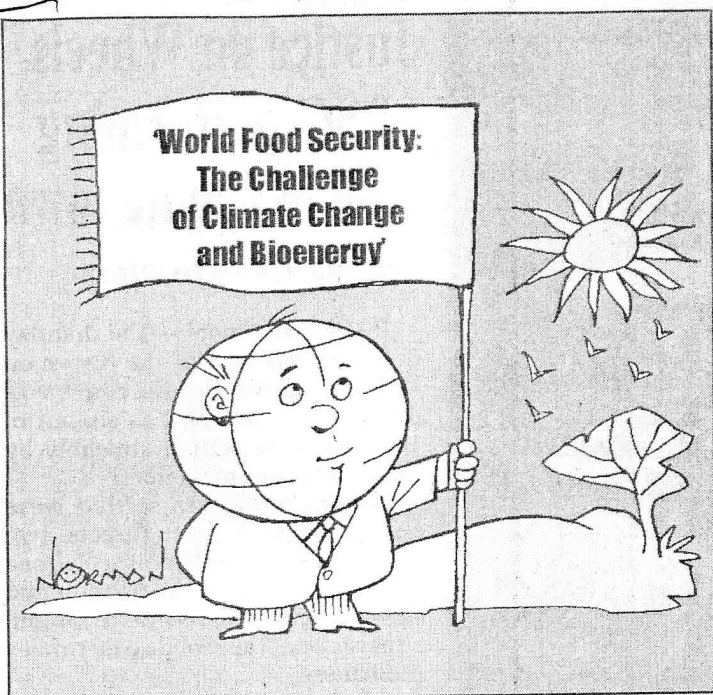


Thursday, October 16, 2008 **11**



World Food Day

IN an effort to expand global awareness of challenges to food security and high food prices, World Food Day is celebrated on October 16 each year.

The theme for 2008 is "World Food Security: The Challenge of Climate Change and Bioenergy." It highlights the need to reduce the effects of increasingly severe climate patterns on agriculture and the impact of biofuels on food production.

The implications of soaring food prices and related issues were considered at the High-Level Conference on World Food Security involving the United Nations Secretary General, 181 governments, and 41 heads of state or government that took place at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) headquarters on June, 2008.

Last December, 2007, the FAO launched an Initiative on Soaring Food Prices to help farmers in some of the poorest countries through the provision of seeds, fertilizers, and tools they need to boost agricultural production for the current planting season through

2009.

The right to food is a basic human right and yet there are close to a billion people who suffer from chronic hunger. And the figure has been increasing since the beginning of the millennium. Food supplies are under greater pressure today than ever before. Prices of wheat as well as milk are rising mainly due to weather fluctuations that affect harvests, the switch to biofuels, and the increasing demand from new and emerging markets. In addition, millions of people around the world are suffering from food shortages and unaffordable food prices and hunger primarily due to industrial farming.

In the latest food summit held among the G8 leaders in Japan, it was suggested that while there is no single solution to the crisis, there are steps to facilitate efforts to solve the current world food predicament, including increasing investments in research and development on ecological and climate change flexible farming, stopping the

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WORLD FOOD

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funding for genetically engineered crops, phasing out the most toxic chemicals in agriculture, eliminating environmentally destruc-

tive agricultural subsidies, protecting domestic food production through trade agreements, and dropping targets that have been set

to increase the ratio of bio-fuels used in transport.

The number of under-nourished people is currently estimated at more than 850 million. Hunger is not an inescapable destiny, and it can be eliminated by sensible policies.

MESSAGES



Malacañan Palace
Manila



As we double our efforts to make food available to all Filipino families, we are confronted with serious problems brought about by climate change and global warming.

The resources from our land and waters are slowly being depleted as erratic weather patterns make our erstwhile rich agricultural lands and fishing grounds to produce less and less.

These problems have resulted to soaring food prices which have, in effect, caused a temporary national crisis affecting our people.

But we remain undaunted. The Philippine government is committed to overcome these difficulties, which is why we launched the FIELDS program early this year. F-I-E-L-D-S, which stands for Fertilizer, Irrigation, Education and Extension, Loans and Credits, Dryers and other Postharvest Facilities, and Seed Distribution, is a package of assistance for farmers, implemented by the Department of Agriculture and whose aim is to make food abundant, accessible and affordable.

This year, as we once again celebrate the World Food Day, let us reflect on what we can do to help the government solve, or at least mitigate, the effects of global warming and provide our people with inexpensive and nutritious food and ultimately wipe out poverty.

Together, we can prevail over these challenges and attain world food security. Mabuhay!

