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Matatag na Ahensiya at Industriya, Kaagapay ng Nagkakaisang Magsasaka



About the Cover



This 35th year milestone reaffirms the significant role of NTA in improving the economic and living conditions of those who depend on tobacco farming for their livelihood. Its accomplishments for the past three decades have been consistent with all government efforts to increase productivity and income of our smallholder farmers while helping them maximize their contributions to the economy. For this year and the coming years, aligned with its five-year development plant or Sustainable Tobacco Enhancement Program, the agency under the new directions provided by the leadership of our President Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos Jr, and Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr., will focus on farm consolidation as a key strategy to sustain our efforts to increase farmer incomes through efficient labor division and cost-effective service delivery, and enhanced government support. This is embodied in this celebration's theme: Matatag na Ahensiya at Industriya, Kaagapay ng Nagkakaisang Magsasaka.

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Editor: Neyo E. Valdez Technical Editors: Fortuna C. Benosa, Randy I. Abella Writer/Circulation: Melanie Rapiz-Parel

Staffwriters: Ilocos Norte: Divina D. Pagdilao * Vigan: Tomasito G. Taloza, Immanouel A. Rafanan * Candon: Orlando O. Galdones, Fayrene Kay P. Milan * Abra: Marife P. Peralta, Jomel Paolo B. Balaoro * La Union: Candido I. Liangao, Joannaliza D. Ordinante * Pangasinan: Alma G. Toralba, Ronald P. Molina * Cagayan: Josefa P. Correo * Isabela: Lagrimas B. Beltran, Garnet Mae B. Menor * FTSD: Ma. Mercedes M. Ayco * Central Office: Jenny Marie C. Molina, Eleanor A. Rapanut, Marissa J. Alvero

Consultants: Branch Managers Editorial Advisers: Atty. Jun Fred V. Parado, Dr. Giovanni B. Palabay, Robert Victor G. Seares, Jr.



Strategic decision to boost agri sector

THE National Tobacco Administration commends President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., for his full support to the agricultural sector by providing the policy framework for the projects and programs of the agency to boost government efforts to achieve food security.

During his first meeting at the Department of Agriculture, the President and concurrent DA Secretary enjoined the Department to focus on the following: increasing production; increasing protection of rice and corn farmers; a review of government purchase of fertilizer; and a multi-year plan to reconstruct our value chain for it is the most important thing.

Implementing programs based on these focal points will surely improve the standard of living of the farmers, including our tobacco growers, by giving them more opportunities to maximize the gain of their farming venture through increased production and income.

The President's decision to serve as agriculture chief is a very strategic decision, giving the agriculture sector utmost priority, and thus a morale-booster to DA, with the hope of a bigger budget for DA, including NTA and other attached agencies in the years to come.

His vision for the country, his unifying leadership his wealth of knowledge, and his experience in good governance will surely keep agriculture a pivotal economic activity in the country. Surely, the future of the farming sector, one close to the stomachs of so many Filipinos, is secure under his watch.

PBBM's 8-Point Economic Agenda



- protect the purchasing power of families by ensuring food security, reducing transport and logistics costs, and reducing energy costs
- reduce vulnerability and mitigate scarring from the COVID-19 pandemic by tackling health, strengthening social protection, and addressing learning losses
- ensure sound macroeconomic fundamentals by improving bureaucratic efficiency and ensuring sound fiscal management
- create more jobs by promoting investments, improving infrastructure, and ensuring energy security, among others
- create quality jobs by increasing employability, encouraging research and development and innovation, and enhancing the digital economy
- create green jobs by pursuing a green and blue economy and establishing livable and sustainable communities
- uphold public order and safety, peace, and security
- ensure a level playing field by strengthening market competition and reducing barriers to entry and limits to entrepreneurship

A legacy of good leadership for sustainable and farmer-centered industry



ROBERT L. SEARES Administrator 2017-2020

IN 2020, the tobacco industry was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic which demanded urgent adjustments to the way we conducted our operations. The impact on the lives and livelihoods of farmers everywhere was significant, with many simultaneously confronting pre-pandemic hurdles to recover, natural calamities, and tax policies that smallholder farmers.

Like the late Administrator Dr. Robert "Banting" L. Seares, my father, before me, I made it my mission to safeguard the welfare of our farmers. We put in place the necessary mechanisms to provide them better government support and ensure no one is left behind on the road to the new normal.

During his term (2017-2020), my father resolutely pursued an agenda focused on the following: (1) improving the welfare of tobacco growers and their families; (2) continuing corporate priority programs; (3) ensuring the highest efficiency of the financial resources of the agency; and (4) enhancing its internal organization. We continue his agenda into the next three years.

Chief among our accomplishments is the Sustainable Tobacco Enhancement Program (STEP), a five-year roadmap to increase the incomes, efficiency and productivity of our nation's tobacco farms. The writing of the draft was started during the time of my father and completed and later approved by the Governing Board under my Administration in 2020. The roadmap introduces Block Farming system as one of the key strategies to boost local production by maximizing production, post-harvest and processing operations while minimizing costs. We already have organized a total of 150 block farms in major tobacco-growing provinces.

Another major initiative is the expansion of Tobacco Contract Growing System (TCGS) under the Integrated Farming and Other Income Generating Activities Program. The TCGS gives farmers improved access to financial and technical assistance and a ready market for their produce. With a budget of P172.9 million for Tobacco Production in 2017, it now increased to P250.9 million in 2021, following the increase of farmer-cooperators from 4,617 to 7,182.

In keeping with my father's "Farmers First" policy, we continued initiatives that prioritize our tobacco growers in implementing projects and programs for industry's growth. In the five-year period, we started Barn Assistance Project, Tobacco Farm Mechanization, Beef Cattle Production Assistance Project, and the solar-powered irrigation system.



FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

We continue with enhanced budget of various institutionalized projects, such as the Rice Production Program, the Synchronized Tree Planting project to restore the ecological integrity of our farms, the NTA Scholarship Program, and the NTA Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita program which supplied more than 700 kilos of pork to Metro Manila during a shortage in 2021, including the NTA AgriPinoy Training School for slaughtering operations in Narvacan, Ilocos Sur.

Following the imposition of strict restrictions on movement, many farms experienced labor supply disruptions which resulted in productivity and income losses. The NTA was among the first agencies to distribute P13-million Emergency Cash Assistance to 6,668 TCGS farmers in Region I and the province of Abra.

We realigned the FY 2020 budget to enhance food productivity, supply availability, and price stability amid COVID-19. We implemented the "Gulayan at Manukan sa Barangay" and the Vegetable Seeds Distribution, and we expanded the coverage in the succeeding year to include more beneficiaries.

Under the new normal, we strengthened our communication and information capability, with the upgrade of our technological resources for teleconferencing and enhanced our website and social media page for more efficient information dissemination. And to ensure the uninterrupted continuation of trade activity, we converted our regulatory services into an electronic format via TradeNet. This is an online platform which offers a single point of approval for import and export permits with the aim of enhancing transparency and enforcement of trade-related procedures and regulations.

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, we provided the manpower needs of our organization. We accelerated the hiring and promotion of our staff, filling up all 94 vacant plantilla positions in both the Central and Branch offices.

When I took over after my father's death at the onset of the pandemic, I was still learning the ropes. Through the support and encouragement I received, I remained undaunted and worked hard, and thus delivered.

Our accomplishments will not be possible without the help of the employees of NTA who exemplified excellence, dedication and teamwork these past five years amidst challenges. Finally, I thank our farmers whose quiet dignity in the face of struggle who have not only kept me honest but also kept me going.

ROBERT VICTOR G. SEARES JR. Administrator/CEO





Photo: Vanessa J. Dela Cruz Photo: Neyo E. Valdez



Coverage



production, trading, redrying and preliminary processing of leaf



manufacturing, distribution and sale of tobacco products, primarily cigars and cigarettes



export/import of unmanufactured leaves and manufactured tobacco products



discovery, development and commercialization of other industrial uses of tobacco

TOBACCO is grown in 35 provinces in 14 regions. Only in the three regions, the National Capital Region, CALABARZON, and Bicol Region, have zero production in tobacco, per Philippine Statistics Authority crop data in 2020.

Farming is deeply entrenched in Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), Region 1 and Region 2 collectively accounting for 90% of both total land area and quantity produced.

The Virginia type, which is mostly grown in North Luzon accounts for 50% of the total production in 2021, 29% for Native, and 21% for the Burley type.

For the stakeholders of the tobacco industry, on top are those directly involved in tobacco production, numbering 40,716 registered tobacco growers in 2022, including their farm workers, and the tobacco farmers' associations and cooperatives.

Stakeholders also include those involved in trading and manufacturing tobacco leaf or products.

- Tobacco Leaf Trading Center Operators
- Field Representatives
- Wholesale Tobacco Dealers & Redryers
- Cigar/Cigarette manufacturers
- Tobacco Exporters and Importers
- Local Marketing/Sales

Also included are the local government units, and the government workers involved in the industry.

Farmers, Area and Volume of Production

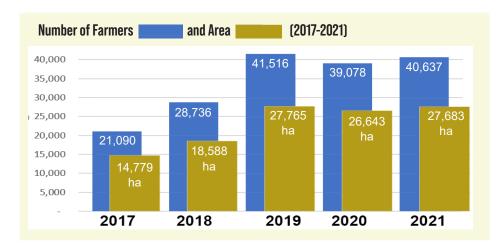
The total registered farmers is 65,000; although the number of those actually planted varies from year to year.

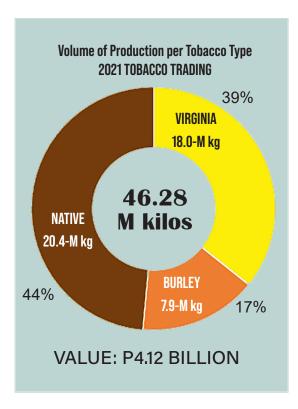
The number of farmers who actually planted in the current crop year 2021-2022 is 40,637. About 50.4% are Native tobacco farmers while Virginia tobacco farmers and Burley farmers comprise 37%, and 11.6%, respectively.

As to hectarage, about 90% of the 27,683 hectares of tobacco farms in the country for crop year 2021-22 are located in tobacco-producing provinces in Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte, Abra, La Union, Pangasinan, Cagayan and Isabela; the rest are scattered in other provinces across the country.

Per tobacco type, 48% of the farm area is planted to Native tobacco, 42% to Virginia, and 10% to Burley Tobacco.

From 2018 to 2021, the average volume of production of tobacco is





46.21 M kg. Production almost reached 50 M kg in 2020, but decreased to 46.28 M kg in the next year. Production was affected mostly by the freak rains that damaged large areas of tobacco farms in Northern Luzon. Said output, however, is within the five-year average.

The value of the total production in 2021 is P4.12 billion.

Exports

Total tobacco exports from the country, increased in volume from 74 M kg in 2018 to 80.77 M kg in 2019. There was a significant decrease in 2020 at 49.09 M kg but recovered in 2021 at 75.48 M kg or more than the 2018 level. The total export for the four-year period was valued at US\$619.38 million.

Global trade liberalization has increased access to new tobacco markets. Between 2018 and 2021, the tobacco importation in the country increased in volume by 131%, or from 56.63 M kg to 131.06 M kg, with manufactured tobacco having the biggest leap, from only 8.21 M kg in 2018 to about 75% M kg in 2021. The total import for the four-year period was valued at nearly US\$600 million.

Cigarette is the primary product of tobacco. The total volume of cigarette production decreased about 19.6% or from 74.05 B sticks in 2018 to 59.5 B sticks in 2021. For Cigars, it decreased by 70% or from more than 854,000 pieces to 254,000 pieces in the same period.

Despite these, the industry still generates enormous revenue, in the form of excise taxes, for the national treasury, which the government uses for its education, infrastructure, economic, health and welfare programs all over the country.

Socio-Economic Impact of the Tobacco Industy

THE industry is one of the strongest pillars of the country's economy and the lifeblood of tobacco growers and communities mostly in Northern Luzon.



Gross-Value Added (GVA) (manufacturing industry)

0.08% of the GVA of the manufacturing industry or about P15.88 Billion of the Gross Domestic Product in 2021.



Employment / Livelihood

2.1 million people, including the more than 89,000 involved in the production (farmers, farm workers, helpers, and the members of their family); rest of the labor force - employed in trading or buying, local cigarette manufacturing, and in the government.



LGU Funds

P24.9 billion released to all major Virginia and Native/Burley tobacco-producing LGUs from their share in the collection of tobacco excise tax, for the 2019 production.



Universal Health Care

With the enactment of the Sin Tax Reform Law (RA 10351), the industry has significant contribution in the Universal Health Care, with P74 billion a year. Sin tax revenue made up 54% of the health budget in 2020.



Revenues

The latest excise taxes collected were PhP147.6 billion in 2019 and PhP149.7 billion in 2020. The industry also earns US\$619 million from exportation of manufactured/ unmanufactured tobacco in 2021.

VIRGINIA

Price/Kg P84.10

P83.10

P82.10

P80.10

P72.10

P71.10

P62.10

P59.10

P48.10

Price/Kg

P72.10

P69.10

Grade

AA

Α

В

C

D

Ε

F1

F2

F2

BURLEY

Grade

В

Tobacco Prices

Despite the decrease in production, the average floor prices per kilo for tobacco registered a 2.32% increase or from P86.89 in 2020 to P88.91 in 2021.

The actual buying prices for Native (P111.92) grew by 21% in 2021 from the four-year average (2017-2020) of 92%. However, the actual buying prices for Virginia (P69.07) and Burley (P74.62) decreased by 7% and almost 10%, respectively, in 2021 from the four-year average (2017-2020) of 74.41 and 82.57, respectively%. ■



Original photo: Diony V. Cabutotan



The **National Tobacco Administration**, the sole government regulatory agency and an attached corporation of the Department of Agriculture, was created through Executive Order 245 issued by President Corazon C. Aquino on July 24, 1987, implementing the consolidation of eight tobacco agencies under Executive Order No. 116 s. 1987.

It oversees and regulates the growth and development of the industry, and looks after the welfare of smallholder farmers.

THE AGENCY



MANDATE

- Improve the economic and living conditions and raise the quality of life of the tobacco farmers including those who depend upon the industry for their livelihood
- Promote the balanced and integrated growth and development of the tobacco industry to help make agriculture a solid base for industrialization

Additional mandate as embodied in Section 33 of Republic Act No. 9211 or the Tobacco Regulation Act.

- (1) Tobacco Growers Assistance Program
- (2) Tobacco Grower Cooperatives Program
- (3) National Tobacco Free Public Education Program
- (4) Research and Development Program

VISION

An improved quality of life of the tobacco farmers and other stakeholders through increased productivity and other incomegenerating activities.

MISSION

Enhance capabilities, build synergistic relationship among sectors, and mobilize resources for the development of the tobacco industry, in accordance with existing laws, for the benefit of the tobacco farmers and other industry stakeholders.

POWER AND FUNCTIONS

- Promulgate and enforce rules and regulations on the production, standardization, classification, grading and trading of tobacco and tobacco products as may be necessary to attain its purposes and objectives and pursue the policy of government on tobacco
- 2. Conduct agricultural and industrial research and establish, operate and maintain experimental stations



Photo: Gerylle Vanmarie Palabay

STRATEGIC PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS



ISSUES AND CHALLENGES



Continuously escalating costs of farm inputs

DEVELOPMENT

- Changing market demand
- The effect of climate change: particularly the El Niño and La Niña phenomena
- Aggressive campaign against smoking and the implementation of tobacco control measures
- ncreasing illicit trade brought about by increasing excise taxes
- Limited release of funds from RA 4155 of the Tobacco Fund

Highlights of the fiveyear achievements (2017-2021)

- Roadmap Development or the Sustainable Tobacco Enhancement Program – one the most important breakthroughs in tobacco production.
- Establishment of Block

 Farms for tobacco growers
 206 block farms has been established in tobacco growing areas.
- 3. Increase in the average net income of tobacco to P75,178 from per hectare across all tobacco types or a 37.5% increase from the 2016 baseline of P54,665 per hectare.
- 4. More farmer beneficiaries of more PAPs implemented in the period, assisting a total of 32,773 beneficiaries.
- 5. Better access to training facilities with the construction of 5 Farmers' Training Building, one each in Tagudin, Ilocos Sur; Bangued, Abra; San Juan, Ilocos Sur; Tuguegarao City; and Ilagan City in Isabela.
- 6. Improvement of Services with the Institutionalization of the NTA Quality Management System. NTA passed ISO 9001:2008 and ISO 9001:2015 and passed the surveillance audit annually.

OPPORTUNITIES

Despite these issues and challenges, we can see opportunities and bright prospects for the industry in the years to come.

- For tobacco production the availability of updated technologies and competent farmers to produce the required tobacco
- Community welfare in farming areas 5% of sin tax revenue apportioned to community welfare under RA 11346
- Development projects for LGUs The LGUs have substantial fund from their share on the tobacco excise tax for production support to their farmers
- Other industrial uses of tobacco Continuing development on other uses of tobacco and further for commercialization
- Agribusiness Existing projects and facilities that can be enhanced for possible agribusiness ventures





In pursuance of its mandates and thrusts, and in line with the Department of Agriculture's Pillars and Strategies towards "Masaganang Ani at Mataas na Kita," the NTA gives top priority to the following programs, projects and activities for CY 2022.

Farm Clustering / Bayanihan Agri-Clusters / **Post-Harvest Processing / Marketing Support**

- 1. Market-Driven Quality Tobacco Production to address the growing demand for domestic manufacturing and export markets through
 - a. Tobacco Contract Growing System (TCGS), that will include the provision of production, technical and marketing assistance and 40% subsidy to farmer cooperators.
 - b. Curing Barn Assistance Project
 - c. Tobacco Farm Mechanization Program
- 2. Emergency Cash Assistance Program, as additional subsidy from the National Government to tobacco farmers affected by calamities
- 3. Integrated Farming and Other Income Generating Activities Project (IFOIGAP) - Funded under the agency's Corporate Funds, the project
 - a. Rice Production Project
 - b. Chicken Layer "Egg Machine" Project
 - c. Hog Production
 - d. Gulayan at Manukan sa Barangay and

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Measures / Digital Agriculture

- 1. Renewable Energy Farm Project, activities include the annual Synchronized Tree Planting and the Beema Bamboo Production Project
- 2. Development of Facility Maps in Tobacco Producing Areas, including NTA projects and tobacco-related activities, for stakeholders of the tobacco industry
- 3. Monitoring of Soil and Water Quality to generate informationon the fertility and salinity status of different tobacco growing areas

Mobilization and Empowerment of Partners / **Professionalization**

Farmers' Organizational Development, to include continuing registration of farmers, strengthening of farm clusters, trainings for cooperative officials and members, and organizational development and livelihood assistance tobacco growing areas

Global Trade, Export Development and Promotion

- 1. Continuing Research and Development, and implementation of pioneering ventures (e.g., the other uses of tobacco)
- 2. Quality Assurance for Tobacco Leaf and Manufactured **Products**, will concentrate on the provision of laboratory services that test the quality of soil, water, fertilizer and leaf tobacco
- 3. Market Research and Development, includes research and assessment on the local tobacco industy, situation/trends of the international market and trade promotions

Ease of Doing Business

Regulatory Services, covering the monitoring and issuance of licenses on the trading of leaf, and the implementation of trading centers / tobacco buyers of the harmonized grading system of tobacco

Strategic Communications

Communication Support Program, involves the provision of information and education materials for the stakeholders, in the form of technoquides, newsletter, video production, radio program and social media

Professionalization

- 1. **Institutional Development Programs,** include Human Resource Development activities, capability trainings, and improvement of facilities, buildings, and acquisition of IT software and hardware
- 2. Mobility Support Program fro Extension Workers, provision of facility loan for TPROs and Agriculturists

SUSTAINABLE TOBACCO ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

- Economies of scale to reduce the cost of operation
 - Government facilitation of farmer training
 - Provision of technologies, including inputs and mechanization
 - Enhanced efficiency and quality of output, and farmer incomes

IN LIGHT of the consistent efforts of the government to increase productivity and income of smallholder farmers and accelerate the modernization and industrialization in agriculture, the agency formulated the Sustainable Tobacco Enhancement Program (STEP). This is a five-year development roadmap (2021-2025) to raise socio-economic standards in the industry.

The development plan is necessary not only to spur development through livelihood creation, job generation, and income augmentation, but also to take advantage of the available fund intended for the development of the industry.

The long-term goal of the STEP is to develop a sustainable and globally competitive tobacco industry, increase farm competitiveness and reduce rural poverty. Through its implementation, the industry targets a double income from tobacco and rice production and other income-generating activities.

