government, aid organizations, NGOs and businesses in providing overall support for the farmers. This is supported by Ms. Costellae as she presented the multi-stakeholder approach, which aims to improve farmers' lives.

Mr. Ondap presented the "Market Linkage Program: A Rice Value Chain Innovation", which focused on four components: consumer, retailer, miller and farmer. He emphasized that it is important to recognize the role of each value chain component in establishing a sustainable rice market that will respond to the demand of the country's growing population. This program fosters partnership and provides support in strengthening the knowledge, skills, resources and experiences of the whole value chain. Meanwhile, Mr. Siddiqui presented the holistic approach to optimize corn productivity, where he emphasized that in order to attain high production, it is important to start right and plant right through the following: 1) proper land preparation, 2) right seed from the start for better seed germination, 3) feeding the crops and not the weeds, and 4) protecting and boosting yield.

Afterwards, Mr. Caballes presented about the seed innovations to improve the value chain of vegetables. Lastly, Ms. Novales discussed the "Nescafe Plan - A look at Public-Private Partnership in the Agriculture Sector", a program which aims to improve farmers' income through increase in yield. The elements of this program are the 1) provision of good planting materials, 2) sustained technical training and 3) provision of ready market.

Presentations in the third session focused on empowering farmers and fishermen through cooperative organizations or corporate farming; capacity building; and technical and financial support. The first speaker for this session is Sen. Cynthia Villar, who discussed relevant capacity programs to promote agribusiness. Ms. Consolacion Galang, Congressional Committee Secretary for Agriculture and Food, talked about congressional initiatives on enhancing agricultural productivity. Afterwards, Cong. Arthur Yap presented about the crop insurance program, which aims to assist farmers in increasing their income amidst climate change. Other honourable guests such as Dr. Roberto Acosta, Dr. Zenaida Sumalde and Mr. Simeon Cuyson graced the said forum.#

FPA Newswatch Production

Digna De Leon
ADVISER

Leila Denisse Padilla
**WRITER, EDITOR, LAYOUT,
PHOTOGRAPHY & PRODUCTION**

Suzettie Alcaide
Mark John Gandecila
Maria Theresa Oliveros
PHOTOGRAPHY

Suzettie Alcaide
Jose Jim Blanco
Angelo Bugarin
Elizabeth Perlado
NEWS CONTRIBUTORS