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO



Department of Agriculture



Agriculture remains as important today as 10,000 years ago when it was born. Its significant role is highlighted by the grim fact that currently the world is populated by more than 923 million undernourished people, mostly children, who are poor, hungry and malnourished.

And in recent years, we have been feeling the effects of climate change, distorting cropping patterns, initiating more unpredictable weather conditions, dumping more rain and flood, and on the other extreme, long dry spell and drought — which altogether reduce farm and fishery production, and subsequently incomes of small farmers, fishers and rural folk.

This is in fact the gist and message of this year's World Food Day celebration — "World Food Security: The Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy."

Indeed, our food production and supply is at risk with the changing global climate. And that is why early on we have been vigorously implementing a comprehensive food security and sufficiency program, which President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo herself has aptly dubbed as FIELDS — which stands for Fertilizer, Irrigation and other rural infrastructure, Education and extension services, Loans, Dryers and other post harvest facilities, and Seeds. It aims to sustain the agriculture industry's high growth and guarantee long-term food security and sufficiency in the face of the unprecedented global food crisis.

We, therefore call on all concerned stakeholders to be vigilant and pro-active in mitigating the adverse effects of global warming on our farms, fishing grounds and ecosystem, in general.

Once again, a meaningful World Food Day celebration to all!

ATTY. ARTHUR C. YAP
Secretary



Food and Agriculture Organization



On behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), I would like to congratulate the Department of Agriculture and its attached agencies and bureaus for successfully leading the observance of the 2008 World Food Day in the Philippines.

Each year starting in 1981 on 16 October, the day on which FAO was founded in 1945, the world observes the World Food Day to provide an occasion to once again highlight the plight of 923 million undernourished people in the world. Most of them live in rural areas where their main source of income is from the agricultural sector.

This year's World Food Day theme is "World Food Security: the challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy", the same theme of the High-Level Conference on World Food Security hosted by FAO from 3-5 June 2008. Delegates from 181 countries met in Rome - including 43 Heads of State and Government and over 100 ministers - and participated in the High-Level Conference. Over 5,000 people attended this event, which brought the food crisis to the forefront of the global development agenda. The Conference reaffirmed the need to produce more and therefore to invest more in agriculture. There is indeed a need to address the growing food demand due to increasing populations, economic progress in emerging countries and competition in the bioenergy sector when supply is affected by climate change and declining stocks.

Truly, World Food Day assumed greater meaning at our present time, as rapidly rising food prices risk increasing the number of hungry people. On this World Food Day 2008, I invite you to promote the Declaration of the High-Level Conference on World Food Security, mobilising all stakeholders: national government, international institutions, agricultural professional organizations, civil society, the academe, and the private sector for its realization. More than ever, the future of this planet depends on our capacity to sustain the development of agriculture and the conservation of its natural resources.

Kazuyuki Tsurumi
KAZUYUKI TSURUMI

FAO Representative in the Philippines



Department of Agriculture



As a result of global warming and climate change, we face today difficulties on food supply and its increasing costs. And even as we continue to pull our efforts together to fight hunger and poverty, we are prevented from attaining our target towards food sufficiency as of present time.

And so for the past years, the Philippine government had launched and duly implemented projects to mitigate and provide solutions for food problems.

The Department of Agriculture thru the directive of Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is now pursuing the FIELDS program towards a more stable food sector for our country.

With policies and projects now in place, we see our targets being realized day by day. And as our capability to produce food for the entire country has improved, we are ensured of a healthy and nourished nation in the years to come.

This year, as we join the world in the celebration of the World Food Day 2008 with the theme, World Food Security: the challenges of climate change and bioenergy, we commit ourselves once more to pursue our dreams of feeding the entire Filipino population, carry on with our efforts in making food available to all, and eradicate poverty altogether.

Sama-sama, labanan natin ang kahirapan.

Salvador S. Salacup
SALVADOR S. SALACUP
Assistant Secretary & Chairman, National
Steering Committee, World Food Day

Metro Manila

Tuesday, October 21, 2008 5



Department of Agriculture

World Food Day 2008 Celebrations



"World Food Security: The Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy."

Yap kicks off World Food Day Celebration

Secretary Arthur Yap of the Department of Agriculture (DA) has led the kick-off celebration in Bohol for this year's "World Food Day" through a series of activities highlighting the Arroyo administration's centerpiece program to guarantee food security over the medium term amid the incessant threats to global farm productivity by climate change.

This year's theme for World Food Day is "World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Food Security." Yap said the weeklong activities lined up by the DA to commemorate World Food Day will help enable the DA "to educate Filipinos on the effects of climate change and diminishing energy sources on global food security and the programs that the government is implementing through the FIELDS initiative to shield the country from the negative impact of these threats."