Guided by the Department of Agriculture OneDA Reform Agenda for transforming Philippine agriculture, industry policy will focus on the implementation of the Block Farming, or the operational clustering of small tobacco farms, as a key strategy to enhance production and farmers' yield. The consolidated farms are expected to become catalysts and engines for sustained and inclusive growth for the tobacco industry.

The roadmap also covers human resource development, technology upgrading and innovation, and investment promotion, and address issues such as high cost of farm inputs and lack of infrastructures.

The roadmap implementation will be funded by the Tobacco Fund. All tobacco farmers (numbering 41,516 covering a total area of 27,765 as of CY 2020) are the beneficiaries of various assistance and interventions that will cost P26.8 billion for five years.

The tobacco industry is a substantial contributor to the national economy, particularly to national public sector revenue and health funding, and creates wide-ranging opportunities for local communities and regional economies.

Only with the sufficient fund can the tobacco industry unleash its full potentials to take advantage of the opportunities currently facing us and become an engine for sustained and inclusive growth.









TOTAL BUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BLOCK FARMS AND OTHER PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	TOTAL FOR 5 YEARS
Block Farms	5,095,140,676	5,073,337,926	5,106,797,414	5,092,339,332	5,117,248,187	25,484,863,534
Technology	104,193,870	137,965,256	161,995,026	189,036,262	183,542,427	776,732,841
Assistance,						
Extn. & Prod.						
Support						
Services						
Industrial	145,661,376	18,083,124	19,728,901	21,479,908	23,720,021	228,673,330
Research						
Agricultural	8,957,188	12,728,922	11,979,999	10,927,615	12,195,536	56,789,260
Research						
Regulatory	48,588,122	32,556,961	32,490,006	34,066,905	34,085,186	181,787,180
Services						
Institutional	14,898,651	15,196,624	15,500,557	15,810,568	16,126,779	77,533,178
Devt.						
TOTAL	5,417,439,883	5,289,868,813	5,348,491,902	5,363,660,589	5,386,918,136	26,806,379,323

TOBACCO FUND

FIVE-YEAR BUDGET

Php26.8 Billion

Php2.6 Billion



TOBACCO FUND (RA 4155)

THE Tobacco Fund was established through Republic Act (RA) 4155, entitled "An Act to Promote and Strengthen the Virginia Tobacco Industry," signed by then President Ferdinand Marcos on June 20, 1964.

Per paragraph 4, of Section 5 (of R.A. 4155, or An Act to Promote and Strengthen the Virginia Tobacco Industry), the Tobacco Fund shall be used for Operational, Office and Field Expenses, including the establishment of Research and Grading Institute.

The DBM on June 13, 2006, approved the establishment of Special Account in the General Fund pursuant to RA 4155 and PD No. 1234, to account the share of the NTA from the Tobacco Fund. In the same year the National Treasury deposited the amount of P575,053,239 to the Special Account in the General Fund of NTA, representing its 40% share from the excise taxes of locally manufactured Virginia type cigarettes

About Php5.5 billion has been released out of the Tobacco Fund from 2010-2022 for the implementation of various programs/projects, namely, tobacco farmers production assistance or the provision of inputs, fertilizers cash for tobacco production, irrigation support project, curing barn assistance project, establishment of quality assurance laboratory, and other operational expenses of the Agency.

NTA has been using the Fund for the support of tobacco supply

chain, through farm mechanization, farm inputs, curing barns, extension and marketing support, agricultural production, processing and marketing, reforestation, irrigation, and trading center; and for expenses related to NTA and tobacco research and grading, through capacity building, farmers' training center, and quality and assurance laboratory.

The projects currently supported by the Fund are Curing Barn Assistance, Production Assistance to tobacco growers, Industrial Research and Quality Assurance. From 2010 to 2017, the Fund also supported the Tobacco Dust and Pulp Production Project, Multi-purpose Curing Barn, AgriPinoy Projects, Irrigation Support Project, Renewable Energy Farm Project, and Irrigation Support Project for small tobacco farmers.

With the approval of the Sustainable Tobacco Enhancement Program, NTA has tapped the Tobacco Fund in planning for priority action programs for tobacco areas in the country. In fact, NTA expects the Tobacco Fund, which reached a net balance of P92.3-billion this year, to finance potential investment projects to benefit the tobacco growers and their communities.

NTA has proposed to utilize P26.8 billion from the Tobacco Fund to meet the budgetary requirement for the Sustainable Tobacco Enhancement Program. For 2023, it had proposed and

initial P2.6 Billion budget.

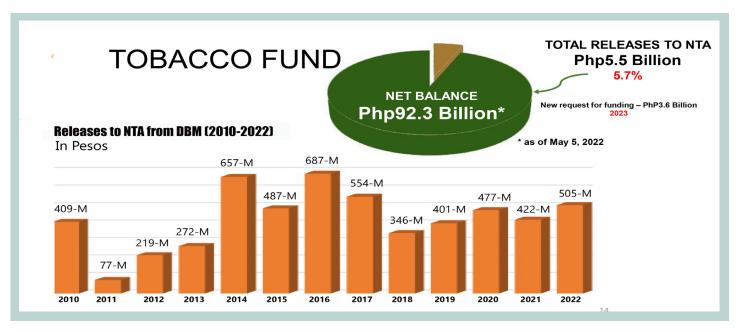
However, the agency hit a snag in the implementation of the five-year development plan, because of the unavailability of fund from the Tobacco Fund.

In the 13-year period, the NTA has only received a total of Php5.512 billion out of the Tobacco Fund, which has a net balance of P93.304 billion as of May 2022, or measly 5.7%. For 2023, our proposed budget is Php3.6 billion from the Fund, and it is only a smaller portion in the pie.

For example in 2018, NTA requested 1.373 billion for our various project, but the release for that year was only Php879 million. Also in 2019, we proposed Php5.679 billion to finance major projects, but the release was only Php401 million.

The STEP has been endorsed in the Regional Development Councils of Region 1 and 2. NTA has already submitted the Plan/Roadmap to the DBM in 2021, with the inclusion of the STEP in the regular budgeting process/preparation.

The agency has already written to the DBM requesting for the release of a portion from the Tobacco Fund for the implementation of the various projects under the STEP, and is still awaiting for their action to include the budget for the STEP in the National Expenditure Program (NEP) for 2023.







For CY 2020-2021, tobacco is planted in 27,683 hectares mostly in seven major tobacco-producing provinces with 40,637 tobacco growers. The occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic in the first quarter of 2020 and its continuing threat slowed down production of tobacco. Tobacco production for Trading Year 2021 is at 46.28 million kilos, or about 6% decrease from the 2020 output (49.17 million kilos) and slightly lower than the five-year average of 46.84 million kilos.

The implementation of Market-Driven Quality Tobacco Production and other interventions like Curing Barn Assistance Program, Improved Seedling Production and increased subsidy (now at 40%) resulted in the increase in quality in production and in income of all its 7,182 tobacco growers planting an aggregate area of 5,003.96 hectares under the Tobacco Contract Growing System for CY 2021-2022. A tobacco grower now earns a net income of P75,178 per hectare (five-year average 2017-2021), about 38% higher than the 2016 baseline.

To address the challenges and as NTA adapts to new normal, the agency explored strategies and adjustments to ensure delivery of its services to the stakeholders, particularly the tobacco growers. It implemented through a refocused/realigned budget in 2020 the Gulayan at Manukan sa Barangay and Vegetable Seed Distribution, during the Covid 19 pandemic. NTA expanded coverage and number of beneficiaries for the Beef Cattle Production Assistance. In all a total of 9,807 farmers are benefitted from these new projects.

This is in addition to the Integrated Farming and Other Income Generating Activities Project (IFOIGAP), that includes Wet Season Rice Production and the Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita Food Processing Plant, where NTA provides additional income for tobacco farmers in hog production. Other institutionalized projects, such as Synchronized Tree Planting under the renewable fuelwood project, was sustained despite the challenges. For the Rice Production project, there was a decrease in average yield due to the effect of calamities for the past two years; however, there was an increase in the 2021 production at 4,592 kg/ha, which is higher than the average six-year average output (4,492 kg/ha) in 2016.

On top of this, NTA initiated in 2021 the Block Farming Scheme, a key strategy of its Sustainable Tobacco Enhancement Program (STEP). This will allow the agency to achieve its goals set for the next five years and spur development though livelihood creation, job generation and income augmentation.

The agency shall remain effective and efficient in delivering services to its customers with the continuous ISO 9001:2015 certification of the Quality Management System in all its core processes. It has enhanced its regulatory services by converting its online document process thru the TradeNet. Likewise, it continues to strengthen its organizational capacity through manpower training and institutional development program.

Continuing Programs and Projects

Tobacco Contract Growing System

This is a market-oriented production system that assures leaf buyers of the volume and quality of tobacco they need; and, assures the farmers of technology, production, and technical assistance.

With the expanded program starting 2021, the expected outcome is to increase yield by 2% and farmer's income by 5% average per year.

For the five-year period 2017-2021, the program assisted an average of 6,478 farmer-cooperators per year.

Total budget on the same period is P8o3 million or an average of P16o.7 million annually. This is funded by national subsidy (RA 4155) and corporate funds.

The average net income in tobacco production per hectare (2017-2020) is P67,960 across all types of tobacco, which is 24% increase from the 2016 baseline of P54,665 per hectare.

TNumber of TCGS Farmers and Area (2017-2022)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
FARMERS	4,583	5,927	7,914	6,670	7,296
AREA (ha)	2,808	3,674	5,215	4,577	4,934



Photo: John James Canosa

Number of IFOIGAP-Rice Farmers and Area (2017-2022)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
FARMERS	2,692	3,194	3,004	3,409	4,395
AREA (ha)	1,907	2,432	2,375	2,772	3,563



Photo: Hermielynn Ringor

Rice Production

As a component of the Integrated Farming and Other Income Generating Activities, this is implemented in line with the rice self-sufficiency program of the national government to augment the income of tobacco farmers, other than tobacco production. Farmer-cooperators are given production, technical and marketing assistance.

For the five-year period 2017-2021, the program assisted an average of 3,450 beneficiaries, with coverage of 2,6085 hectares annually. Average yield and income was 4,087 kg/ha and P 32,411/hectare.

Total budget on the same period is P213.6-million or an average of P42.7 million annually.

This is a continuing project, funded by corporate funds, which has included corn production starting 2020, for Region 2 farmers, as alternative to Rice Production Assistance.

For the initial implementation, corn farmers under the program earned P47,774 per hectare at an average yield of 5,058.

Renewable Fuelwood Energy Farm Project

The project is implemented to address the fuelwood requirement of curing Virginia tobacco. One component of the project is the Synchronized Tree Planting (STP). From 2017 to 2021, a total of 5.8 million of forest trees were planted during the STP in various areas in major tobacco-growing provinces held every July, which gathered 62,580 planting volunteers annually.

For the Kahuyang Pangkabuhayan at Pangkalikasan (KPP), a growout plantation module from 2013-2017, it has distributed 5.68 million tree seedlings and 145,175 bamboos, involving 1,177 farmer-cooperators with total production assistance of P71 M.

The KPP component has been completed in 2017. Shape filing of grown trees under the KPP is now being conducted by the Branch Offices, in coordination with DENR to determine fuelwood trees that can be cut and sold by farmer-cooperators.

Number of Tree Seedlings Planted (2017-2022)

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	TOTAL
1.84 M	1.42 M	825,013	854,811	872,119	5.82 M



Photo: Aryann Pamela Sangil



Photo: Dyesebelle I. Corpuz

Farmers Organizational Development

The project aims to develop and nurture entrepreneurial capabilities of the tobacco farmers and promote dynamic rural enterprises, and prepare them for any eventuality if the tobacco industry subsides due to global control. In 2019, some 749 tobacco farmers/dependents have been given trainings on food and meat processing, bread and pastry making, mushroom production and agro-mechanic and cooperative education.

Future trainings will focus on capability building of Coops and Block farms as co-implementors of the Block Farming component of the STEP.

Tobacco Seed Production and Distribution

The agency provides seeds of tobacco varieties to ensure consistency in volume and quality production to the tobacco farmers and private companies. From 2017-2021, the project produced and distributed about 495 kilos of seeds for TCGS farmers.

The project also includes field verification of high yielding tobacco varieties.

Number of Tobacco Seeds by Type/ Variety (2017-2022)

TYPE	VARIETY	Seeds Distributed (Kg)
Flue-Cured	NC 2326	259.89
(Improved)	K 326	64.31
	Coker 254	3.37
	DH 48	5.03
Flue-Cured	Golden Harvest	17.92
(Neutral)	Reams 266	39.37
	Giant Coker	0.06
Burley	TN 90	49.00
	Vizcaya	6.40
Cigar	Tabije	47.45
	Simmaba	1.00
	Sinai Akaba	0.51
	Lampangog	0.00
	Sinai	0.07
Native Batek	Lawit	0.03
	Pimminya	0.03
	Karag	0.03
	GRAND TOTAL	494.45

Research and Development

As part of its integrated production technology development, the agency conducted various researches on tobacco production, including Protocol Researchers on fertilizers and pesticides. Studies were likewise conducted to find other uses of tobacco.

For the five-year period, 2017-2021 the agency accomplished 28 agricultural research projects, with three regular/continuing project and five ongoing projects..

As part of its integrated production technology development, it conducted Tobacco Germplasm Collection, Maintenance and Characterization; Monitoring of Soil and Tobacco Growing



Photo: NTA Cagayan

Areas; Development of NTA Projects and Tobacco Related Activities and Facility Maps for Stakeholders of the Tobacco Industry; Verification Trial of the Fertilizer Recommendations for Specific Location Based from the Results of the Soil Fertility Monitoring in Tobacco Areas; Improvement of Curing Structures and Curing Processes for Virginia Tobacco – Evaluation of Solar -Aided Curing Barn to Tobacco Flue-Curing; Continuing verification trials on "Scale Up Production and Demonstration Trails on the Use of Tobacco Leaf Extract Emulsion"; Tobacco Handmade Paper production: Technology enhancements and prototyping of novelty items"; and Tobacco Powder and Extract Research and Development.

For 2022 and succeeding years, the agency will apply for commercialization of Tobacco Extract, Tobacco Handmade Paper and collaboration with DOSTPRDI on other projects, conduct annual trainings to TPROs, Agriculturist, tobacco company graders and farmer leaders, and work for the establishment of Leaf Grading Institute (as provided under R.A. 4155).

Regulatory Services

This program involves the exercise of regulatory authority of the agency, to include supervision of tobacco trading operations, the setting up of floor prices and implementation of regulatory procedures.

Activities include monitoring of trading operations, documentation of tobacco production and acceptances, and issuances of licenses/permits to leaf buyers, importers and exporters, and the conduct of Tripartite Consultative Conference for tobacco floor prices.

The Regulation Department completed in 2021 the onboarding activities in the TRADENET Platform during the 3rd National Single Window – Technical Working Group (NSW-TWG). Objective of which is to streamline and facilitate application of licenses and permits on tobacco trading, imports and exports of tobacco leaf and products.



Photo: John James B. Canosa



Photo: Kenneth V. Costales

Scholarship

For Academic Years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, a total of 356 college students were given scholarship grant under the Tobacco Growers and Dependents Scholarship Program . In all 1,239 college students have been granted with scholarship since the program started in 2011. In the same period, the agency hired 13 scholars into its fold, namely, Karla May E. Cardona (TPRO I), Arvin B. Solito (TPRO I), Christopher D. Queddeng (Agriculturist I), Mae Anne F. Mina (TPRO I), Maricar R. De Leon (Computer Operator II), Aljon M. Aquebay (Agriculturist I), Ryan Jay Z. Sape (TPRO I), Michael Jhon P. Dahilig (TPRO I), Judith M. Morales (Agriculturist I), Kathlyn Mae A. Tejano (Science Research Specialist I), Rose Ann S. Dismaya (TPRO I), Ian Michael C. Ventura (TPRO I) and Mica Ella G. Pagal (TPRO I).

NTA Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita

Formerly NTA AgriPinoy, the project aims to increase the level of productivity and income of tobacco farmers and to sustain the continued operation of the Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita Meat Processing Plant in Narvacan, Ilocos Sur. From 2017-201, a total of 4,375 piglets were dispersed to 428 tobacco farmers, with total production assistance of PhP34.41 million. The dispersal project, however, was suspended in 2020 due to occurrence of ASF in Region 1.

NTA proposed additional funds to expand the coverage of the NTA Kadiwa and for the sustainability of the hog-fattening project to benefit more farmer-cooperators and contribute to the food sufficiency program of the government.



New Programs and Projects

Curing Barn Assistance Project

The project aims to increase the income of tobacco farmers through the production of properly cured leaf. It provides facility assistance for the construction and repair of curing barns and air-curing sheds, or replace old/damaged ones that have been destroyed by calamities that hit the region in recent years.

A total of 19,741 farmers have availed of the CBAP with a total budget utilization of P445.1 million in five years.

To reduce the carbon footprint of the tobacco industry as part of its climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts, NTA introduced the first solar-powered curing barn Badoc town, Ilocos Norte in 2021. The unique design of the barn allows solar energy to be stored and used to power a pump dryer which supplies the barn's heat requirements. It can reduce the fuel consumption of a farm by 40%, thereby increasing the savings of the farmer.

CBAP Five-Year Allocations (2017-2022)

CY	Allocation	Curing Barn		Curi	ng Shed
		Repair	Construction	Repair	Construction
2017-2018	84.7 M	2,062	1,129	1,047	326
2018-2019	74.6 M	1,210	420	1,264	225
2019-2020	96.8 M	1,045	420	2,389	290
2020-2021	87.3 M	763	330	2,493	139
2021-2022	101.7 M	1,170	437	2,250	332
TOTAL	445.1 M	6,250	2,736	9,443	1,312





Tobacco Farm Mechanization Program (2018-2020)



Year	Amount	No. Ass'ns	No. of Farmers	Service Area, Ha
2018	11,510,350	35	1,009	678.23
2019	26,920,000	25	1,938	1,477.46
2020	49,625,900	36	2,036	1,791.15
TOTAL	88,056,250	96	4,983	3,946.84

CY 2021 & 2022 - no releases for TFMP

Tobacco Farm Mechanization Program

The program aims to modernize the conduct of field activities on tobacco production by applying new technologies and using farm machineries and equipment to increase the farmer's efficiencies of labor utilization and reduce the cost of production. Expected output is the full mechanization of tobacco production and post-harvest activities.

The initial fund for the program was sourced from the Corporate Fund and it was proposed that future funding will be sourced from the Tobacco Fund (RA 4155). All assistance provided have subsidy of 40 percent (%).

Improved Tobacco Seedling Production

The project aims to encourage early planting among tobacco farmers for improved quality, yield and increased income. Beneficiaries were provided with technical assistance, inputs and implements to produce required seedlings to be distributed free to tobacco farmers. The seedlings will be brought back by the agency as an additional income to the seedling growers. The project aims to provide additional income of P15,000 with 5-hectare module per seedling grower. Total amount (budget) 2020-2021: P39.2 million



Photo: John James B. Canosa

Number of Beneficiaries (2017-2022)

BRANCH OFFICE	2020	2021	2022
Abra	40	70	
Ilocos Norte	35	70	25
Vigan	25	50	25
Candon	45	80	
La Union	30	60	25
Pangasinan	25	60	
Isabela	25	55	
Cagayan	25	55	
TOTAL	250	500	75

Beef Cattle Production Assistance Project

The project aims to increase the income of the tobacco farmers by providing them with one ready-to-breed upgraded Brahman heifer, to be pushed through forward payment to downline farmer-cooperators.

To ensure the effective implementation of the initiative, the participating NTA branches conducted a training seminar to educate the farmers on the basics of cattle production, such as land development for grazing, and other major project components. The components include production technology packages, artificial insemination services, and animal health services.

Total amount (budget) 2017-2022: P32.9 million As of December 2021, 28 offspring were recorded.

Gulayan at Manukan sa Barangay

The project aims to help farming households produce their own food and raise additional income for their family during the COVID 19 pandemic, and in support of the "Plant, Plant, Plant" Program of the Department of Agriculture. Recently, the project has been part of the immediate assistance/intervention for farmers affected by natural calamities.

Each farmer beneficiary is given vegetable seeds and 25 free-range chicken (Sasso) and other inputs.

This is a continuing project, which is now part of the immediate assistance/intervention for farmers affected by natural calamities and the

Total amount (budget) 2019 and 2021: P21.14 million

Number of Beneficiaries (2019 & 2021)

Branch	2019	2020
Abra	40	
Ilocos Norte	100	75
Vigan	270	210
Candon	250	185
La Union	200	564
Pangasinan	186	214
Cagayan	113	
Isabela	51	
Total	1,210	1,248



Vegetable Seeds Distribution

The Vegetable Seed Distribution Project complements the Gulayan at Manukan sa Barangay Project, ensuring farmers enough food supply and additional income for their family during and after the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) health crisis.