FIELDS—President Arroyo's centerpiece program for agriculture that she unveiled during the DA-hosted National Food Summit last April—stands for Fertilizers, Irrigation and other rural infrastructure, Education and extension services for farmers, Loans, Dryers and other postharvest facilities, and Seeds.

Joining Yap in the various activities in Bohol were Kazuyuki Tsurumi, the country representative of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), lawmakers and local chief executives of Bohol.

For the FIELDS aspect of the World Food Day celebration, the activities included the launching of the Organic Fertilizer Production-Tamang Abono Program, signing of a FAO-DA food security initiative by Yap and Tsurumi; and turnover of irrigation rehabilitation projects, multipurpose drying pavements; rice and vegetable seeds; and fund assistance from the Agricultural Credit and Policy Council (ACPC) to beneficiaries; all in Lila town.

After the Lila and Dimiao events, Yap proceeded to this city to deliver keynote speeches at the Provincial Poverty Reduction Fair 2008 at the Bohol Cultural Center and at the World Food Day Celebration program at the Bohol Agriculture Promotion Center (APC).

In both speaking engagements, Yap had underscored the need for the country to further boost farm productivity in the face of tightening global food supplies, brought about by climate change and other global factors, and the urgency for all sectors not only in Bohol but in the rest of the country to work together in sustaining the growth momentum of Philippine agriculture and fisheries.

After the second event, Yap and Tsurumi along with Governor Erico Aumentado, Vice Gov. Julius Caesar Herrera and Rep. Edgar Chatto turned over LGU financial assistance, barangay bagsakan centers, flatbed dryers, bio-organic fertilizers, palay seeds and leaf color charts to beneficiaries.

They also awarded plaques of appreciation to the Alturas group of companies, Bohol Quality Corp., Bohol Farmers MPC, and the Plant Genetic Resources.

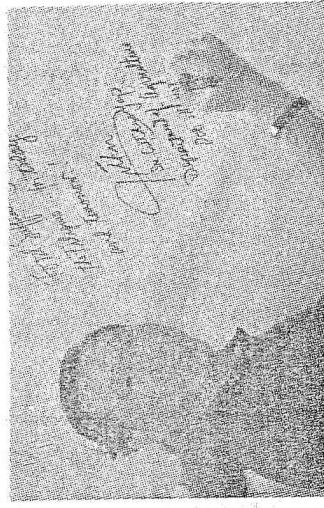
Yap and the other guests also witnessed during the program the launching of the Provincial Rice Self-sufficiency Plan for Bohol spearheaded by the provincial government.

The other events being lined up by the DA in Manila for its weeklong celebration of World Food Day are a candle lighting ceremony at the Quezon Memorial Circle to dramatize the government's commitment to fighting hunger and malnutrition, and the planting of fruit trees and biofuel crops at the Pantabangan watershed in Nueva Ecija.

Last year, Yap also spearheaded the DA's celebration of World Food Day as he pledged to make the DA an instrument in ensuring the Filipino people's "right to food."

Yap had also assured the public in last year's celebration that the DA was working double time to fulfill the country's food sufficiency goals by making available adequate and affordable rice and other basic foodstuff, especially for low-income families.

He noted that in the Philippines, the challenge confronting the government was how to guarantee agriculture's high growth path—and in such a way that it would be felt by rural families by way of better living standards for their families, and by consumers by way of plentiful and more affordable foodstuff.



Secretary Yap signs his name as a symbol of his commitment in the attainment of food sufficiency for the Filipino via the TAMANG ABONO Program which was launched during the World Food Day 2008 celebration held in Lila, Bohol.

Winners of D.A.'s 'Pinaka-Best' Agri Products

The Department of Agriculture declared recently the winners of this year's search for the best Philippine farm and fishery products in terms of size, weight and physical appearance, an annual competition now on its second year that aims to recognize domestic producers of extraordinary crops and fishes.

The 2008 search for the "Pinaka-best" Agricultural Harvest Contest involved 12 commodities, including the biggest (according to weight and length) banana (cardaba variety), papaya and pineapple, eggplant, cabbage, sweet potato and corn; bangus, lapu-lapu and carp; sugpo (black tiger shrimp), and freshwater shrimp.

The entries topped the corresponding records set by last year's grand winners.