The project has benefitted 7,463 tobacco growers in 2020 and 6,660 in 2021.

Each farmer received a pack of mixed vegetable seeds of okra, bush sitao, upland kangkong, pechay, eggplant, ampalaya, and other fast-growing vegetables perfect for backyard gardening.

No cost incurred for Isabela and Cagayan because seeds distributed were given by DA-RFO II.

Total amount (budget) 2020-2021: P5,699,617



Photo: NTA Candon

Institution Building and Strengthening Projects



Institutionalization of Quality Management System

Date implemented 2015 ISO 9001:2008 certification ISO 9001:2015 certification Passed surveillance audit annually

Farmer's Training Buildings

Construction of 5 Farmers' Training Building





2019-2020 - Training centers for Candon Branch (located in Tagudin, Ilocos Sur) and Abra Branch (located in Bangued)



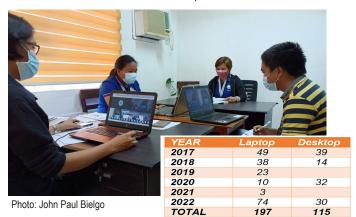




2021 - Training Centers for Vigan Branch (located in San Juan, Ilocos Sur), Cagayan Branch (located in Tuguegarao City) and Isabela Branch (located in Ilagan City).

IT Infrastructure Development

Years implemented: 2017-2022
Procurement of hardware computers



Human Resource Development

Learning and Development Trainings conducted

YEAR	No. of Trainings
2017	62
2018	84
2019	67
2020	48
2021	67
TOTAL	197





COVID-19 Response

FOLLOWING the government's declaration of a State of Public Health Emergency, the Department of Agriculture issued Memorandum dated April 14, 2020, directing its Bureaus Attached Agencies and Regional Field Offices to refocus all activities and budget to enhance food productivity, supply, accessibility and price stability amid COVID 19.

To perform the above objectives, NTA launched three new activities, namely: (1) Cash Assistance for Farmers under its Risk Management Program, (2) Gulayan at Manukan Sa Barangay project, and (3) Vegetable Seed Distribution project. The activities sought to address the immediate economic fallout by augmenting the household incomes of its poorest and most vulnerable farmers.

A total of 6,426 farmers under the Tobacco Contract Growing System (TCGS) for crop year 2019-2020 received the P13-Million Emergency Cash Assistance (ECA), at P2,000 per farmer, in tobacco-growing provinces in Region 1 and Abra.

In addition, the agency directed local traders to release cash advances to contracted farmers upon the recommendation of the assisting NTA technician. It also made arrangements with local governments and buying firms to facilitate the safe transfer of tobacco to designated buying stations and redrying plants.

Branch offices in Regions I and II, on the other hand, fast tracked the release of food lane accreditations to 130 suppliers and other distribution entities. This allowed for the unhampered delivery of tobacco within and outside the regions at the height of the enhanced community quarantine restrictions.

The NTA had obtained an exemption to the nomovement policy to ensure the undisrupted continuation of operations at the start of the pandemic. Over a million kilograms of cured tobacco was delivered and purchased in buying stations in March 2020.

NTA allocated P10.98-million for the Gulayan at Manukan sa Barangay (GMB) project, providing a total of 26,579 Sasso chicks and 6,112 packs of assorted vegetable seeds.

As a fitting follow-up to the Gulayan at Manukan sa Barangay project, the agency also distributed 19,922 seed packs (5 kinds of vegetable seeds per pack) to 8,321 tobacco recipients under the Vegetable Seeds Distribution project. The project covered not only contract growers under the NTA-financing scheme, but also registered contract growers under the buying firms or local government units.

In 2021, a total of 1,342 tobacco farmers, whose tobacco plants were affected by freak rains were given free chicks, including feeds. For the Vegetable Seed Distribution, each of the 6,685 tobacco farmers was given vegetable seed packs which consist of 5 packs of different vegetable seeds were distributed to tobacco farmers.

The agency also provides protective kits, vitamins, and observance of all health protocols; online consultation with the agency medical officer; procurement of necessary medical and other equipment for disinfection (e.g., alcohol, air purifiers, installation of plastic barriers in the office areas).

Other Activities:

- Coordination with various LGUs, DA and other agencies for the full vaccination and booster shots for all the employees by 2021, and regular antigen test for Central Office employees.
- Alternative working arrangements were implemented in accordance with IATF/CSC/DA rules and regulations.
- Procurement of 74 units of laptops to be used for employees for Work from Home setup.



NTA was one of the first government agencies that came to the aid of the farmers during the early part of the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) in the first quarter of 2020. A total of 6,426 farmers under the Tobacco Contract Growing System (TCGS) for crop year 2019-2020 received the P13-Million Emergency Cash Assistance (ECA), at P2,000 per farmer. NTA personnel in the Branch Offices worked on the front line to deliver, in coordination with the local government units, the cash assistance to the farmers.

In 2022, the ECA had a budget of PhP50 million from the 2022 GAA (Congressional insertion) to provide assistance to tobacco farmers affected by calamities such as typhoons, freak rains, earthquake, among others.

Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares said that the agency requested the fund from Sen. Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go. Said budget is already included in the General Appropriations Act of CY 2022 as stand-by emergency cash assistance for tobacco growers.

The amount is augmented by the agency's Corporate Funds.

Breakdown of beneficiaries per Branch Office

PROVINCE/	TARGET BE	NEFICIARIES	AMOUNT (PLP)
BRANCH OFFICE	No. of Farmers	Area (has.)	AMOUNT (PhP)
Abra	2,198	1,095.17	3,297,000.00
Ilocos Norte	3,701	1,712.75	5,551,500.00
Vigan	4,308	3,545.00	6,462,000.00
Candon	7,426	5,891.17	11,139,000.00
La Union	3,830	2,274.23	5,745,000.00
Pangasinan	3,390	2,335.09	5,085,000.00
Isabela	8,594	6,569.00	12,891,000.00
Cagayan	778	353.15	1,167,000.00
Grand Total	34,225	23,775.56	51,337,500.00

Each farmer will receive PhP1,500 each. Said assistance is currently being distributed to the farmers of various tobacco-producing provinces in Regions 1 and 2.

The administrator added that with the extensive damage, the agency needs additional fund to assist all the affected farmers as listed during the damage assessment conducted by the Branch Offices.

To supplement the P50 million NTA ECA Fund, Secretary William D. Dar approved NTA's request for P50 million from the Quick Response Fund.

The assistance will be given to the farmers as soon as the funds and the implementing guidelines are released in August, assuring farmers of the agency's absolute commitment to helping and supporting them in their farming endeavor.



La Union farmer receives cash assistance amidst lockdown in 2020. Background: Farmer on his farm damaged by freak rains in 2021.

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH



DIGITAL AGRICULTURE: **Development of NTA Projects and Tobacco-related Activities and Facility Map for the Tobacco Industry**

by Kenneth Russel L. Tanaval, Gay Ann A. Ronduen, Evangeline C. Cabigan, Randy I. Abella & Felisa R. Aurellano

IN KEEPING pace with technological advancement, NTA initiated the Development of NTA Projects and Tobacco-Related Activities and Facility Map (TRAFMAP) for the stakeholders of the tobacco industry in Regions 1,2 and the province of Abra, to identify, locate and monitor, and come up with maps of various NTA projects and tobacco-related activities and facilities using GIS applications.

The Phase 1 of the project was conducted in Ilocos Norte from May 2021 to June 2022. The collected information consists of the demographic profile of the tobacco farmer, curing structures (capacity, dimension, materials, and status), machinery used in tobacco production, and projects.

As of June 30, 2022, the total number of geotagged tobacco farmers in Ilocos Norte is 3,354, equivalent to 86.04% of the target 3,898. The total number of curing structures is 3,319, where 2,367 is curing barn, 872 curing shed, and 62 sun-drying structures. Other facilities, such as Solar-powered Irrigation System, Irrigation Support Project, and machinery, were also geotagged.

Accomplishments on Phase I as of July 29, 2022

Data	Target	Geotagged
Socio Demographic Profile of Farmers	3,898	3,354
Curing Structures	*	3,319
ITSP	*	22
SPIS	*	0
ISP	*	0
Trading Centers	*	0
Machineries	*	567
Animals	*	56
Vegetables	*	4
Total		7,322
* The target data is dynamic.		

Phase 2 of the project was conducted in January, 2022 in the rest of the provinces in Region 1, Cagayan, Isabela, and Abra.

As of July 31, 2022, the total number of geotagged tobacco farmers is 4,904 from the submitted data. Multispectral drone and plant health analysis software were procured and delivered. Training for the operation of multispectral drone is completed.

The data collected were all stored in ArcGIS Database.

Demographic Profile. The geotagged demographic profiles of tobacco farmers contain, basic information about themselves, tobacco type planted, years of tobacco planting, and images of the farmer, and house.

The information collected was used to develop the operational dashboard that can generate data analytics of tobacco farmers. The operations dashboard can provide (1) data analytics on the prevailing tobacco type in a given area, (2) insights into the status of the tobacco industry for the coming years based on age and gender, and (3) data analytics of all the data insights on the province per municipality and city.

Curing Structures. The geotagged information of the curing structures is composed of basic information about the tobacco farmers and their curing structures. Additionally, curing materials, style, type, and furnace were collected, and the most prevalent materials and types of furnaces used were identified. The location of the curing barns and curing sheds are clustered and showed a significant relationship with the type of tobacco which is based on the post-harvest practices of the tobacco farmers.

Furnace. The study identified five furnace types used by the tobacco farmers, namely: Anawang furnace, modified anawang furnace, traditional drum type, venturi furnace, and air cured. The most prevalent type of furnace in Ilocos Norte is the modified anawang furnace. This is followed by traditional

Web Map

Operations Dashboard

Web Map Application

Target

9

30

Accomplished

14

10

drum type and anawang furnace. It only shows that the modified anawang furnace is implemented properly together with the standard design of the curing barn.

Wall Materials. The wall materials are highly dependent on the availability of materials to the farmer. Based on the data collected, the most used wall material for the curing barn is galvanized Iron (GI) sheet. The GI sheet is combined with other materials like concrete hollow blocks (CHB), clay, rice straw, and nipa. Most of the tobacco farmers tend to use GI sheets because of its shape factor. Its surface is larger compared to CHB, bricks, and other materials. It can provide structural support, especially on materials that cannot stand alone such as clay, nipa, and rice straws. It could also provide protection from adverse environmental conditions during the curing.

Roof Type. The roof of curing barns provides additional protection and method of ventilation to the curing barn. In Ilocos Norte, the most prevalent type of roof used is the gable roof. Other types provide a different method of ventilation. Spatially, the gable roof and other roof types were not significantly affected by practice in a specific area. For instance, it is highly clustered in all municipalities of Ilocos Norte. This only means information about curing barn roof types is not specific to an area but widely used by any terms of knowledge and practice sharing.

Barn and Shed Capacity. The smallest unit of curing barn and shed capacity is 0.25 hectares. The standard capacity increases by 0.25 hectares depending on the planting area. From the gathered information, the 0.5 hectares capacity is the most numerous followed by 0.75 hectares and one-hectare. The remaining percentage is divided by non-standard sizes of curing barns, which are modified according to their needs and changes because of the structural material used.

Improve Tobacco Seedling Production (ITSP). The ITSP provides quality tobacco seedlings for tobacco farmers. The modules are strategically located based on the beneficiary and on the ongoing block farming of tobacco in the province.

The total number of modules documented was from crop year 2021- 2022. There were separate modules for Virginia and Burley tobacco type. The modules are in the areas where the prevalent tobacco type are highly planted. They were clustered according to the tobacco type.

Other Data Collected. Additional information collected projects that the tobacco farmer might have received such as the Beef Cattle Production Assistance Project, Vegetable Seedling Distribution, and the Gulayan at Manukan sa Barangay.

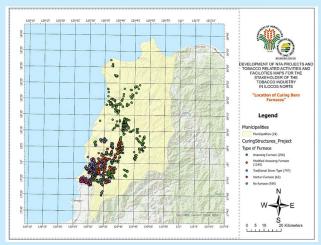
THE PROJECT collected baseline data for planning future projects, especially for the improvement of the production and income of tobacco farmers. Maps, web apps like operational dashboards, and distance calculators were developed. A website for GIS was also developed.

For future activities of the project, the data collected is recommended to be updated every year by the Branch OfficeS. FTSD and MIS-CorPlan have the access administrative access to the generation of maps, web apps, and story maps.



Operational dashboard on the demographic profile of tobacco farmers in Ilocos Norte





Location of curing barn furnaces (Ilocos Norte)



Operational dashboard of the machinery, animals, and vegetables in the province.



NTA celebrates 35th Founding Anniversary

by Rhonelle C. Sulicipan

Photos: Gerylle Vanmarie Palabay





INSPIRED by this year's theme, "Matatag na Ahensiya at Industriya, Kaagapay ng Nagkakaisang Magsasaka," the National Tobacco Administration celebrated its 35th Founding Anniversary on July 22, two days ahead of its actual anniversary.

The said celebration was hosted by the Batac-based offices, namely, NTA Ilocos Norte Branch, Farm Technology and Services Department, and the Product Development Division of the Industrial Research Department.

Sportsfest

This celebration was highlighted by a thanksgiving mass in the morning at the NTA Gallery celebrated by Rev. Fr. Cipriano L. Alnas, Jr., officiating priest of the Immaculate Conception Parish Church. This was followed by a motorcade of the participants in the Anniversary Sportsfest 2022. Administrator/ CEO Robert Victor G. Seares, Jr., Acting Deputy Administrator for Operations Dr. Giovanni B. Palabay and members of the Board of Directors joined the motorcade from the NTA Building going to MMSU Covered Court.

Four competing teams, represented by their colors, joined the competitions on volleyball, basketball, table tennis, 400-meter relay, tug-of-war and sack race.

Red Team - Ilocos Norte, FTSD/IRD-Batac, Cagayan Yellow Team - La Union, Pangasinan, Isabela Blue Team - Candon, Abra, Vigan, Kadiwa Green Team - Central Office The Blue Team copped first places in basketball and volleyball torunaments. Runners-up were Yellow Team and Red Team for basketball and volleyball, respectively. In table tennis doubles, Yellow Team and Green Team won first place and second place, respectively.

Program and Fellowship

The anniversary program was held in the evening at the JLP Resort and Hotel in Suba, Paoay, Ilocos Norte. The program highlighted the awarding of Certificates of Recognition to employees who had rendered at least 35 years to the agency.

Paoay Mayor Shiela A. Galano in her message, cited the partnership of NTA and the partner LGUs in the provision of the needs of our tobacco farmers like soft loans, subsidies and tree seedlings from Synchronized Tree Planting. She thanked the NTA for uplifting the lives of our tobacco farmers.

Ilocos Norte Vice Governor Cecilia Araneta Marcos, represented Gov. Matthey Marcos Manotoc and the two Representatives, Sandro Marcos (1st District) and Angelo Marcos Barba (2nd District) in the said celebrations. Vice Governor Marcos recognized NTA as home of outstanding public servants catering to the needs of the tobacco farmers and the tobacco industry as a whole

In his speech, Administrator/CEO Seares expressed his heartfelt thanks to the top leaders of Ilocos Norte for their allout support to all NTA programs and projects.

"I want to continue the Farmers First Policy of my father.



I take pride with the Sustainable Tobacco Enhancement Program. I want to make NTA as a promising agency," he added.

Director Nestor C. Casela cited in his message the benefits derived by the LGUs from the tobacco excise taxes.

Highlights of the fellowship night include dance presentations of the Branch Offices and the Central Office and raffle draws.

The dancers of La Union was adjudged winners in the dance presentation, besting nine other groups. Dancers from Ilocos Norte was second best, while the dancers from Cagayan got third place.

LOYALTY AWARDEES

The NTA recognizes the following employees who have served the agency for at least 35 years of unparalleled dedication and commitment.

agency for at least 55 years of unparatteled dedication at		
44 years	Elvira N. Sambrana	Supervising 1
43 Years 43 Years 43 Years	Alicia A. Malab Luzviminda U. Padayao Joefrey T. Bautista	Supervising 1 Department I Department I
42 Years	Ethelwolda C. Bosque	Computer Op
41 Years	Orlando O. Galdones	Administrative
41 Years	Alex L. Borje	Chief TPRO,
41 Years	Roderick C. Villarin	Artist/Illustrat
41 Years	Eulalia Z. Ele	TPRO III, Par
40 Years	Hector A. Tabije	Computer Op
40 Years	Ma. Teresa B. Laudencia	Department I
40 Years	Evangeline Y. Isip	TPRO I, Reg
40 Years	Elizabeth Q. Biala	Supervising T
40 Years	Myrna O. Lozano	Department I
39 Years	Giovanni B. Palabay	Department N
39 Years	Alma G. Toralba	Senior TPRO
39 Years	Ophelia T. Gonzales	HRMO IV, Ad
38 Years	Zenaida P. Tabije	Computer Op
38 Years	Edna C. Perlaoan	TPRO III, Par
37 Years	Zenaida T. Arrojo	Supply Office
37 Years	Virgilio I. Rabang	TPRO I, Pan
37 Years	Charleza A. Cabagsang	Computer Op
37 Years	Sinfrosa N. Valmonte	TPRO III, Re
37 Years	Magdalena N. Mamuyac	Administrativ
37 Years	Joselyn G. Miguel	Cashier III, P
37 Years	Rolando C. dela Cruz	Supervising S
37 Years	Fortuna C. Benosa	Department I
36 Years	Eleanor A. Rapanut	Chief TPRO,
36 Years	Roger T. Madriaga	Chief Agricult
35 Years	Tomasito G. Taloza	Senior TPRO
35 Years	Teresita D. dela Rosa	Economist IV
35 Years	Dinah E. Pichay	Department M
35 Years	Reynaldo R. Aquino	Budget Office
35 Years	Milagros C. Tiu	Chief Accoun
35 Years	Saturnino A. Agatep	Senior TPRO
35 Years	Elma C. Daquioag	Supervising O
35 Years	Carol Lynn R. Sambo	Supervisingn

TPRO, Regulation Dept

TPRO, Cagayan Branch Manager III, Ilocos Norte Br. Manager III, Isabela Branch

perator II, Abra Branch

e Officer V, Candon Branch Regulation Department tor, Industrial Research Dept ingasinan Branch

perator II, FTSD Manager III, Finance Dept ulation Department TPRO, Pangasinan Branch Manager III, IRD

Manager III, La Union Branch O, Pangasinan Branch dministrative Department

perator II angasinan Branch

er V, Administrative Dept ngasinan Branch perator II, FTSD gulation Department e Officer V, Pangasinan Br. Pangasinan Branch SRS, Industrial Research Dept Manager III, CorPlan Dept

Regulation Department Iturist, Pangasinan Branch

O, Vigan Branch /, Corporate Planning Dept Manager III, IAS er V, Finance Department ntant, Finance Department O, Ilocos Norte Branch Cashier, Finance Department Supervisingn SRS, IRD



Top officials flanked some of the awardees (Front, L-R) Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr., Teresita D. Dela Rosa, Carol Lynn R. Sambo, Dinah E. Pichay, Milagros C. Tiu, Elma C. Daquioag, Saturnino A. Agatep, and Tomasito G. Taloza; (Back, L-R) Dir. Nestor C. Casela, Dir. Jessie Pat M. Serna, Dir. Teofilo R. Quintal, Dir. Danilo C. Trongo, Deputy Administrator for Operations Dr. Giovanni B. Palabay.





ILOCOS NORTE-IRD BATAC-FTSD-CAGAYAN





ABRA-CANDON-VIGAN-KADIWA





NTA La Union dancers flash their winning moves



(L-R) Atty. Rohbert A. Ambros, Fortuna C. Benosa, Myrna O. Lozano, Dinah E. Pichay, and Dir. Danilo C. Trongco



(L-R) Adonis D. Lazo, Gilbert A. Taguiam, Dr. Giovanni B. Palabay, Engr. Roger T. Madriaga, and Joefrey T. Bautista



Hosts: Gay Ann B. Ronduen and Gerald C. Guzman





Ilocos Norte Vice Gov. Cecilia Araneta Marcos





Pangasinan

NTA Pangasinan conducted the annual STP in Mangandingay, San Manuel, Pangasinan and Poblacion West, Alcala, Pangasinan.

The activity was participated by officials and employees of local government units, tobacco farmers, employees of Universal Leaf Philippines, Inc., and employees of NTA Pangasinan.

La Union

NTA La Union staff, together with employees of the Trans-Manila, Inc., and representatives of Aringay Rice Corn Tobacco Farmers Growers Association, Inc. join the tree-planting activities in San Benito Norte, Aringay, La Union. A total of 550 mahogany seedlings were planted on the branch's first, among a series of planting schedules. The Branch Office targets to distribute 95,000 assorted forest and fruit tree seedlings from 15 branch-managed nurseries to tobacco-growing municipalities across the province.

Cagayan

NTA Cagayan Branch joined the annual STP in two ceremonial planting sites, one in Bulagao, Tuao at its Sanitary Landfill and the other in Vicente D. Trinidad National High School, Poblacion, Iguig, Cagayan.

The LGU Tuao and Iguig, MENRO representative, farmers, PNP, out-of-school youths, teachers, students, private individuals and branch office staff joined in the activities. A total of 300 neem tree, mahogany and butterfly seedlings were planted in Tuao and 650 assorted seedlings were planted in Iguig. There are still seven sites for the tree planting activity until second week of August.

The Branch aims to distribute 220,000 fruit trees, forest trees and ornamental tree seedlings to the eight tobacco-producing municipalities, LGUs. Schools, Cooperatives, NGOs and private individuals within the province.■

NTA Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. joined the annual Synchronized Tree Planting (STP) activity at the Golden Leaf Village in Barangay San Isidro, Rodriguez Rizal on July 29. Eighty officers and staff of the Central Office participated in the simultaneous inter-agency and multi-sectoral tree planting activity, now on its 10th year, as a regular event of the celebrations of its Founding Anniversary.

Also providing support during the activity were officials of the village homeowners' associations and the barangay council of Barangay Isidro.

Volunteers planted about 200 seedlings of mahogany, tamarind, katuray, and papaya in vacant and common areas of the village.

The tree-planting activity, initiated in 2013, is supplementary to the NTA's livelihood assistance under its Kahuyang Pangkabuhayan at Pangkalikasan (KPP) module, a component of its Renewable Fuelwood Energy Farm Development Project and Restoration of Ecological Integrity Program.

The project aims to help reinstate the ecological integrity of the tobacco-growing regions and contribute to the government's effort to improve water irrigation in farm lands, soil erosion, and lessen flooding potential.





NEWS

Groundbreaking of new NTA Building

NTA Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. led on June 30 the groundbreaking of the new Central Office Building in its original location at Scout Reyes corner Panay Streets in Quezon City.

The old building, which was built in 1966, officially shut its doors in 2019 after experts determined the structure was vulnerable to shifting and possibly collapsing in the event of an earthquake.

Once completed, the new Central Office will boast fifteen floors and over 24,000 square meters of office space. It will include space for each of the NTA branch offices and Members of the Governing Board. Floors will also be allotted to other government agencies and rented out to commercial establishments.



Time capsule laying (L-R) Dir. Jessie Pat M. Serna, Dir. Teofilo R. Quintal, Deputy Administrator for Support Services Benedicto M. Savellano, Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr., Deputy Administrator for Operations Engr. Cesario G. Sambrana, Dir. Danilo C. Trongco, and Dir. Nestor C. Casela.





Administrator Seares deliver his message before the time capsule laying. Right photo: The top officials [Melanie Rapiz-Parel]

Validation session on NTA readiness for NSW system

NTA Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. and Regulation Department Manager Atty. Rohbert A. Ambros led the agency in the validation session on NTA readiness to implement the National Single Window (NSW) system based on the NSW Technical Reference Guidelines (TRG) in a virtual meeting held on May 23.

The Regulation Department and the Corporate Planning Department provided updates on the progress of activities relevant to TradeNet, the new NSW online portal, and discussed potential data management and protection issues of the agency. TradeNet was developed in 2017 to harmonize all import and export procedures across the government.

Also present during the meeting were DTI Strategic Trade Management Office Director Atty. Luis Catibayan, ASEAN Single Window Advisor for USAID ASEAN Policy Implementation Project Dennis Pantastico, and Strategia Development Research Institute's Dr. Angie Zafra and Donn Ramos, among others.

The NSW was mandated to be implemented via Executive Order No. 482 to facilitate trade authorization procedure by allowing single submission of applications for



Administrator Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. and Regulation Department Manager Atty. Rohbert A. Ambros during the virtual meeting [Melanie Rapiz-Parel]

licenses, permits and other authorizations required prior to undertaking a trade transaction.

In ensuring the efficiency of the NSW services and clearly establishing the responsibility and accountability of participating TRGAs, the TWG required a strong human resource organization.



(L-R) Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. and ULPI Vice President Francis Irwin C. Ang sign the MOU, witnessed by (L-R) Dir. Wilfredo C. Martinez, Deputy Administrator for Operations Engr. Cesario G. Sambrana, Dir. Jessie Pat M. Serna, Dir. Teofilo R. Quintal, Dir. Nestor C. Casela, and NTA La Union Dr. Giovanni B. Palabay. [John James B. Canosa]

MOU for joint research, use of drones for agri application

NTA and Universal Leaf Philippines, Inc. (ULPI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to pursue and implement the projects in developing alternative system and promote or advocate the modernization of agricultural practices.

NTA Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. and Francis Irwin C. Ang, ULPI Vice President, Growing Operations, signed the MOU on April 6 at the NTA La Union Branch office in Bauang.

The parties agreed to undertake research and development project in using agricultural drones for the application of various farm inputs like crop protection agents, fertilizer and pesticides, generation of GPS coordinates, plant variety and number of standing crops, among others.

Before the signing, Administrator Seares and his team, along with some local officials and farmer leaders, attended the Pilot Testing of GPS Mapping demonstrated by ULPI staff using a Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) in Payocpoc Norte-Weste, also in Bauang.

Tobacco Dust Plant visit and inspection

NTA Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. and Deputy Administrator for Operations Engr. Cesario G. Sambrana, together with members of the NTA Governing Board and Engr. Roger T. Madriaga, officer-in-charge of the Tobacco Dust Processing Plant (TDPP), inspected project equipment at the production facility in Brgy. Fernando in Sto. Tomas, La Union on April 6. Members of the Technical Working Group for the rehabilitation of the plant were also present during the visit.

A fire inside the plant in 2018 damaged some equipment, resulting in stoppage of production for the Tobacco Dust Plus, an NTA brand for the dust pure tobacco formulation. The product is used as molluscicide to control snails and other predator, and as organic fertilizer to promote growth of lablab, a natural source of food of fish, in fish ponds.

The TWG, headed by Engr. Sambrana, discussed with Administrator Seares, and NTA Directors Nestor C. Casela, Teofilo R. Quintal and Jessie Pat M. Serna to determine the extent of rehabilitation to re-operationalize the production facility.



(L-R) Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr., Deputy Administrator for Operations Engr. Cesario G. Sambrana, TDDP OIC Engr. Roger T. Madriaga and Dir. Teofilo R. Quintal. [John James B. Canosa]



Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. checks on a leaf sample that Joel L Binwag (in white shirt) of Universal Leaf Philippines Inc. (ULPI) picked from a bundle of broadleaf tobacco being traded at the ULPI buying station in Barangay Nappacu Pequeño in Reina Mercedes, Isabela on May 5. Binwag leads the tour of the NTA Officials, which include Deputy Administrator for Operations Engr. Cesario G. Sambrana, NTA Directors Nestor C. Casela and Danilo C. Trongco and NTA Isabela officer-in-charge Joefrey T Bautista, at the trading floor, the warehouse and cold storage of broadleaf tobacco. (John James B. Canosa)

Isabela buying stations compliant with NTA trading rules

THE NTA Regulation Department has found the buying stations of the Pentaleaf Tobacco Corp. in Cauayan City and Universal Leaf Philippines, Inc. (ULPI) in Reina Mercedes, both in Isabela province, compliant with the trading rules and regulations for locally grown tobacco leaves.

Following an onsite visit conducted from May 30 to June 1, Primitivo Abalos Jr., Supervising Tobacco Production and Regulation Officer and head of the monitoring team, said that the buying stations have sufficiently adopted the provisions of the NTA Harmonized Grading System for Burley and Native tobacco types, as per Memorandum Circular No. 001, series of 2018.

Abalos said the buying stations use the calibrated digital weighing scale and give prompt issuance of Purchase Invoice Vouchers and payments to farmer-sellers. He also cited the ongoing collaboration with the NTA to monitor and ensure the consistent application of proper grading and classification practices.

After the visits, the monitoring team met with the Isabela branch personnel to discuss their observations and findings as well as the current trading needs and concerns faced by leaf buyers. Tobacco acceptances for all buying stations in Regions 1 and 2 for all tobacco types have reached about 49% or 24 million kilograms of the estimated volume of production of the current trading season as of May 31.

Other members of the monitoring team were Franklin Ross Mendoza, Senior TPRO, and Dianne Joyce O. Trinidad, TPRO I, of the Regulation Department. ■

Monitoring team satisfied with trading operations in Region 1

ALL major buying stations in Region 1 are compliant with trading rules and regulations, according to the NTA Regulation Department Monitoring Team dispatched to observe trading operations in Region 1 from April 18 to 22.

The team visited the buying stations of the Universal Leaf Philippines, Inc. in Rosales (Pangasinan), Agoo (La Union), Sta. Cruz, Candon City, and Cabugao (Ilocos Sur), Currimao and Batac City (Ilocos Norte); Trans-Manila Inc. in Agoo and San Juan, Ilocos Sur; Continental Leaf Tobacco Corporation in Bacnotan, La Union), Associated Anglo-American Tobacco Corporation in Agoo; and A & J Buying Station in Sto. Tomas, La Union.

Elvira N. Sambrana, Supervising Tobacco Production and Regulation Officer and head of the Monitoring Team, said that the buying stations, wholesale tobacco dealers and field canvassers adopted the harmonized grading system



RD Monitoring Team headed by Elvira N. Sambrana, Supervising TPRO; Sinfrosa N. Valmonte, TPRO III; and Dianne Joyce Trinidad, TPRO I, joined NTA Vigan's Roving Team in observing trading activities in two buying Stations, ULPI VTC #88 and TMI, and field canvassers Evelyn Chua and Nenita Anagaran, to monitor the compliance of the Trading Rules and Regulations. (Dianne O. Trinidad)

for Virginia and Burley tobacco per Memorandum Circular No. 001, Series 2018.

She added that the buyers complied with the calibration of digital weighing scales to ensure its precision, immediate issuance of Purchase Invoice Vouchers and payment to farmer sellers, and cooperation with assisting staff from NTA in monitoring grading and classification.

The visit was in coordination with the Branch Offices where the buying stations are located.

Other members of the monitoring team were Sinfrosa N. Valmonte, TPRO III, and Dianne Joyce O. Trinidad, TPRO I, of the Regulation Department.

In 2021, Region 1 accounts for about 60% of total production of tobacco, all types, in the country. ■





(L-R) NTA llocos Norte Senior TPRO, acting Chief Agriculturist, Branch Manager Luzviminda U. Padayao, Piddig, Ilocos Norte Mayor Eduardo Guillen, and (far right) MAO Eugene Calima who received the certificate of commendation in behalf of Alfonso Lista Mayor Edralin B. Alipio.

LGUs commended for support to tobacco farmers

NTA Administrator/CEO Robert Victor Seares Jr. commended two tobacco-growing local government units that extend cash assistance and farm inputs to tobacco farmers. He signed letter of commendations to the local executives of Piddig, Ilocos Norte and Alfonso Lista, Ifugao.

Administrator Seares praised Mayor Eduardo Guillen of Piddig, Ilocos Norte for the "outstanding work and unceasing commitment" of the town in promoting the sustainable development of the industry and improving the quality of life of its tobacco farmers.

The letter was presented to Mayor Guillen by NTA Ilocos Norte Manager Luzviminda U. Padayao during a short ceremony at the municipal hall on June 16.

"Guillen has introduced one of the best practices in our industry, and has set a standard for other tobacco-producing local government units to emulate. His genuine concern for the plight of the ordinary tobacco farmer is truly deserving of merit and appreciation," said Seares.

He cited the town's leadership for stepping in to shoulder 60% of the costs of fertilizers and pesticides of their farmers.

Piddig has dedicated over 200 hectares of agricultural lands to tobacco farming following a renewed interest among local farmers. The NTA, in coordination with the

local government and with the support of the Universal Leaf Philippines Inc. (ULPI), is actively encouraging the planting of tobacco as an alternative crop. All farm inputs are freely provided by ULPI with the exception for farm labor.

NTA Isabela Manager Joefrey T. Bautista presented the letter of commendation to Alfonso Lista Mayor Edralin B. Alipio through Municipal Agriculture Officer Eugene Calimay on June 16.

Administrator Seares cited the "exemplary leadership and commitment" of LGU Alfonso Lista in contributing to the development of tobacco industry.

Mayor Alipio spearheaded the distribution of excise tax to the local farmers at the LGU Alfonso Lista Municipal Hall during the celebration of 67th Founding Anniversary (Alfonso Lista) on May 20.

Tobacco farmers who planted in the year 2019 received a share of P10,000 per hectare, P7,000 for those who planted in 2020, and P5,000 for 2021.

Administrator Seares has been consistent in his call for the local government units who are beneficiaries of the tobacco excise tax to provide production assistance and other benefits to the tobacco growers to increase their income and productivity.

Gathering of tobacco leaf samples

The NTA-IRD Quality Assurance Division (QAD) has started gathering leaf samples of Virginia, Native and Burley from major training centers and tobacco contract growers.

Science Research Specialists Cyrus Raymond C. Olivenza and Kathlyn Mae A. Tejano visited La Union and Pangasinan, through the provincial branch offices, from May 10 to 13 to collect leaf samples for Crop Year 2021-2022.

This is in connection with the implementation of the "Annual Physical and Chemical Evaluation of Locally Grown and Tobacco Leaf Project" of the agency. QAD collects leaf samples every year to update the historical data on the physical and chemical characteristics of locally grown tobacco leaf. Samples will also be used as reference materials in seminars to be conducted on the Harmonized leaf grading.

The QAD has not able to gather leaf samples for the past two years due to travel restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

In La Union, the QAD team on May 11, assisted by Branch



The NTA-IRD-QAD Team with NTA La Union Roving Ream [Aryann G. Sangil]

Roving Team headed by NTA La Union Manager Dr. Giovanni B. Palabay, collected 1 kg of tobacco leaf sample per grade and for each tobacco type from the buying stations of Trans-Manila Inc. in Agoo, Associated Anglo-American Tobacco Corporation and Continental Leaf Tobacco (Phil.) Inc., in Bacnotan, and A & J Trading Center in Sto. Tomas, and from a field canvasser and farmer cooperators from Agoo and Bauang.

NTA hosts webinar on illicit tobacco trade

NTA has stepped up its effort to combat illegal tobacco trade by raising awareness on the issue with a webinar entitled "Government Fights Back: Combating Illicit Tobacco Trade," in cooperation with the Bureau of Customs and the Bureau of Internal Revenue, held on April 7.

Resource speakers were NTA Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr.; Rep. Jericho Jonas Nograles, head of the Technical Working Groups on Illicit Tobacco and Agricultural Smuggling (Ways and Means); Atty. Beverly Milo, HREA, Large Taxpayers Service – Excise Group; and Atty. Vincent Philip C. Maronilla, Assistant Commissioner of the Post Clearance Audit Group (PCAG), Bureau of Customs.

Topics focused on initiatives of their respective agencies to combat anti-illicit trade.

Rep. Nograles said that based on the Euromonitor International report, about 13 percent of the cigarettes sold in the Philippines are illegal.

The rampant smuggling of illegal cigarettes was discussed, most if which coming from neighboring ASEAN countries and shipped through the Philippines' unmonitored shorelines. These illicit activities have resulted in a P26-billion illicit market annually depriving the government of tax revenues.

According to the House Committee on Ways and Means, an estimated PHP 60 billion in taxes a year is lost because of untaxed tobacco products. That's money that could have been used to fund several social service programs for Filipinos.



Screengrab: (clockwise) Host Melanie R. Parel, Rep. Jericho Nograles, Atty. Vincent Philip C. Maronilla, Atty. Beverly Milo, and Admininstrator Robert Victor G. Seares Jr.

Administrator Seares in his presentation shared the economic impact of the tobacco industry.

"The sale of illegal cigarettes poses a major risk to public health and serious damage to our economy. The NTA, as ever, is committed to supporting the government in this fight," he said.

To help curb these losses, the NTA vowed to intensify its drive against smuggled and illegal cigarettes. With the help of its partner agencies, the NTA launched a large-scale information campaign to educate both consumers and retailers about the dangers of illegal tobacco products.





Screengrab (left photo) of the seminar and NTA llocos Norte participants at the Branch Office in Batac City

Rice Production Training Seminar for EWs

IN preparation for the upcoming rice season, the NTA Farm Technology and Services Department held an online seminar and training session on high-quality inbred rice production for its extension workers (EWs) on June 21.

The session included basic lessons on rice morphology and the different growth stages of the plant. It also sought to educate EWs on new and more efficient production and management practices.

In his message, Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares, Jr. discussed the importance of the NTA's rice production project at a time when there is rising food insecurity and economic uncertainty worldwide.

The participants are expected to enhance their training skills by knowing the different stages of rice growth and understanding the different rice production techniques and practices.

The rice production, a component project of the Integrated Farming and Other Income Generating Activities, was introduced in 1999 in support of the self-sufficiency agenda of the government. The project specifically aims to augment the income of tobacco farmers, other than tobacco production. Farmer-cooperators are given production, technical and marketing assistance.

Also present during the seminar were Deputy Administrator for Operations Engr. Cesario Sambrana and resource speakers Tobacco Production and Regulation Officer III Rhonelle Sulicipan, Chief Science Research Specialist (SRS) Juanito Maloom, SRS I Melvin Andres, and Philippine Rice Research Institute − Batac SRS II Marilyn Yere. ■





Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. (right photo) talks to the staff of NTA Isabela after the inauguration of their new Farmers' Training Building. The Administrator also eads the ribbon cutting ceremony of the new Farmers' Training Bulding in NTA Cagayan (left photo). [John James B. Canosa]

NTA inaugurates 2 farmers' training center in Region 2

NTA inaugurated two farmers' training centers in Region 2 during the first visit of Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. to the region for the monitoring of tobacco trading.

Administrator Seares and NTA Cagayan Manager Dr. Corazon R. Riazonda led the inauguration of the NTA Tobacco Farmers Training Building in Tuguegarao City on May 4.

Fr. Bernard Corpuz, Parish Priest of Saint Peter Metropolitan Cathedral, blessed the training center that will be used by tobacco growers for tobacco production and livelihood training.

The structure represents a significant enlarge-ment of an NTA compound at 1,267 square meters. It includes an additional space for commercial trading purposes. The facility also houses conference, meeting and study rooms as well as a training hall that can accommodate up to 200 people.

Administrator Seares also led the inauguration of the new farmers training building on May 5 at the compound of NTA Isabela, with NTA Isabela Manager Joefrey T. Bautista.

In attendance in both inaugurations were Deputy Administrator for Operations Engr. Cesario G. Sambrana, members of the NTA Governing Board Nestor C. Casela, Teofilo R. Quintal, and Danilo C. Trongco, managers of the different Branch Offices and Departments, NAFTAC officers, and representatives from buyer firm and local officials.

The Isabela building can accommodate 200 persons and composed of a dozen conference and break-out rooms and shall serve as an avenue for skills training for tobacco farmers, providing latest farm technologies and techniques and to take part in various livelihood programs.

Virtual training for NTA-IQA

The NTA Internal Quality Auditors (IQA) Team participated in a training course on the Guidelines on Auditing Management Systems with Orientation on the ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Systems Standards on April 25-27.

The seminar-workshop, conducted virtually by the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP), was designed to prepare and equip the 25 members of the NTA-IQA Team with the necessary information to effectively conduct QMS, audits according to the internationally recognized best practice techniques for ISO 9001:2015.

The training also provided the participants with an overview

of the key requirements and benefits of the ISO 9001:2015 audit application to manage quality and drive continual improvement. Also included in the training course were the identification of the aims and benefits of an ISO audit and interpretation of ISO 19011:2019 auditing requirements for audit application.

ISO 9001 and ISO 19011 are standards that both aim to develop an effective management system that helps an organization maintain quality services to the customers. In general, ISO 19011 focuses on management systems while ISO 9001 centers specifically on quality management systems.



IRD visits JTI plant. THE NTA Industrial Research Department visited the JTI Asia Manufacturing Corporation in Malvar, Batangas on June 21 in line with the efforts of the NTA to ensure the appropriate and efficient oversight of tobacco products. The IRD team, headed by the Manager Myrna Lozano, observed the primary and secondary processes of cigarette production before dropping by at the Quality Control Unit laboratory. (L-R) Cyrus Raymond C. Olivenza, Renzo Vien C. Reas, Dina Dela Reyna, Rafael Ledesma of JTI, Myrna Lozano, and Lee Marja R. Mercado.■



Region 2 EDC endorses STEP. The Region 2 Economic Development Committee endorsed the Sustainable Tobacco Enhancement Program (STEP) roadmap to the Regional Development Council of the NEDA Region 2 Office on June 14. The proposed budget for FY 2023 totaled PhP2.6 billion, with an estimated P620 million allocated for the Cagayan Valley Region alone.