The winners for the "Pinaka-best" Agricultural Harvest are the following:

- Reggie Mallari of Mexico, Pampanga for banana (Cardaba), which weighs 0.37 kilogram and with a length of 19 centimeters;
- Mr. and Mrs. Abias Rosalia of Valencia, Bukidnon for papaya, 7.25 kg and 52 cm;
- Dominador Gonzales of Malilipot, Albay for pineapple, 4.5 kg and 25.1 cm;
- Vicman Duque of Rizal, Cavite for eggplant, 0.5 kg and 35 cm;
- Lucio Amadoron of Davao, Cebu for sweet potato, 2.5 kg and 20 cm;
- Oliver Brillier of Liliw, Laguna for cabbage, 1.9 kg with a circumference of 63 cm;
- Alfredo N. Talpan of Madaela, Quirino for corn, 0.4 kg and 23 cm;
- Marcelino D.S. Fernandez of Dagupan City for bangus, 6.7 kg and 98 cm;
- Alexander Amorin of Mauban Quezon for lapu-lapu, 6.3 kg and 62.23 cm;
- Francisco Cermonia of Binangonan, Rizal for carp, 8.02 kg and 62.12 cm;
- Chrisanto Cantong of Binmaley, Pangasinan for black tiger shrimp (sugpo), 0.17 kg and 24 cm; and
- Leonardo Mallenzo of Tanay, Rizal for freshwater shrimp (ulang), 0.5 kg and 29 cm.



Marcelino Fernandez's 6.7 kg bangus receives the Pinaka-Best Bangus award from Sec. Yap and BFAR director Malcolm Samrinito during the Pinaka-Best Agricultural Harvest Awarding Ceremony held at the World Trade Center.

Agri-Kalikaan Organic Agriculture for Sustainable Agricultural Development

The Tamang Abono Project was conceptualized to empower marginal farmers to become less dependent on external inputs, experience higher yield in their farms, attain rice self-sufficiency and insure food security for the country. As the urgency of the needs become apparent, the Department of Agriculture (DA) launched the National Organic Agriculture-Tamang Abono Program on October 16, 2008 in Tagbilaran, Bohol.

Agriculture secretary Atty. Arthur C. Yap led the launching ceremony as one of the highlights of the 2008 World Food Day celebration with the theme: "World Food Security: the challenges of climate change and bioenergy". Another activity was the turn-over of DA-projects such as: LGU financial assistance, flatbed dryers, bagsakan center, farm inputs (organic fertilizers and vegetable seeds) and leaf color chart to the Provincial Government.

The National Organic Agriculture-Tamang Abono Program is an organic-based sustainable rice production program that advocates the safe and judicious use and proper mixtures of organic and inorganic fertilizers, recycled farm wastes, and bio-fertilizers.

The program is an undertaking of the DA and the BSWM as the lead implementing agency in partnership with the DA-RFUs, LGUs, SCUs, NGOs, and local organic fertilizer producers and manufacturers. It is cost-reduction strategy and environmentally sound rice production technology that aims to reduce the dependence of our poor farmers from using chemical fertilizers.

It advocates and promotes a more prudent way of balance fertilization scheme through the application of the right combination of organic and inorganic fertilizers to address the increasing cost of farm inputs, while sustaining the targeted optimum production yield for rice to ensure national food security. The project supports the use of recycled farm wastes through the utilization of rice biomass as organic compost.

The Modified Rapid Composting (MRC) is an on-farm composting technology that helps to revitalize the soil, increase its organic matter content, enhance microbial biodiversity thus, rendering the availability of soil nutrients to the plants. Organic compost provides micro-nutrients, which are found to enhance the productivity of agricultural crops.

Empowering our farmer clientele, through continuous education and trainings will sustain the objectives of the program. Teaching them how to make their own organic fertilizers by providing them composting facility, will ensure the sustainability of the project even without external support. It is expected that by year 2013 rice sufficiency will be attained and pure organic farming will be achieved.



Secretary Arthur C. Yap (2nd from left) and farmer Eugenio Sebaldia, Jr. lead the ceremonial rice harvesting festival in Lila, Bohol during the World Food Day celebration. With him are (from left): WFP deputy country director Aghassim Wanie, Lia mayor Telesforo Balagosa and F4O Representative in the Philippines Kazuyuki Tsurumi.

2008 World Food Day NATIONAL ON-THE-SPOT POSTER MAKING CONTEST NATIONAL WINNERS

Ivan Jun Sourbio	Garry Keith Escucha	Yves Tablac
Doane Brilliant Child Learning Heaven	Norala Central Elementary School	Bagumbong Elementary School
Delgado St., Sta. Ana Barbara, Iloilo	Poblacion, Norala South Catobato	Bagumbong, Caloocan City
Region VI	Region XII	NCR
Clarence Dabao	Prince Celso L. Sanchez	Jearsey Loraine Chua
Baliwasan Central School	Mariano Memorial School University	Phil. Tong Se Academy
Baliwasan, Zamboanga City	Castro Ave., Looc City	Sta. Elena, Bnondo, Manila
Region IX	Region I	NCR