The STEP promotes block farming, which involves the integration of the provision of farm inputs, mechanization services, and other government interventions through the clustering of small-scale farms. (L-R) Corporate Planning Manager Fortuna C. Benosa, Division Chief III Neyo E. Valdez, Deputy Administrator for Operations Engr. Cesario G. Sambrana, Budget Officer Vi Reynaldo R. Aquino, and Deputy Administrator for Support Services Benedicto M. Savellano. ■ [John Caesar V. Albano]



Final Board Meeting with Sec. Dar. Outgoing Secretary of Agriculture and Chairman of the NTA Governing Board William D. Dar poses with the Vice Chairman and NTA Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr., the Board Members and the Deputy Administrators after the 109th and final Special Board Meeting at the DA Central Office on June 29. Dar stepped down the following day, June 30, with President-elect Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. succeeding him as interim DA Secretary. (L-R) Deputy Administrator for Support Services Benedicto M. Savellano, Dir. Nestor C. Casela, Dir. Teofilo R. Quintao, Undersecretary Leocadio S. Sebastian, Sec. William D. Dar, Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr., Dir. Jessie Pat M. Serna, Dir. Danilo C. Trongco, Board Secretary Rex Antonio P. Teoxon, and Deputy Administrator for Operations Engr. Cesario G. Sambrana. ■ [Alona A. Manganaan]

Farmers meeting in Tarlac. NTA Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. discussed tobacco trading and various programs and projects of the agency to the tobacco farmers from tobacco-producing barangays in San Manuel, Tarlac in a meeting organized by NTA Pangasinan held at Barangay San Narciso on April 5. The tobacco growers, who are members of the tobacco block farming in the province, are beneficiaries of facility and livelihood assistance both from the agency and the local government of San Manuel.

Joining the Administrator in the meeting were Deputy Administrator for Operations Engr. Cesario G. Sambrana, Members of the NTA Governing Board Nestor C. Casela, Teofilo R. Quintal and Jess Pat M. Serna, and NTA Pangasinan Officer-in-Charge Engr. Roger T. Madriaga. ■ [John James B. Canosa]



Promotions of 3 Managers, 4 Division Chiefs

NTA promoted Perla C. Manzon, Myrna O. Lozano and Joefrey T. Bautista to Department Manager III and four others to Division Chiefs.

Both Manzon and Lozano served as officers in charge (OIC) of their respective departments.

Manzon has been the OIC of the Administrative Department, in a concurrent capacity as the Human Resource Management Officer (HRMO) V of the same department, after the optional retirement of Dr. Cristina C. Lopez on February 25, 2020.

Lozano was designated as OIC of the Industrial Research Department (IRD) on April 22, 2021, in a concurrent capacity as Chief Science Research Specialist of the Techno Laboratory Services and Instrumentation Division (TLSID) of IRD. She replaced former Department OIC Lina Cera, who died of illness in 2021.

Bautista was promoted from Chief Agriculturist to Branch Manager of NTA Isabela, replacing Herman C. Torres who retired from government service in February 2020.

Also promoted were Neyo E. Valdez, from Public Relations Officer V to Division Chief III of the Planning, Programming and Evaluation Division of the Corporate Planning Department; Randy I. Abella, from Supervising Science Research Specialist (STS) to Chief Science Research Specialist of the Farm Techno-



(L-R): Deputy Administrator for Support Services Benedicto M. Savellano, Deputy Administrator for Operations Engr. Cesario G. Sambrana, Administrative Department Manager Perla C. Manzon, Industrial Research Department Manager Myrna O. Lozano and Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. [Melanie Rapiz-Parel]

logy Development Division of the Farm Technology and Services Department; Dina B. Dela Reyna, from Chemist IV to Chief SRS of the Quality Assurance Division of IRD; and Noralyn I. Idica, from Administrative Officer V to Chief Agriculturist of NTA Vigan.■



Central Office: NTA Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. administered the oath-taking of five newly appointed and promoted employees in the Central Office. (L-R) Leonora P. Nudo, Russel R. Rutab, Patricia Lourdes Cortez, Kriscia Mae M. Vidal, Marjorie Ann P. Tabije, Rochelle C. De Peralta, Primitive M. Abalos Jr., Franklin Ross S. Mendoza, and Jay C. Darlucio. [Melanie Rapiz-Parel]



La Union: NTA Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. administered the oath-taking of five newly appointed extension workers of NTA La Union, held at the La Union Branch Office in Bauang, La Union on April 6. (L-R) Joseph R. Ramos, Agriculturist I; Mildred M. Hidalgo, Agriculturist I; Arnel M. Acosta, Tobacco Production and Regulation Officer (TPRO) I; Jerome B. Alcantara, Agriculturist I; and Clarence M. Lucina, TPRO I; and flanked by NTA LA Union Manager Dr. Giovanni B. Palabay. [Keithlyn Joy Madayag]

More Promotions and Appointments

FIVE newly promoted, three newly appointed employees and one lateral transfer took their oath of office before NTA Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares on April 11 at the Central Office in Quezon City.

Promoted:

Jay C. Darlucio – from Project Evaluation Officer II to Information Technology Officer II of the Corporate Planning Department

Primitivo M. Abalos, Jr. – from Senior Tobacco Production and Regulation Officer (TPRO) to Supervising TPRO of the Regulation Department

Franklin Ross S. Mendoza – from TPRO III to Senior TPRO of the Regulation Department

Russel R. Rutab – from Financial Analyst II to Financial Analyst III of the Finance Department

Rochelle C. De Peralta – from Internal Auditor I of the Internal Audit Service to Human Resource Management Officer II of the Administrative Department

New Appointments:

Leonora P. Nudo – Supervising Science Research Specialist Marjorie Ann P. Tabije – Cashier II Kriscia Mae M. Vidal – Computer Operator II

Lateral Transfer:

Patricia Lourdes Cortez – from Cashier II of NTA Vigan to Supply Officer II of the Administrative Department

Deputy Administrators Benedicto M. Savellano (Support Services) and Engr. Cesario G. Sambrana (Operations) and Perla C. Manzon, OIC Administrative Department, witnessed the oathtaking held after the Monday's flag ceremony.

The nine employees are part of the 42 promotions and appointments approved by the Civil Service Department from May to June. The rest of the promotions and appointments were plantilla positions from the eight Branch Offices, including FTSD in Batac City.



Top Officials (L-R): Administrative Department officer-in-charge Zenaida T. Arrojo, Regulation Department Manager Atty. Rohbert A. Ambros, newly designated DASS and Finance Department Manager Ma. Teresa B. Laudencia, Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr., outgoing DAOP Engr. Cesario G. Sambrana, outgoing DASS Benedicto M. Savellano, newly designated DAOP and NTA La Union Manager Giovanni B. Palabay, Corporate Planning Department Manager Fortuna C. Benosa, Industrial Research Department Manager Myrna O. Lozano and Internal Audit Department Dinah E. Pichay. [Rose Policarpio]

Farewell ceremony honors outgoing Deputy Administrators

NTA held a send-off program for its two Deputy Administrators on July 5, at the NTA Central Office in Quezon City. During the ceremony NTA Administrator/ CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. handed over the certificates of recognition for valuable service to the agency to the outgoing Deputy Administrator for Operations (DAOP) Engr. Cesario G. Sambrana and Deputy Administrator for Support Services (DASS) Benedicto M. Savellano.

The "Salamat, Mabuhay" ceremony was attended by the officials and staff of the Central Office, with the Branch Offices joining the ceremony online via Zoom.

Engr. Sambrana was deginated OIC DAOP on April 2021, in concurrent capacity as Manager of NTA Pangasinan, and got his presidential appointment in March 2022. In taking the helm of the Branch operations, including agriculture and industrial research and tobacco regulation, he focused his efforts to organize farmers into block farms.

He also pushed forward its vision to modernize and industrialize the country's tobacco industry, when he initiated the Tobacco Farm Mechanization Program.

Through modernization, he said, the industry can produce

self-reliant farmers organizations who produce tobacco of global quality.

Savellano was the Chief of Staff of Ilocos Sur (1st Dist.) Rep. Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano and a three-time councilor before he assumed his position as DASS on June 17, 2020. He came on board in the middle of a public health emergency, and took charge as the agency and its workers go through the challenges amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under his leadership of the Support Services, the Administrative Department made significant progress in the recruitment, promotion and selection, filling up all 94 vacant plantilla positions in 2021.

During the ceremony, Administrator Seares formally announced the designation of NTA La Union Manager Dr. Giovanni B. Palabay, and Finance Department Manager Ma. Teresa B. Laudencia as new DAOP and DASS, respectively, concurrent to their respective positions.

Administrator Seares delivered his message of support to the newly designated officials, and thanked the outgoing officials for a job well done in serving the tobacco farmers and NTA employees, and their outstanding leadership in their respective offices.

RETIREMENT

PERLA C. Manzon, Department Manager III of the Administrative Department, retired on June 30, after working in the government for tobacco industry for 41 years.

Manzon, was only promoted to her current position in January this year, though she had been the officer-in-charge of the Administrative Department, in a concurrent capacity as the Human Resource Management Officer (HRMO) V of the same department, after the optional retirement of Dr. Cristina C. Lopez on February 25, 2020.

She also served as the Pubic Relations Officer III of the

Office of the Administrator from 2017 to 2014. She began working as Casual Employee of the Philippine Virginia Tobacco Administration, and as Information Officer I of NTA after the merger of tobacco agencies in 1987.

Also retiring in the second quarter were NTA Cagayan Branch Manager Corazon R. Riazonda who reached mandatory retirement after 40 years in service on May 4, Farm Technology and Services Department officer-in-charge Felisa R. Aurellano who opted to retire on June 27 after 31 years in service.

Long-time Administrative Officer V of NTA Ilocos Norte Elaine A. Tinio also bowed out of government service on May 27 after 39 years. ■

PROVINCIAL NEWS

ISABELA: NTA-LGU dialogues for tobacco farmers

NTA Isabela Manager Joefrey T. Bautista paid courtesy visits to local executives of tobacco-growing municipalities in the province to discuss matters in relation to updates in the tobacco industry as well as the utilization of excise tax shares of LGUs to tobacco farmers, on July 14.

In Cauayan City, Manager Bautista met with City Mayor Ceasar Jaycee Dy at the Mayor's Office where they also discuss validated masterlisting of tobacco farmers who planted to tobacco in the city.

Plans and programs regarding the environmental management concerns and tree planting to maintain a sustainable environment were also highlighted during the visit.

Manager Bautista next visited Naguilian Mayor Juan R. Capuchino and Vice Mayor Isidro Acosta Jr. at the Municipal Conference Hall. They discussed two of the pressing issues, which are the complaints of some tobacco farmers in their incentives and the labor, and the protracted delay in the release of shares of excise in the municipality intended to finance programs and projects to benefit the local tobacco growers.

Alternate cropping, tobacco to corn, was also included in the discussion to optimize land utilization and lessen availability on labor.

In order to boost tobacco farmer beneficiaries' productivity and profitability, Mayor Capuchino aims for the expansion of the coordination links between agricultural development possibilities and extension services.

In Benito Soliven, Manager Bausita discussed with Mayor Roberto T. Lungan and Municipal Administrator Rodalyn Grace V. Lungan on updates of the tobacco industry including the plans to potential cooperation to NTA in empowering the farmers through livelihood programs that center on farm machinery. ■ [Photos: Joey A. Pascual]



Cauayan City with Mayor Ceasar Jaycee Dy



Municipality of Naguilian with Mayor Juan R. Capuchino



Municipality of Benito Soliven with Mayor Roberto T. Lungan

IRD-BATAC: Training on THP production



Tobacco farmers, members of the Women Weavers Association, Sangguniang Kabataan leaders, and employees of the Municipal Agriculture Office of Banna town in Ilocos Norte attended a technology transfer training session on how to produce tobacco handmade paper (THP) and novelty items by the Industrial Research Department from June 20 and 22. The session sought to equip participants with knowledge and skills so they could find other means of livelihood or employment.

PANGASINAN: Assistance for IFOIGAP-Rice Production





NTA Pangasinan headed by officer-incharge Engr. Roger T. Madriaga distributed P599,600 worth of checks for fertilizers for IFOIGAP-Rice Wet Season 2022 to 23 farmer cooperators on July 18 held at the NTA Pangasinan Office in Villasis, Pangasinan. Before this, the Branch Office conducted on June 30 an orientation seminar and ceremonial distribution of P2.48 million worth of production assistance (land preparation and gas and oil) to 396 farmer cooperators of the ride production, tilling an aggregate area of 319 hectares.

ABRA: PCIC seminar on crop, livestock insurance

NTA Abra, in partnership with the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC), conducted a seminar on Crop and Livestock Mortality Insurance participated in by employees and farmers on June 28 at the NTA Abra Branch Office in Banqued, Abra.

The half-day seminar was attended by the Branch Operations Group along with the farmer cluster leaders. The resource speaker, Mercury D. Pascua, PCIC Provincial Extension Office Supervisor, discussed the programs offered by PCIC and gave an orientation on the process of application for crop and livestock insurance in cases of damage or loss. She also explained the different benefits and other privileges of insured crops and livestock.

According to Branch officer in charge Randy I. Abella, the seminar is "very relevant" for the ongoing implementation of Rice Production Wet Season CY 2022.

Release of cash assistance to the farmer cluster leaders under the said project followed after the end of the seminar.







NTA La Union Branch Manager Dr. Giovanni B. Palabay [Aryann G. Sangil]

LA UNION: TGY evaluation

The NTA La Union TGY Technical Committee, headed by Branch Manager Dr. Giovanni B. Palabay conducted the second field evaluation of Tobacco Grower of the Year (TGY) nominees for Virginia Tobacco Improved Flavor on April 12 in the municipalities of Balaoan, Bangar, and Sudipen, La Union and for Virginia Neutral Flavor on April 19 in Bacnotan and San Juan, La Union. With Manager Palabay in the visitation and evaluation were the other members of the committee Chief Agriculturist Emma Beth B. Fantastico, Supervising TPRO Engr. Warlie V. Oribello, Senior TPRO and TGY Project Coordinator Engr. Christopher R. Supang, and TPRO III Engr. Potenciano H. Apilado.





MINDANAO: Benchmarking in Region 2

A DELAGATION from Cagayan de Oro City and Alubijid, Misamis Oriental conducted benchmarking activities at the NTA Isabela Branch Office in Ilagan City on July 21. They were accompanied by Mercedes M. Ayco, Tobacco Production and Regulation Officer III of the NTA Extension Office in Mindanao.

The 63-member delegation from the local government of Cagayan de Oro, and Agriculture Extension Workers and tobacco farmers of Misamis Oriental, gained new insights in tobacco mechanization and production. NTA Isabela Manager Joefrey T. Bautista gave them orientation on the implementation of different projects and programs of NTA.

[Photos: Edgar R. Lagasca Jr.]

VIGAN: 100% Collection

NTA Vigan achieved 100% collection rate for the IFOIGAP-TCGS for crop year 2021-2022. The program covers 1,011 Farmer Cooperators with an area of 708.50 hectares. According to Branch Chief Agriculturist and officer in charge Noralyn I. Idica, the "historic achievement" for the Branch is the culmination of everyone's hard work and dedication towards the attainment of the Agency's "Natatangi at Tapat na Adhikain."

She recognized the efforts of other members of the Operations Group, particularly Supervising TPRO Jose A. Taclas Jr. and Senior TPRO Tomasito G. Taloza and all Area Supervisors.

"Special thanks to our former manager, Ma'am Minerva P. Mizal, who had set the standards that we have followed," added Idica. ■



CANDON: Tree seedlings inventory

BRANCH officer in charge Adonis D. Lazo joined the NTA Candon Branch Office Inventory Team headed by Orlando O. Galdones, Administrative Officer V, in the inspection of tree seedling nurserey of Antero Melchor Cabrera in Estancia, Narvacan, Ilocos Sur on July 20. The tree seedlings were distributed to different participating entities and farmer cooperators for the 2022 Synchronized Tree Planting activity. **[Photo: Jennifer M. Carbonell]**



FTSD: Drone operation training

THE NTA Technology and Services Department, in cooperation with AgriDOM Solutions Corporation, a private drone supplier, conducted a Training on Remotely Piloted Aircraft System on July 27-29 at the FTSD Office in Batac City.

The participants are Agricultural and Biosystems Engineers (ABEs) from the NTA Branch Offices in Abra, Ilocos Norte, Vigan, Candon, La Union, Pangasinan, Isabela, and Cagayan, including technical staff from FTSD, Industrial Research Department, Office of the Deputy Administrator for Operations and Regulation Department.

The three-day training highlighted the use and basic operation of the drone which will be used in the documentation and operation of tobacco growing, specifically on the Tobacco Farm Mechanization Project which is one of the components of the agency's Block Farming approach.

Mark A. Flandez, Trainer/Instructor of the said corporation, was equally enthusiastic as the trainees in providing lectures/ theories and more importantly hands-on/actual operation of the drone in the open field.

NTA Ilocos Norte Manager Luzviminda U. Padayao, in her message, the drone is very helpful in documenting accurate data on areas planted to tobacco, thus more accurate computation of expected volume produced by every local government unit.



Demo on the basic operations of drone [Rhonelle P. Sulicipan]

ILOCOS NORTE: Orientation on drone

NTA Ilocos Norte in partnership with Universal Leaf Philippines Inc. (ULPI), conducted an Aerial Drone Demonstration on the measurement of tobacco planted areas at Piddiq, Ilocos Norte on April 11. It was attended by the tobacco farmers from the different tobacco growing barangays of the municipality. NTA Ilocos Norte ManagerLuzviminda U. Padayao emphasized the advantages and significance of having precise measurement of tobacco planted areas. Manager Mario Lagmay of ULPI together with the technical staff discussed and demonstrated the operation of the Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) or drone.



CAGAYAN: MOA for OJT

NTA Cagayan signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Cagayan State University (CSU) College of Engineering and Architecture in fulfillment of the Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering (ABE) students' academic requirements for the on-the-job training (OJT). Branch officer in charge Gilbert A. Taguiam signed the MOA for NTA Cagayan, while Jennyfer D. Rabanera, ABE Program Chair, signed on behalf of CSU. The signing, held on July 8 at the NTA Cagayan branch office, was witnessed by Josefa P. Correo, Administrative Officer V; Alicia A. Malab, Supervising TPRO; Moises D. Duran, Senior TPRO; and ABE students from Cagayan State University.

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NATIONAL TOBACCO ADMINISTRATION

GOVERNING BOARD



PRES. FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.
Chairman

ROBERT VICTOR G. SEARES, JR
Vice Chairman



TEOFILO R. QUINTAL Member Tobacco Farmers Sector



WILFREDO C. MARTINEZ

Member

Tobacco Farmers Sector



NESTOR C. CASELA Member Academic Community Sector



DANILO C. TRONGCO *Member Tobacco Farmers Sector*



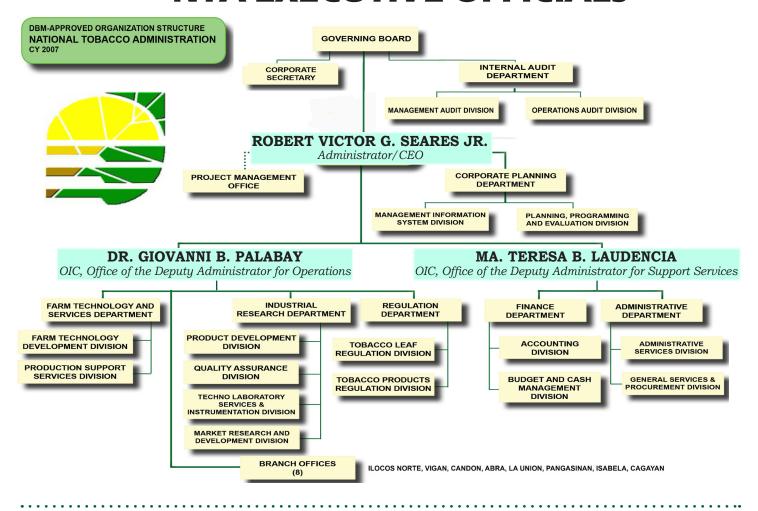
WILSON VICTORIOMember

Tobacco Traders/Exporters



JESSE PAT M. SERNA *Member Tobacco Manufacturers Sector*

NTA EXECUTIVE OFFICIALS



OFFICE OF THE CORPORATE SECRETARY

The **Office of the Governing Board** formulates policies, promulgates regulations and prescribes rules necessary for the attainment of the purposes and objectives of the Agency. The Board of Directors confirms the appointment of personnel below the rank of Deputy Administrator, except the Auditor and those under him; approves the Agency Plan and Budget and such Supplemental Budgets submitted by the Administrator; and Acts on policy issues and matters identified by Management.

The Office of the Corporate Secretary provides secretariat and administrative services to the Board and its committees; prepares the agenda for meetings of the Board, in consultation with the Administrator, for the approval of the Chairman; and acts as official custodian of documents entrusted to the Board and exercises control over the use of the corporate seal and minutes of proceeding confirmed by the Board.■



REX ANTONIO P. TEOXON
Board Secretary



(L-R): Marissa J. Alvero (Administrative Assistant III) and Ramon R. Muncal (Stenographer III).



NTA ADMINISTRATORS (1987-present)



MARIANO UN. OCAMPO III July 24,1987 -November 30, 1987



ALONZO Q. ANCHETA December 3, 1987 -March 8, 1990



EDILBERTO V. CARIASO April 1, 1990 -December 7, 1992



JOAQUIN T. ORTEGA December 9, 1992 -January 15, 1995



AMANTE E. SIAPNO January 16, 1995 -March 1998



ANTONIO M. DE GUZMAN July 16, 1998 -February 29, 2001



MAMERTO E. ELLORIN June 19, 2003 -March 12, 2004



CARLITOS S. ENCARNACION *March 18, 2001 - June 18, 2003 March 12, 2004 - June 30, 2010*



EDGARDO D. ZARAGOZA September 20, 2010 -February 8, 2017



ROBERT L. SEARES February 9, 2017 -March 19, 2020



ROBERT VICTOR G. SEARES JR.
June 10, 2020 - present

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR



Seated (L-R): Richard Aaron C. Recio (Executive Assistant II), Alona A. Manganaan (Administrative Officer V and NTA Abra OIC), Robert Victor G. Seares Jr. (Administrator/CEO), Atty. Jun Fred V. Parado (Attorney V), Arman L. Anga-angan (Private Secretary II) Back (L-R): Ramil B. Lamboloto (Administrative Assistant IV), Cecilia A. Santos (Administrative Assistant I), Bryan P. Micu (Utility Worker III), and Sammy H. Albay (Utility Worker III).

The **Office of the Administrator** (OAd) recommends to the Board, and implements Board-approved policies, guidelines, plans/programs/projects, rules and regulations, and systems and procedures; submits Corporate Operating Budget, Agency Plan and Budget and Supplemental Budget to the Board; and provides the Board annual and periodic reports pertaining to the policy guidelines, plans/programs/projects, rules and regulations, systems and procedures implementation and the total operations of the Agency.

In addition, the Administrator appoints officials and employees subject to the confirmation of the Board, and disciplines or removes them for cause in accordance with Civil Service Laws, rules and regulations; vprovides overall direction, coordination, control and supervision over all the Operating Groups; and and transfers, designates and assigns Agency officers and personnel as the exigencies of the service may require. He also directs the conduct of periodic review of the performance of all the operating Groups to gauge the efficiency and effectiveness; and represents the Agency in all dealings with other offices, agencies and instrumentalities of the government and with other public or private, domestic or foreign entities, and all persons subject to the limitations provided under pertinent laws, rules and regulations.

The office is headed by the current Administrator/CEO Robert Victor G. Seares Jr., a young and charismatic local politician, a multi-awarded and hardworking Mayor of Dolores, Abra, before he assumed the top position of the agency. He has been at the forefront in the implementation of the Sustainable Tobacco Enhancement Program (STEP). During the lockdowns and under the new normal, he implements health and safety protocols, including provision of health kits to employees and interventions for affected tobacco farmers. He initiated reforms such as the strengthening of the communication and information capability of the agency and efforts for the construction of a new Cental Office building.

Two units assisting the OAd are the Legal Support Services headed by the Legal Officer (Attorney V) and the Public Relations Office headed by the Public Relations Officer (PRO V).

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE

The **Public Relations Office** is responsible for education and information, the issuance of press releases and establishment of media relations, as well as the Communication Support Projects of the Agency.

The main objective of the Communication Support Program, in line with the national government platform for transparency and accountability, is to ensure that the NTA is able to effectively educate and convey pertinent information to industry stakeholders.



(L-R): Roderick C. Villarin (Artist Illustrator III), and Melanie R. Parel (Public Relations Officer III).

LEGAL SUPPORT SERVICES

The **Legal Support Services** provides a legal arm for the management in overseeing the contractual activities of the agency; legal consultancy services, specifically in the areas of legal advice, opinion, recommendations, etc., necessary for policy formulation or decision-making for the Top Management and other units. It also acts as the legal counsel and prosecution arm of the agency, and provides procedural process in the prosecution and defense of administrative disciplinary and non-disciplinary cases.■

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR FOR OPERATIONS





DR. GIOVANNI B. PALABAYOfficer-in-charge
Office of the Deputy Administrator for Operations

The Office of the Deputy Administrator for Operations (DAOP) provides overall direction, control, coordination, and supervision of the development and implementation of the Agency's programs and projects by the Farm Technology Development and Services, Industrial Research Development and Regulation Departments and ensure that such is in accordance with set directions, thrusts, policies and plans, and that the output and results are within the set performance targets and standards. The DAOP conducts periodic performance review of the departments/units within the group to determine their effectiveness, adequacy and responsiveness of the units in responding to the Agency's operations requirements as well as introduce necessary measures for the continuing improvement of service delivery.

NTÁ La Union Manager Dr. Giovanni B. Palabay is the designated officer-in-charge of the DAOP office in concurrent capacity. Dr. Palabay, the most senior manager of the agency, have been head of the La Union Branch since 1999. He earned his master's degree in Master in Business Administration from Divine World College in Laoag City, and Docto of Philosophy in Rural Development from the Benguet State University. ■



Seated (L-R): Priscilla E. Esguerra (Secretary), Dr. Giovanni B. Palabay (OIC DAOP); Back (L-R): Alvin Gacayan (Driver), and John James B. Canosa (Agriculturist I).

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR FOR SUPPORT SERVICES



MA. TERESA B. LAUDENCIA

Officer-in-charge

Office of the Deputy Administrator for Support Services

THE Office of the Deputy Administrator for Support Services (DASS) provides overall direction, control, coordination, and supervision of the Finance and Administrative Departments to ensure that the provision of support services needed in the implementation of the Agency's programs and/or services are well coordinated and in accordance with approved policies, plans, systems and procedures and that outputs are within set standards. The DASS conducts periodic performance reviews of the Finance and Administrative Departments to determine effectiveness, adequacy and responsiveness of the units in responding to the Agency's operations requirements as well as introduce necessary measures for the continuing improvement of service delivery.

The DASS Office is currently headed by its officer-in-charge Ma. Teresa B. Laudencia, in concurrent capacity as Manager of Finance Department. Ms. Laudencia is a Certified Public Accountant with a career and experience spanning over 30 years, and holder of a master's degree in Development Administration from Don Mariano Marco Memorial State University in La Union.■

INTERNAL AUDIT DEPARTMENT



(*L-R*): Krisyleen C. Jayme (*Clerk I*), Rosalie P. Catura (*Internal Auditor II*), Dinah E. Pichay (*Department Manager III*), and Kriscia Mae M. Vidal (*Clerk II*).



With the full and unwavering support of then Administrator, Dr. Robert L. Seares, and then Administrative Manager, Dr. Cristina C. Lopez, the NTA Governing Board approved the creation of three Internal Auditor positions, thru Board Resolution No. 808-2018. The NTA Governing Board's endorsement to the GCG of the request for the creation of merely three IA positions, however, developed into a total restructuring proposition that created the Internal Audit Department, with two Divisions: Operations Audit Division (OAD) and, Management Audit Division (MAD).

The IAD journey was long but eagerly awaited. There were struggles in-between, as we commiserated with our own personnel who were affected by the abolition of their positions, and a pandemic that further delayed the approval process. The anticipation was nonetheless rewarding.

The IAD restructuring afforded delineation of responsibilities and will facilitate monitoring of accountabilities and evaluation of performance of the internal auditors. Notwithstanding the structural change, the functions of the Department remain, which are geared essentially towards strengthening the internal control systems, improving existing systems and procedures, and promoting transparency and accountability in various aspects of the operations of the NTA. It is tasked with appraising the internal control system of the Agency to determine whether controls are well designed and properly implemented, and in determining the adequacy of internal controls or whether it is achieving its objectives. Furthermore, the IAD is responsible for the evaluation of management controls and operations performance, and the determination of the degree of compliance of internal controls with laws, regulations, managerial policies, accountability measures, ethical standards and contractual obligations.

With the recent approval by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) of the Qualification Standards of the newly created internal auditor positions, the IAD is going full throttle in the selection and/or hiring of high potentials to ensure fulfillment of these functions. ■



DINAH E. PICHAYDepartment Manager III

The journey towards IAD restructuring is summarized through this timeline of activities:

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March 16, 2018	NTA Governing Board adopted Board Resolution No. 808-2018 approving the creation of three IA positions
March 28, 2018	Submission to the DBM of letter request for the same, including justifications and other supporting documents
April 12, 2018	DBM indorsed NTA letter to the GCG, as the authority over GCCC operations
April 30, 2018	Initial meeting between NTA Management representatives and GCG. It was during this meeting that NTA was apprised that the 3 new IA positions proposed for creation is not responsive to the CSC career pathing requirements, considering the salary grades of the existing and the proposed positions. GCG instead recommended for the total restructuring of the IAS, guided by the provisions under DBM Circular No. 2008-5 on the Guidelines in the Organization of an Internal Audit Service/Unit, and the Philippine Government Internal Audit Manual issued per DBM Circular No. 2011-05 dated May 19, 2011.
August 30, 2018	GCG required the submission of a new Board Resolution approving the restructuring of the NTA IAS, and the constitution of a Technical Working Group (TWG) who shall work in close coordination with the GCG. Special Order No. 0693 constituting the TWG to review, evaluate and modify the organizational structure and staffing composition of the IAS, was approved by then Administrator Robert L. Seares.
September 12, 2018	NTA Governing Board, thru Board Resolution No. 911-2018, approved the restructuring of the IAS.
September 13, 2018	Meeting with GCG and NTA TWG, including the whole staff of the IAS
October 22, 2018	After a series of consultations, GCG Memorandum Order No. 2018-09 was issued on the Restructuring of the NTA IAS and renamed it into the Internal Audit Department (IAD), with two divisions. The same also effectively abolished the positions of Internal Auditor IV and Computer Operator III.
January 2019 onwards	Documentation activities: - Preparation of GCG-approved IAD OSSP - Preparation of Functional Statements, Job Descriptions, Qualification Standards Coordination activities with the CSC on the implementation of the GCG MO: - On the effects of the abolition of positions to the incumbents thereto. CSC response on quidance to implement the GCG MO, with recommendation to appeal
October 4, 2019	to the GCG for reclassification of action on affected plantilla positions from 'abolition' to 'coterminus with incumbent'
January 29, 2020	Submission to GCG of appeal to reclassify action on affected plantilla positions
February 27, 2020	Receipt of GCG denial on appeal
October 5, 2020	Submission to the CSC of the Qualification Standards of the IAD positions, based on the standards set in the Revised Philippine Government Internal Audit Manual
November 25, 2020	CSC response was received, with observations and recommendations on the proposed QS, and submission of Organizational and Functional Chart of the IAD, Position Description Forms/Job Descriptions as certified by HRMO
December 21, 2020	Resubmission to the CSC of the revised QS, based on CSC MC No. 12, s 2006
December 7, 2021	Receipt of CSC Notice of Resolution No. 2101051 on the Approval of QS for positions under the IAD of the NTA

CORPORATE PLANNING DEPARTMENT



FORTUNA C. BENOSA

Department Manager III



NEYO E. VALDEZ
Division Chief III
Planning, Programming
and Evaluation Division

THE Corporate Planning Department (CPD) ensures its continuing relevance of he Agency to national development; responsiveness to client's needs and priorities; and, effectiveness, efficiency and viability as a government corporate entity, mandated to regulate and administer the local tobacco industry. As a policy, the NTA institutionalizes a corporate planning system that will guide, systematize, standardize and integrate all planning efforts of all its units and, therewith, unify directions, strategies and priorities which will provide the basis for its allocation of resources.

Corporate planning covers mediumterm strategic, tactical programs and projects; and, annual operational levels. The department has likewise been tasked with performance monitoring/tracking and evaluation, organizational review and systems development, and management information systems and computerization services.

The Department coordinates with relevant agencies for the effective interfacing of its plans and programs, for the effective compliance of requirements with oversight agencies and the preparation of position papers and reports. The department provides process consultancy assistance and management support to operating groups, as may be determined at any stage of project implementation.

The Planning, Programming and Evaluation Division (PPED) conducts the Agency Medium-Term Strategic Planning as well as Public Investment Plan preparation, for inclusion in the Medium-Term Development Plan and Public Investment Plan of the Agriculture Sector and of the National Government. In collaboration with the Finance Department, it leads the preparation of the Agency's Plan and Budget for presentation and negotiation for Budgetary Support from the National Government and of the Corporate Operating Budget for its execution, as approved

through the General Appropriations Act.

It leads in the conduct of review and evaluation of plans/programs/activities for funding and incorporation to the Agency's plan and operating budget. In addition, it conceptualizes programs/projects in coordination with relevant units/personnel and initiates negotiation; and, establishes necessary linkages with relevant agencies for effective interfacing, collaboration, and/or funding support.

The Management Information Systems Division (MISD) serves as the management information and computerized services arm of the Agency. It is primarily responsible for the introduction, or upon request of the departments/units, development of and enhancement of existing information systems (ISs) that will support both the operations covering core and support functions of the Agency. It provides top management, and the various departments and/or offices with timely, relevant, and accurate organized data, information and statistics to be used in their planning and decision-making.

The MISD is tasked with the assessment of the Agency's hardware and software requirements, including the maintenance/ upkeep and the needed upgrading of such, the administration/maintenance/upgrade of the Agency's website, and the provision of technical support/user assistance and computerization services, as requested by other departments/units.

Most importantly, it is responsible for the performance tracking/periodic monitoring of the Agency's various programs/projects being implemented by the departments/ branch offices to determine whether or not they are implemented as planned, what deviations were made, what causes and what effects, whether or not services and outputs were delivered. Performance Monitoring systematizes collection of performance information as a basis for meaningful evaluation/measurement of project achievement/impact.

Seated (L-R): Teresita D. dela Rosa (Economist IV), Neyo E. Valdez (Division Chief III), Fortuna C. Benosa (Department Manager III), Jay C. Darlucio (Information Officer II), Joseph B. Benosa (Information System Analyst II); Back (L-R): Claire Monnette P. Esteban (Economist II), Leah C. Fiesta (Secretary I), Perla V. Labayan (Computer Operator II), John Caesar V. Albano (Computer Operator I), and Arnold B. Melosantos (Computer Programmer II).



FARM TECHNOLOGY AND SERVICES DEPARTMENT



Seated (L-R): Hector A. Tabije (Computer Operator II), Kenneth Russell L. Tanaval (Science Research Specialist II), Warner J. Batugo (Science Research Specialist II), Rhonelle P. Sulicipan (TPRO III), Evangeline C. Cabigan (Senior Science Research Specialist), Randy I. Abella (OIC, Chief Science Research Specialist), Prescilla A. Nisperos (TPRO III), Gay Anne B. Ronduen (Science Research Specialist II), Charleza A. Cabagsang (Computer Operator II), Charleza I. Tanaval (Product Development Officer I), David Paulo Ogatis (Research Assistant) Back (L-R): Ralph Edward Abrasaldo (TPRO I), Lilibert Rafisura (TPRO I), Nelly G. Alba (TPRO III), John Rick L. Manglal-lan (Research Assistant), Jezza Mhae A. Jacinto (Farm Aide), Gervan A. Lucido (Research Assistant), Ryan Lester B. Camangeg (Farm Aide), John Leimar G. Cristobal (Research Assistant), Rudy Mar C. Sagsagat (Farm Aide), Rhema I. Sotelo (Secretary), Bryan Dave B. Manglal-lan (Farm Aide), Arcely C. Aniñon (Farm Aide), Raymart P. Guzman (Research Assistant), Jonathan T. Avila (Research Assistant), Howell D. Quemquem (Farm Aide), Christine E. Oclaray (Research Assistant), Ronald I. Quilban (Utility Worker I), Ranie Joy B. Sebastian (Research Assistant), Mercedez M. Ayco (TPRO III), and Regie Bagas (TPRO I).

AGRICULTURAL research is vital for the improvement of the agricultural sector. The primary role of agricultural research is to improve agriculture's productivity, sustainability, and profitability. It provides knowledge, stimulates new thinking and innovation, improves technology, develops human resources, and facilitates dialogue between stakeholders in the sector.

The Farm Technology and Services Department (FTSD) is the Agency's research arm, composed of 20 plantilla positions. It is divided into two divisions.

The Production Support Services Division (PSSD) is assigned to develop programs, projects, and assistance service packages for the farmer's systematic transfer and adoption of recommended technologies. Training and enhancing the capabilities of extension workers and organizing, strengthening, and promoting farmer leaders and organizations is also a function of PSSD. At the same time, the Outreach Desk Office, which is in Misamis Oriental and North Cotabato with five staff, is tasked with the extension of technical assistance and regulatory functions. Currently, they are assisting 4,286 tobacco farmers with a total area of 2,416.7 hectares.

The Farm Technology Development Division (FTDD), on the other hand, is focused on recommending, and implementing policies, programs, projects, and guidelines for continuing technology enhancement through project

verification, demonstrations, and pilot testing. The group continuously monitors the actual application of production technologies as a reference for technology adjustments and floor price determination. Also, it operationalizes the Protocol Research System with the private sector and the Quick Response/ Problem Referral System with the other operating groups of the agency. It takes charge of germplasm collection, characterization, evaluation, and maintenance and provides technical expertise/consultancy services to Branch Offices

Two of the department's most notable achievements are the registration of Native Batek Chewing tobacco varieties, Lampangog, and Sinai by the National Seed Industry Council (NSIC) during the 38th NSIC Technical Secretariat Meeting on November 18, 2021, and the awarding of the technical paper entitled: Making Life with Giving: NTA Extends Assistance During the Pandemic as Third Placer during the 32nd Regional Symposium on Research and Development Highlights. Aside from protocol research, the regular projects undertaken by FTSD are Tobacco Collection, Purification, Maintenance, and Characterization of Different Tobacco Varieties, Lines, Introductions, and Related Species; Pest Clinic Quick Response System; Tobacco Contract Growing System; and Farmer's Organizational Development. At the same time, the ongoing projects consist of the



Engr. RANDY I. ABELLA Officer-in-charge, FTSD

following: the Determination of Suitable Area for Virginia Improved Flavor Tobacco Production Through Spatial Analysis Using Geographical Information System (GIS) Technology, the Development of Tobacco-Related Activities, and the Facility Map for the Stakeholders of the Tobacco Industry in Regions 1, 2, and CAR.

FTSD ensures the provision of highquality research and training that will uplift the quality of life of the tobacco farmers and other stakeholders through increased productivity and other income-generating activities.

INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

THE Industrial Research Department (IRD) is responsible in developing other industrial uses of tobacco, setting quality standards of tobacco leaf and products, conducting market research, and rendering laboratory analytical services.

It is divided into four divisions: the Product Development Division (PDD), Techno Laboratory Services and Instrumentation Division, the Quality Assurance Division, and Market Research and Development Division. All the divisions hold office at the Central Office, except PDD which is based in Batac City.



MYRNA O. LOZANO Department Manager III



DINA B. DELA REYNAChief Science Research Specialist
Quality Assurance Division



Seated (L-R): Dina B. Dela Reyna (Chief Science Research Specialist), Myrna O. Lozano (Department Manager III), Cyrus Raymond C. Olivenza (Science Research Specialist II); Back (L-R): Renzo Vien C. Reas (Market Research Assistant), Kenneth Martin S. Duguiles (Computer Operator II), Kathlyn Mae A. Tejano (Science Research Specialist I), Lee Marja R. Mercado (Market Specialist IV), Jano P. Belleza (Secretary I), and Justito A. Ambros (Science Research Specialist II); Not in photo: Carol Lynn R. Sambo (Supervising Science Research Specialist)

The Quality Assurance Division (QAD), is responsible in developing and implementing programs, policies, guidelines, and/or procedures for the conduct of continuing research/studies and determines standards of quality for tobacco leaf and tobacco products to be adopted. It also conducts the following: (1) physical-chemical quality evaluation of all tobacco types to determine quality composition, material suitability improvement for production management and import requirement; and (2) research relative to the harmonization of existing tobacco leaf classification and grading systems with internationally accepted standards.

Two studies being conducted for Standards and Quality Assurance are the following: 1) Annual Physical and Chemical Evaluation of Philippine Grown and Imported Tobacco Leaf, and 2) Annual Physical and Chemical Evaluation of Manufactured Tobacco Products (Cigarettes). The first study involves evaluation/analysis of tobacco leaf samples in terms of physical (maturity, body, color) and chemical characteristics (nicotine, reducing sugars, chloride contents), the results of which are presented to NTA extension workers and farmer leaders during seminars on leaf grading standards. The second study is conducted to determine the levels of nicotine, tar, and carbon monoxide in tobacco smoke. It is building up capabilities in line with the WHO-FCTC commitments.

The Market Research and Development Division (MRRD) undertakes market research/feasibility studies on supply and demand for tobacco and tobacco products in both local and foregin markets to guide technology development, production and export development programs; and determines the market conditions, needs, problems and issues affecting domestic and foreign market for all types of tobacco and other tobacco products.

Among the studies it conducted are the supply and utilization of tobacco. It published an abstract of Selected Tobacco Statistics culled from various sources. It also compiled profiles of different tobacco producing countries.

MRDD conducted promotion and marketing of Tobacco Dust Plus in the Central Office, and participated in expositions, congress and trade fairs/exhibits organized by a non-government organization (Kabisig), government offices (Department of Agriculture and Department of Trade and Industry) and international company (Multimedia Co., Ltd., *Tobacco Asia*).

All these activities are in support of the production of quality tobacco and tobacco products, a concern for all NTA researchers, tobacco companies, and other stakeholders of the industry.



(L-R): Hanna Brigette C. Corpuz (Science Research Specialist I), Krizelle Ashleigh O. Guzman (Administrative Assistant I/Researcher), Leonora P. Nudo (Supervising Science Research Specialist), May Jane C. Vives (Science Research Specialist II), Julie L. Mercado (Senior Science Research Specialist), Engr. Juanito O. Maloom (Chief Science Research Specialist), Rolando C. Dela Cruz (Supervising Science Research Specialist), Sharwin D. Abad (Science Research Assistant), Ernesto O. Sagsagat Jr. (Administrative Aide I/Utility), Jyre Christian P. Semanero (Administrative Assistant I/Researcher), and Roosevelt C. Sagsagat (Administrative Aide III)

The Product Development Division (PDD) conducts research and development activities on the use of tobacco leaf, plant parts and wastes for industrial/commercial products, pharmaceutical, medicinal and veterinary uses, pesticides, oils and others; in conducting techno-economic analysis of potential/new products to determine their technical/economic feasibility, investment viability and market potentials; and in information dissemination and technology training on potential/new industrial products developed from tobacco.

The PDD's research and development efforts are directed to address the need to maximize the utilization of the tobacco plant and its by-products for industrial purposes.

One of the studies conducted was on alternative uses of tobacco, focused on the use of tobacco extracts for controlling pests in vegetable crops. Such parameters as efficacy, quality, ease of handling, and general acceptance, were considered in the research trial, which are prerequisites for the product's registration and commercialization with the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards.

The Techno Laboratory Services and Instumentation Division (TLSID) services the laboratory requirements of the industry through the QAD and Farm Technology and Services Department. It conceptualizes, organizes, and implements research on laboratory standards and procedures in tobacco and other tobacco byproducts in support to product research and operations needs.

NTA maintains four laboratories: the Quality Assurance and Laboratory in Quezon City, and the Soils and Water, Seed, and Product Development Laboratories in Batac City.

The newly-built three-storey Quality Assurance and Laboratory Building houses the analytical laboratory and the Leaf Grading and Classification Training Room.

The new QA laboratory will serve the following functions: (1) effective regulation through continuing monitoring and measurement of physico-chemical and synthetic substances of cigarettes and physico-chemical components of tobacco for export and being imported; (2) setting of standards for leaf and tobacco products; and (3) harmonization of grading systems for Virginia and Burley tobacco.

Annually, the Soils and Water Laboratory conducts chemical analysis on the organic matter, pH, phosphorus, potassium and chloride content of soils for fertility assessment; and performs confirmatory tests on NPK content of fertilizers used in tobacco production, and the chloride content and salinity of irrigation water.



Engr. JUANITO M. MALOOM Chief Science Research Specialist Product Development Division



ROLANDO C. DELA CRUZ

Acting Chief
Techno-Lab Services and
Instrumentation Division

REGULATION DEPARTMENT



Atty. ROHBERT A. AMBROS

Department Manager III



Seated (L-R): Elvira N. Sambrana (Supervising TPRO), Eleanor A. Rapanut (Chief TPRO), Rohbert A. Ambros (Department Manager III), Alex L. Borje (Chief TPRO), Primitivo M. Abalos Jr. (Supervising TPRO); Back (L-R): Rose D. Policarpio (Clerk I), Jerymy Ann E. Feria (TPRA II), Evangeline Y. Isip (TPRO I), Franklin Ross S. Mendoza (Senior TPRO), Dianne Joyce O. Trinidad (TPRO I), Sinfrosa N. Valmonte (TPRO III), and Carmelita V. Albano (TPRA II)



Engr. ALEX L. BORJE
Chief TPRO
Tobacco Leaf Regulation Division

AMONG the general and specific objectives of the NTA under Executive Order No. 245 (1987) are: (1) to administer and regulate the tobacco industry and (2) to promulgate and enforce rules and regulations on the grading and trading of leaf tobacco and tobacco products.

The reorganization in 2007 marked the major shift of the NTA of its regulatory authority from purely regulation of local trading to further include the regulation of manufacturing/processing, import, export and transshipment of leaf tobacco and tobacco products.

The major regulatory activities of the **Regulation Department** are monitoring and supervision of local tobacco traders, manufacturers, and exporters/importers/ transhippers, as well as quality inspection procedures, proper and accurate recording/ certification of tobacco production in relation to Republic Act Nos. 7171 and 8240. To further enhance their technical capability and expertise, the RD Staff actively participate in relevant seminars, workshop and conferences product regulation conducted locally and internationally, such as the Department of Agriculture, Department of Finance, the Department of Trade and Industry, Development Academy of the Philippines, Department of Health, WHO-Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

The department also represents the NTA in congressional and senate hearings on the proposed legislative measures related to tobacco. All these activities are within the functional responsibility of the department as the regulatory arm of the agency under the direct control and supervision of the Office of the Deputy Administrator for Operations.

Among the recent milestone accomplishments of the department are: (1) recognition of NTA as one of the first four Trade Regulation Government Agencies to successfully onboarded with the tradenet.gov.ph portal, a

government wide unified system for the full automation of import licensing and commodity clearance procedures; (2) successful conduct of biennial Tripartite Consultative Conferences with the farmers and traders in the setting of Floor Prices; (3) adoption of new implementing guidelines and procedures in the efficient and effective monitoring of tobacco production per municipality based on validated area of production; (4) recognition of the NTA as Standard Development Organization in the development and recommendation of tobacco standards for inclusion in the Philippine National Standards (PNS); and (5) contributed the biggest share in the generation of corporate income in the collection of license, processing, monitoring/supervision, inspection, research and regulation and competitiveness enhancement fees.

The Department is composed of two divisions. The Tobacco Leaf Regulation **Division** formulates and implements approved plans, policies and/or guidelines for the effective enforcement of rules and regulations governing the trading of locally-grown leaf tobacco, and in the issuance of licenses and permits/authorities for tobacco trading, redrying/warehousing, as well as, importation, exportation and transshipment of leaf tobacco. The Tobacco Products Regulation Division formulates and implements approved plans, programs policies, quidelines and/ or procedures governing the regulation of manufacture, packaging, advertising, distribution, wholesaling, retailing, importation and exportation of tobacco products; and conducts overall supervision and monitoring of the manufacture, distribution, wholesaling, retailing, importation, exportation and transshipment of tobacco products and other tobacco related materials, to ensure full compliance to set policies, rules and regulations. ■



ELEANOR A. RAPANUT
Chief TPRO
Tobacco Leaf Product Division

FINANCE DEPARTMENT



Seated (L-R): Resty C. Cambe (Accountant IV), Milagros C. Tiu (Chief Accountant), Ma. Teresa B. Laudencia (Department Manager III), Reynaldo R. Aquino (Budget Officer V), Marivic G. Espolong (Budget Officer IV); Back (L-R): Bernadette S. Sanidad (Accounting Clerk III), Russel R. Rutab (Financial Analyst III), Maylene B. Afos (Financial Analyst I), Merilene V. Sansano (Budget Officer II), Elma C. Daquioag (Cash Clerk III), and Marjorie Ann P. Tabije (Cashier II

THE **Finance Department** sets the financial controls, plans, policies, and operations. It generates financial reports as Management tools in making critical decisions and taking the necessary corrective actions. Its functions encompass and extend to all other departments and branch offices of the Agency.

Powered by a lean and mean staff of 14, it is faced with daily pressures to meet funding needs, financial reporting requirements and deadlines as well as myriad other duties. This is the department where you hear, "the deadline was yesterday."

The Finance Department carries large responsibilities to implement such programs, activities, and projects not only by providing timely and adequate funding resources but also making sure that the funds are spent efficiently and effectively.

Through the years, the Agency has funded such notable projects as Rice and Tobacco Production; Renewable Energy Development Project and Restoration of Ecological Integrity, which includes Seedling Production, Synchronized Tree Planting for Tree and Bamboo; AgriPinoy Processing Plant; AgriPinoy Milling Complex; Irrigation Support Project; Tobacco Dust Production; and Irrigation Support Project for Small Tobacco Farmers in partnership with local government units; Tobacco Growers Assistance Program, the Tobacco Growers Cooperatives Program, the National Tobacco Free Public Education Program, and the Research and Development Program.

As COVID-19 caused massive paralysis on all sectors of society for more than two years, the people of Finance Department soldiered on to mitigate its impact not only to its employees but also the farmers. The Department saw to it that the employees received their salaries and all the benefits on time. In some instances where employees got exposed, they were given additional assistance in their recovery. The department released funds for the procurement of test kits for the employees to do routine testing to protect them and their families.

The Finance Department, through the **Accounting Division**, provides timely and consistent financial services to the officers and employees like payroll administration, payment of claims, remittance to oversight bodies of all statutory deductions, payment of administrative expenses, and purchasing assistance.

The **Budget and Cash Management Division** formulates and implements budgeting and fund/financial resource management policies in accordance with existing directives and guidelines and considering the Agency's resources and constraints. ■



MA. TERESA B. LAUDENCIA

Department Manager III



MILAGROS C. TIU

Chief Accountant

Accounting Division



REYNALDO R. AQUINO

Budget Officer V

Budget and Cash Management Division

ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT

THE Administrative Department is the Administrative support arm of the Agency, to ensure the availability of the technophysical facilities and infrastructure requirements, supplies and materials, the appropriate number and quality of manpower expertise, and the general services necessary for the effective and efficient operations of the Agency to facilitate the achievement of its goals and objectives.

The Department is made up of two Divisions: the Administrative Services Division (ASD) and the General Services and Procurement Division (GSPD). Some of the important functions of the Divisions are, as follows:

1. Administrative Services Division

- Formulates, recommends, and implements policies and procedures pertaining to Agency personnel recruitment, selection, placement, promotions and transfers; records management; and programs related to health care and medical services
- Develops and implements policies, systems and procedures for employee

- performance appraisal, rewards and recognition and sanctions; and provides management with updated and relevant information on personnel matters
- Undertakes manpower assessment and planning for the Agency on the basis of the present and future operations
- Conducts training needs analysis and continuing training/capability building and development and team building programs for the Agency
- Submits reports on the implementation and evaluation of personnel policies, personnel welfare benefits/programs, training programs, and records management policies and systems and procedures.

2. General Services and Procurement Division

Formulates, recommends, and implements (1) policy guidelines for the proper use and maintenance of equipment, NTA buildings and facilities; (2) efficient duplicating and printing service system for all departments and offices; (3)

- policy guidelines for the proper and maximum utilization of NTA vehicles and for an efficient and effective vehicle maintenance system; (4) security measures, and provides security services for NTA officials and employees and NTA property from fire, theft and other hazards
- Establishes, designs and installs systems and procedures on the procurement and storage of supplies and materials
- Formulates, recommends, disseminates, and implements rules for the proper procurement, issuance and utilization of supplies and equipment, as well as disposal of unserviceable properties
- Conducts periodic physical inventories of supplies and equipment as required by law
- ➤ Submits reports on implementation of policy guidelines and systems on maintenance services, property and supply procurement and control programs, transportation and communication services and security measures.



ZENAIDA T. ARROJO *OIC, Administrative Department*



Atty. JUN FRED V. PARADO OIC, Administrative Services Division



Engr. ABRAHAM D. DELA PENA OIC, General Services & Procurement Division



Seated (L-R): Rochelle C. De Peralta (HRMO II), Ophelia T. Gonzales (HRMO IV), Zenaida T. Arrojo (OIC, Supply Officer V), Michelle P. Nacpil (HRMO III), Patricia Lourdes F. Cortez (Supply Officer II); Back (L-R): Marlon M. Ross (Utility Worker III), Dr. Salter Joseph B. Elizalde (Medical Officer), Deevid John Rayze B. Briosos (Secretary I), Gerald C. Guzman (Record Officer II), Engr. Abraham C. dela Pena (Supply Officer IV), Anthony V. Pagba (Liaison Clerk), Atty. Jun Fred V. Parado (OIC, HRMO V), Raymond M. Marzan (Reproduction Machine Operator II), Pablo B. Catura Jr. (HRMA II), Edgardo C. Guia (Building Foreman), and Jayson I. Gannaban (Audio-Visual Technician II). Not in Photo: Randy V. Ramos (Driver II), Roberto P. Abella Jr. (Driver II), Wilmer G. Tamayo (Driver II), and Joemarie L. Gela (Driver II)



BRANCH OFFICES

ON January 30, 1987, President Aquino issued EO 116, otherwise known as Reorganization Act of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, mandating the consolidation of the aforementioned agencies into one, attached to the Department of Agriculture. The consolidation was implemented by EO 245, the NTA Charter.

In order to effectively cater to the develop-ment of the 27 major tobacco growing provinces, the NTA established its corresponding Branch Offices. These offices were strategically located in the heart of the tobacco-growing areas to implement its programs and projects, namely:

- Batac Branch Office, to cover Ilocos Norte and house the NTA Research and Training Center at the same time;
- 2. Vigan Branch, first district of Ilocos Sur;
- 3. Candon Branch, second district of Ilocos Sur;
- 4. Bangued Branch Office, Province of Abra;
- 5. San Fernando Branch Office, La Union and Benguet;
- 6. Rosales Branch Office, Pangasinan, Tarlac and Nueva Ecija;
- 7. Ilagan Branch Office, Isabela, Quirino, Ifugao, Kalinga-Apayao, and Nueva Vizcaya;
- 8. Tuguegarao, Province of Cagayan
- 9. San Jose Branch Office, Occidental Mindoro
- 10. Iloilo Branch Office, the whole of Visayas; and
- Cagayan de Oro Branch Office, to cover the whole of Mindanao.

In its organizational life, the NTA has undergone two streamlining programs. The first one, in 1998, which was implemented by virtue of EO 29, as amended by EO 36, that resulted in the reduction in its manpower complement from 1,126 to 750 regular positions; and in 2007, under EO 366, that left the Agency with only 350 residual positions.

After the latest reorganization, the number of branch offices were reduced to only eight, namely:

Ilocos Norte – Batac City
Ilocos Sur (1st District) – Vigan City
Ilocos Sur (2nd District) – Candon City
Abra – Bangued, Abra
La Union – Bauang, La Union
Pangasinan – Villasis, Pangasinan
Isabela – Ilagan City
Cagayan – Tuguegarao City





NTA also maintains extension and regulation activities for Visayas, Mindanao and Mindoro traditional tobacco growing areas, which used to be covered by branch offices that were abolished by the Department of Budget and Management on the issue of administrative viability.





LUZVIMINDA U. PADAYAO

Department Manager III



DIVINA D. PAGDILAO
Acting Chief Agriculturist

BRANCH PROFILE

NTA Ilocos Norte Branch is located at Brgy. 17 Tabug, City of Batac, Ilocos Norte 2906 Philippines. It is housed in the National Tobacco Administration building, together with two other departments of the NTA, the Farm Technology and Services Department (FTSD) and the Industrial Research Department (IRD).

The office serves 17 tobacco producing municipalities/cities in the 2 Districts of the province: District I includes the municipalities of Bacarra, Pasuquin, Piddig, Sarrat, Vintar and Laoag City, and District II includes the municipalities of Badoc, Banna, Currimao, Dingras, Marcos, Nueva Era, Pinili, San Nicolas, Paoay, Solsona and the City of Batac. ■

STAFF

OFFICE OF THE MANAGER
Luzviminda U. Padayao – Department Manager III
Ferdimark R. Rosario – Acting Administrative Officer
Valentino L. Valdez – Accountant III
Helen Grace A. Frianeza – Cashier II
Zenaida P. Tabije – Computer Operator II
Eduardo D. Enriquez – Driver II

OPERATIONS Divina D. Pagdilao – Supervising TPRO Saturnino A. Agatep – Senior TPRO Romel E. Calautit - TPRO III Rosemarie T. Soriano – TPRO III Mae Angela U. Lacamora – Agriculturist II **Leazyl V. Casauran** – *Agriculturist I* Dynel Lourena C. Bumocli – Agriculturist I Dianne May A. Jose – Agriculturist I Nessa Marie Suniga – Agriculturist I Jazlyn D. Obien - TPRO I Jan Jan A. Gudoy - TPRO I Reymar I. Abella - TPRO I Jessa Mae A. Alcantara - TPRO I Michael Jhon P. Dahilig - TPRO I Filipinas Q. Ganir - TPRO I Judith Ann A. Sarian - TPRO I

JOB ORDER Aldwin V. Acosta - Secretary John Kaiser D. Arellano - TPRO / Norvelyn D. Cabanatan - Administrative Aide I Reynaldo U. Corpuz - Driver II Marilyn O. Dahilig - Trading Clerk Jose B. Frianeza, Jr. – Utility Worker I Buenamer R. Mangabat - TPRO I Marbie B. Marcelino - Utility Worker I Karl Ceferino T. Nicolas - Trading Clerk Crispin R. Pagtama – Laborer I Joel Anthony C. Pambid – Administrative Aide Vina Rizza D. Salut – Cash Clerk Oliver S. Tapec - TPRO I Vineil V. Teaño - Driver II **Derwin S. Torres** – *Trading Clerk* Gem Denise Z. Ventura – Administrative Aide I John Rey B. Arzaga – Administrative Aide I Michael T. Laforteza - Administrative Aide I

Roxanne Mae Puyot - Trading Clerk



BRANCH PROFILE

NTA Vigan Branch is located right in the heart of the culturally rich and historically significant City of Vigan, standing along with other Government Offices beside the well-known Quirino Stadium in Bantay, Ilocos Sur. The workforce, now dominated by 'millennials' maintain a close-knit family for the greater good of everyone.

The Branch Office has the First District of Ilocos Sur as its area of coverage, ith seven tobacco-growing municipalities (Sinait, Cabugao, San Juan, Magsingal, Sto. Domingo, San Ildefonso, and San

Vicente) and one city (Vigan City).

As of crop year 2021-2022, the Branch had 4,527 registered tobacco farmers tilling a total aggregate area of 3,659 hectares of Virginia Neutral and Improved Flavor, Burley Improved Flavor, and Native LP2, LP4 and LP7.

For the past 35 years, NTA Vigan has been serving its clients through

the dynamic leadership of five Branch Managers in succession, namely, Rodrigo T. Pagtulingan (1987-1989), Teofilo S. Batin (1989-1997), Reynaldo D. Perez (1997-1999), Minerva P. Mizal (1999-2022), and Noralyn I. Idica (April 2022 to present). However, from May 2013 to March 2017, then Chief Agriculturist Faustino O. Taal, was the officer-incharge, when Ms. Mizal was designated Project Manager of the NTA AgriPinoy Projects (now the Kadiwa Ni Ani At Kita) in Narvacan, Ilocos Sur.

Vigan Branch has maintained its pride for its highly dedicated personnel complement of 21 regular staff (16 from the Operations Unit; five from the Administrative and Finance Section), and 18 Job Order hires (4 Extension Workers, 3 for the Special Projects - TRAFMAP,10 branch office-based, and one assigned at the Tobacco Farmers Training Center) who all possess the technical know-

Engr. NORALYN I. IDICA Officer-in-Charge

how and expertise to implement various programs and projects of the agency. For this most recent crop year 2021-2022, Vigan Branch has attained the collection efficiency of 100% both for the IFOIGAP-RICE WS2021 and IFOIGAP- TCGS 2021-2022. ■

STAFF

OFFICE OF THE MANAGER

Noralyn I. Idica - Chief Agriculturist

Erwin B. Venus - Secretary I

Immanouel A. Rafanan – TPRO III / Acting Administrative Officer V

Jannalie T. Esquierdo - Accountant III

Liezl Margarette R. Guzman - Computer Operator II

OPERATIONS

Jose A. Taclas, Jr. - Supvg. TPRO

Tomasito G. Taloza - Senior TPRO

Victor V. Valledor - TPRO III

Christopher S. Cabanog - Agriculturist I

Laura V. Abelita – Agriculturist I

Wesley M. Salem - Agriculturist I

Jessica T. Isnec – TPRO I Elma S. Bayading – TPRO I

lan Michael C. Ventura - TPRO /

Jonard C. Manglal-lan – TPRO I Melissa P. Sumao-i - TPRO I

Delia R. Giron - TPRO I

Johnley E. Ramos - TPRO I

Gloria L. Abella - TPRO I

Nasser Jhon F. Ragasa - TPRO I Mica Ella G. Pagal - TPRO I

Rychelle C. Cabanting - TPRO I

Megan C. Gengania - TPRO I Mae Vanessa J. Millares - TPRO I

Daniel Roy A. Siababa - TPRO /

Jeoffrey Q. Dy - Driver

Mark Louie I. Silario – Driver/Mechanic

Charlotte T. Antiporda - COA Clerk

Reynalyn A. Udani - Administrative Aide I Dyesebele I. Corpuz - Administrative Aide I

Vitex J. Vivit - Administrative Aide I

Maureen V. Cadaro – Administrative Aide I Ligaya L. Remillo – Utility Worker

Mark Jefferson I. Jimenez - Utility Worker

John Paul J. Casela - Computer Operator

Georgina D. Tongawan - TRAFMAP Surveyor

Dioceasar P. Valle - TRAFMAP Surveyor

Evangelyn A. Tara - TRAFMAP Surveyor

Rizalyn V. Fernandez – Trading Clerk



ADONIS D. LAZO
Officer-in-Charge



AMELIA VERONICA L. LACADEN Acting Chief Agriculturist

OFFICE OF THE MANAGER

Adonis D. Lazo — Chief Agriculturist

Jennifer M. Carbonnel — Secretary I

Orlando O. Galdones — Admin. Officer V

Winefreda V. Fangon — Cashier III

Restie V. Peralta — Computer Operator II

Arman M. Valdez — Driver II

OPERATIONS

Amelia Veronica L. Lacaden – Supvg. TPRO
Helen Teodora D. Pena – Senior TPRO
Oliva C. Galdones – Agriculturist II
Marcelia P. Pulgar – Agriculturist II
Charito A. Masiglat – TPRO III
John James B. Canosa – Agriculturist I
Leonardo C. Escobar – Agriculturist I
Rosella A. Dosono – Agriculturist I
Roan G. Daproza – Agriculturist I
Rosario D. Parel – Agriculturist I

NTA Candon Branch is strategically located in City of Candon, the center of commercial, business and trade in the second district of

llocos Sur. Its area of jurisdiction includes 22 tobacco-producing municipalities, 14 of which are situated in the interior (upland) area.

The Branch Office was created on April 24, 1989, after the division of the then NTA Ilocos Sur Provincial Office into two branches, the Vigan Branch to cover the first district of the province, and the Candon Branch for the second district. During its first year of operations, NTA Candon boasted of registering more than 12,000 tobacco farmers with an aggregate area exceeding 10,000 hectares of land area planted to tobacco.

More than 100 plantilla positions were allocated to Candon Branch and this was decreased to 92 during the 1999 reorganization. At present, 49 plantilla positions are assigned after the rationalization. An additional 22 Job Order hirees complement the manpower of the branch office, eight are assigned at the Administrative and Finance Unit and the remaining 14 are fieldworkers under the Operations Unit and deployed across the

different tobacco-producing municipalities under its jurisdiction.

Its office building at the City Hall Compound in Candon City was inaugurated on July 21, 2011, during the term of Administrator Edgardo D. Zaragoza, using the funds from the District Share of RA 7171. Before this, NTA Candon rented four office spaces in succession from 1989 to 2011.

NTA Candon was first headed by Rodrigo T. Pagtulingan, of Badoc, Ilocos Norte, April 24, 1989 to February 7, 2005, and August 8, 2005 to May 21, 2007. For six months, February 7 to August 7, 2005, Engr. Cesario G. Sambrana, from Cabugao, Ilocos Sur, served as officer-incharge of the branch office.

Estrella G. De Peralta became the Officer-in-Charge on May 21, 2007 and later as Department Manager III from March 5, 2013 to November 12, 2020. Engr. Cesario G. Sambrana returned and served as Acting Branch Manager from October 13, 2020 to January 12, 2022. From January 13, 2022 onwards, the branch office is under the stewardship of Adonis D. Lazo, Branch Chief Agriculturist, as Officer-in-Charge. ■

Diosdado Dominguez - Driver

Raymart D. Talloc - Utility Worker I

Abegail Faith D. Andres - Utility Worker I

STAFF

Leo C. Rante - Agriculturist I Jannel O. Valdez - Agriculturist I Edgar C. Torres - TPRO I Mark Anthony C. Artates - TPRO I Vanessa J. Dela Cruz - TPRO I Julius Caezar G. Briones - TPRO I Cristy V. Gabayan - TPRO I Julita F. Valdez - TPRO I Edilberto P. Guerrero - TPRO I Marcelio C. Ancheta – TPRO I Marvin B. Gambala – TPRO I Nic Angelo A. Masiglat - TPRO I Harold Herald L. Lumbania - TPRO / Susana G. Dangpalan – TPRO I Reynaldo L. Padillon – TPRO I Susan P. Tingle - TPRO I Hermielyn C. Ringor – TPRO I Julius Mark Lester L. Flores - TPRO I Janette P. Casino – TPRO I Fayrene Kay P. Milan - TPRO / Johnnhy Q. Rosendo Jr. – TPRO I JOB ORDER

Junio Ringo P. Bulauitan - Driver

Jasmine V. Zamora – Administrative Aide Jayson Benedict A. Cabuena – Admin Aide Glynis Choisy T. Cortez – Accountant Karlyn E. Dosono – Clerk II Wilfredo A. Agana Jr. - TPRO / Angel S. Clarin - TPRO I Annabelle C. Dasalla - TPRO I Karl Angelo U. Delos Santos - TPRO I Jayson S. Draculan - TPRO I R-Jay Errol C. Hidalgo - TPRO / Abegael E. Imperial - TPRO / Gerson C. Lazo - TPRO I Ulysses R. Manuel - TPRO I Jick S. Timbreza - TPRO I Mena Rose T. Tudayan - TPRO I Ma. Renchelle G. Bangisan - Research Assistant Alpine C. Diga – Research Assistant

Alpine C. Diga – Research Assistar Roderick C. Paroligan – Research Assistant

NTA ABRA



BRANCH PROFILE

NTA Abra is the only branch situated in the Cordillera Region with a mix of mountainous type and arable landform of terrain. The Branch Office is located at Washington Street, Zone 6, Bangued Abra.

Due to the unique topography of its coverage area, the Branch Offie hired more extension workers in Job Order Status in order to provide the best service to the tobacco farmers from different tobacco growing municipalities, namely: Bangued, Bucay, Tayum, Villaviciosa, Tubo, Pilar, San Isidro, Luba, Lagayan, Peñarrubia, Manabo, Lagangilang, Dolores, San Quintin and Pidigan. For CY 2021-2022 the province has 2,228 number of tobacco farmers and 1,615.08 hectares of tobacco farms planted to Virginia, Burley and Native.

NTA Abra has only 16 plantilla items with 11 filled-up positions. Alona A. Manganaan, Administrative Officer V, is currently the Branch officer-in-charge, while Romeo Y. Paculdo, Supervising TPRO, is designated as Acting Chief Agriculturist. ■

STAFF

OFFICE OF THE MANAGER

Alona A. Manganaan - Administrative Officer V Jomel Paolo B. Balaoro - Secretary I Marielle Cristy B. Beloy - Accountant II Jordan C. Turalba – Cashier II Ethelwolda C. Bosque - Computer Operator II Anthony B. Baytan - Driver II

OPERATIONS

Romeo Y. Paculdo - Supvg. TPRO Melben B. Bejarin - TPRO III Carmencita T. Bersalona – Agriculturist I Marife P. Peralta - Agriculturist I Ryan Jay Z. Sape - TPRO I Natividad B. Quibilan - TPRO I

JOB ORDER Ceasar A. Andres - Driver **September Faye T. Pilor** – Accounting Clerk Louie Angelo Z. Palomo – Computer Operator Elsie B. Del Monte – Administrative Aide I Bryan G. Testado - Administrative Aide I Austine Martin V. Guzman – Data Encoder Nick M. Medrano - Utility Worker

ALONA A. MANGANAAN Officer-in-Charge



ROMEO Y. PACULDO Acting Chief Agriculturist

Mardelito B. Bacarias – TPRO Roger B. Talape – TPRO Homer B. Millan – TPRO Jemaima C. Santiago - TPRO Julei Ann S. Joaquin - TPRO Rowena T. Avila – TPRO Raymund Jay B. Ferales - TPRO Rizalino D. Ferido Jr. - TPRO Jhowie A. Cada – TPRO Norfil A. Benesa – Research Assistant Louie C. Beneza -Research Assistant Jocel B. Aladin –Research Assistant Marianne A. Balasiw – Administrative Assistant I

NTA LA UNION



BRANCH PROFILE

NTA La Union Branch oversees the production of all types and sub-types of tobacco, namely, Virginia (Neutral or Improved Flavor and Sun-Cured), Burley (Neutral and Improved), and Native Tobacco (Batek, Liso. LP2, LP4, Cigar-Filler, and Cigar-Wrapper). Of the 20 municipalities and city in La Union, 16 produce the different types/sub-types, mostly Virginia tobacco in the First District,

Dr. GIOVANNI B. PALABAY

Department Manager III



EMMA BETH B. FANTASTICO

Chief Agriculturist

and Burley and Native tobacco in the Second District.

The Branch Office is headed by Dr. Giovanni B. Palabay, who was appointed Department Manager III at a young age of 36 years old on March 21,1997; and ably assisted by Chief Agriculturist, Emma Beth B. Fantastico, who heads the Operations Division; and Administrative Officer V Engr. Alberto C. Casison, in-charge of the Support Services. At present, NTA La Union has 29 employees out of the 36 approved plantilla positions and 14 Job Order hirees, converging the energy and dynamism of strong dedicated public service, servicing more than 3,825 farmers, tilling 2,272.38 hectares.

La Union is the center of Trading and Marketing of Tobacco in Region I and CAR, as most of the Buying Stations are located in the province, with 13 Buying Stations; 10 wholesale tobacco dealers;

3 Redrying Plants; and an average of 35 Field Representatives or Canvassers in the past three years.

The La Union Branch was awarded the Best NTA Branch Office in 1993. The Regional Productivity Committee through the NEDA Region I Office also awarded the NTA La Union as the 1st Runner-up (Category A) in the Region I Search for the "Most Outstanding 5S Implementor" in the Government Sector for 2002. In 2009, the Branch Office won 1st Runner-up in the Search for the Best NTA Branch Office. Furthermore, it holds the distinction of garnering "Excellent" scores in the Customers Satisfaction Survey (CSS) in terms of performance rating by the Researchers, Consumers and Buyers.

To this day, it is consistently performing its best in all aspects of branch operations and in the implementation of the various programs and projects of our Agency.

STAFF

OFFICE OF THE MANAGER

Giovanni B. Palabay – Branch Manager Aryann Pamela G. Sangil – Secretary I Alberto C. Casison – Administrative Officer V

Adonis B. Yangat – Accountant III Nicolas A. Mendoza – Cashier III

Carolyn P. Natan – Computer Operator II

George S. Cabiles - Driver II **OPERATIONS** Emma Beth B. Fantastico - Chief Agriculturist Warlie V. Oribello - Supervising TPRO Christopher R. Supang - Senior TPRO Potenciano H. Apilado - TPRO III Ruby A. Dacanay - TPRO III Ambrocio R. Nisperos, Jr. - TPRO III Leni M. Arciaga – Agriculturist II Candido I. Liangao - Agriculturist I Judith M. Morales - Agriculturist I Mildred M. Hidalgo - Agriculturist I Jerome B. Alcantara - Agriculturist I Joseph R. Ramos – Agriculturist I Rosita O. Gambito - TPRO I Aurelia C. Santos - TPRO I Estrelita E. Nabua - TPRO I

Corazon V. Dacumos – TPRO I Virgilio A. Garcia – TPRO I Joannaliza D. Ordinante – TPRO I Kristin Mae S. Castañeda – TPRO I Emily M. Abubo – TPRO I Clarence M. Lucina – TPRO I Arnel M. Acosta – TPRO I

JOB ORDER

Layca Mae G. Cavinta – Administrative Aide I

Jaimes C. Rivera – Utility Worker
Christian C. Rivera – Utility Worker
Charlito C. Padilla – Driver
Sonny P. Sta. Maria – Driver - BOD
Reina B. Terrora – Administrative Clerk
Jennelyn M. Valdez – Data Encoder
Aldouse Ramil C. Ubungen – TPRO I
Leandro Vince A. Domondon – TPRO I
Diony V. Cabutotan – TPRO I
Regine B. Ducusin – TPRO I
Keithlyn Joy H. Madayag – Research
Assistant

Rhaynan H. Calica – Research Assistant Christian T. Verceles – Research Assistant

NTA PANGASINAN



BRANCH PROFILE

NTA Pangasinan Branch office is unique as compared to other Branch Offices, because it covers two (2) provinces, the provinces of Pangasinan and Tarlac. The Branch Office is located at the well-known vegetable bowl of Pangasinan, the municipality of Villasis. Employees of the branch office were known to be the dedicated, hardworking and full of ethusiasm in implementing programs/projects of the agency.

The Branch Office covers 21 tobacco producing municipalities coming from the different districts namely: Mapandan, Malasiqui and Sta. Barbara (3rd District) Manaoag, San Fabian, Mangaldan and San Jacinto (4th District) Villasis, Sto. Tomas, Alcala, Sison and Laoac (5th District), Rosales, Balungao, Sta. Maria, Asingan and San Manuel (6th District) all from Pangasinan, and San Manuel and Moncada (1st District) of Tarlac.

For Crop Year 2018-2019, Burley and Native tobacco had 3,016 farmers with an area of 2,121.91 hectares. For CY 2021-2022, the Branch office registered 3,555 farmers with an area of 2,334.09 hectares. There was an increase of 15% in terms of number of farmers and 9% in terms of area planted compared from the last two years planted with both Burley and Native tobacco. ■



Engr. ROGER T. **MADRIAGA** Officer-in-Charge

STAFF

OFFICE OF THE MANAGER

Roger T. Madriaga - Chief Agriculturist Ann Desiree N. Gacayan - Secretary I

Magdalena N. Mamuyac - Administrative Officer V

Chryzl Hirieze Marie P. Estacio – Accountant III

Joselyn G. Miguel – Cashier III Redel A. Jularbal – Computer Operator II

Omer D. Casanova - Driver II

Elizabeth Q. Biala - Supervising TPRO

Myrna P. Galaraga - Senior TPRO

Alma G. Toralba - Senior TPRO

Eulalia Z. Ele – TPRO III

Marina G. Pine - Agriculturist I

Marcos G. Atela – Agriculturist I

Israel C. Ramos – Agriculturist I

Rechie V. Ballo - TPRO I

Marlon G. Facun - TPRO I

Ronaldo P. Molina - TPRO I Manuel M. Delfin Jr. - TPRO I

Rose Anne S. Dismaya – TPRO I

Edna C. Perlaoan - TPRO I

Lorna S. Espanto – TPRO I

Virgilio I. Rabang - TPRO I Venbel V. Echalar - TPRO I

Dante P. Briones – Administrative Clerk Glydel J. Morales - Operations Clerk

Maylyn F. Mizal - Cash Clerk

Anne Margarett P. De Fiesta - Research Assistant

Jessica L. Belmoro - Research Assistant Ma. Saniata T. Briones - Utillity Worker Maricar M. Decierto - Utility Worker



ELIZABETH Q. BIALA Acting Chief Agriculturist

NTA ISABELA





JOEFREY T. BAUTISTA

Department Manager III



PERPETUO C. DALLORAN

Acting Chief Agriculturist

BRANCH PROFILE

NTA Isabela Branch is located at the capital of Isabela, City of Ilagan, the center of trade, commercial and cultural activities in the province. It covers the provinces of Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Mountain Province, and Quirino. As of Crop Year 2021-2022, the Branch Office had 8,646 registered tobacco farmers, with a total hectarage of 6,593.83 and production yield of 12.87 million kilos which in the two consecutive crop years increase in numbers, making Isabela as the biggest Branch at present in terms of total area, production yield, and number of registered farmers.

There are three types of tobacco planted in Isabela: Native Broadleaf (NaB) 71.89% of the total production in the province, Burley Improved Flavor 17.93 %, Dark Air Cured (DAC) 5.28%, and Burley HPNT 4.91%. ■

STAFF

OFFICE OF THE MANAGER

Joefrey T. Bautista – Department Manager III Leah M. Ramones – Computer Operator II Lorelie B. Figarola – Accountant III Jovanie C. Gante – TPRO I / Acting Cashier III Jayson Darwin T. Leones – Driver II

OPERATIONS

Perpetuo C. Dalloran – Supervising TPRO Cesar P. Cambas Jr. – Agriculturist II Lagrimas B. Beltran – TPRO III Gavina C. Domingo – TPRO III Christopher D. Queddeng – Agriculturist I Joey A. Pascual – Agriculturist I Karla May E. Cardona – TPRO I Arvin B. Solito – TPRO I Edgar R. Lagasca – TPRO I Mae Anne F. Mina – TPRO I Jonely Rose B. Manuel – TPRO I

Emer C. Hernandez – TPRO / Edmund M. Macapinlac – TPRO /

Gelre John R. Tagapan – TPRO I Fericel C. Batnag – TPRO I Marjory L. Basa - TPRO I Arnel N. Berlin – Forester Jaymark R. Agcaoili - Forester Jeffrey P. Tuquiero – TRAFMAP Surveyor Roger A. Bassig - TRAFMAP Surveyor Erwin B. Cadorna – Research Assistant lan Kenneth V. Costales - Operations Clerk Robelle Nissi M. Guingab – Administrative Clerk Jeremy Karl G. Rodriguez – Computer Operator Alvssa Moira T. Acierto - Accounting Clerk Valerie T. Costales – Cashier Clerk Richelle Marie D. Carpio – Data Encoder Danilo D. Nicolas - Driver II Rachelle G. Jimenez – Trading Clerk Mark Anthony Cyril F. Cattiling Jr. - Trading Clerk

Jayson A. Liao – Trading Clerk Angelica B. Gonzaga – Utility Worker I Rodolfo M. Pardito – Utility Worker I

NTA CAGAYAN



BRANCH PROFILE

NTA Cagayan Branch is situated in Tuguegarao City the only city of Cagayan. The province is situated in a valley with scenic beauty spots and where the famous Basilica Minore of Our Lady of Piat is located which attracts tourists and pilgrims from all walks of life. It is the home of the hospitable people and known as the "Smiling Land of Beauty."

The Branch is maintained by 11 regular employees and 16 Job Orders of both Administrative and Operations division.

Through the years, CY 2010-2011 exhibited the highest number of farmers (4,229) who planted tobacco with an area of 2,218.40 hectares. There is a decrease of 20-30% area across years and in CY 2014-2015, there is a sudden decrease of farmers and area planted due to Crop Holiday of two buyer firms in the region. In the succeeding years, the lone buyer firm depends solely on the demand of foreign markets on the area and type of tobacco to be planted, thereby the decrease in area. CY 2022-2023 is a challenging year because the buyer firm (PENTALEAF) increased a target area of 1,000 hectares (ULPI) and 50 hectares.



GILBERT A. TAGUIAM Officer-in-Charge

STAFF

OFFICE OF THE MANAGER
Gilbert A. Taguiam — Chief Agriculturist
Josefa P. Correo — Administrative Officer V
Elmerante A. Ginez — Cashier III
Maricar R. De Leon — Computer Operator II
Ver Y. Agustin — Driver II
OPERATIONS
Alicia A. Malab — Supervising TPRO
Moises D. Duran — Senior TPRO
Edna R. Simeon — TPRO I
Orlando B. Arugay — TPRO I
Bryanne Marke William R. Simeon — Agriculturist I

Aljon M. Aquebay – Agriculturist I

JOB ORDER Angelica A. Ragasa – Accountant II Maricor P. Eyas - Secretary Ivan Monico L. Tambauan - Administrative Clerk Feliciano J. Pineda – Driver II Franco V. Correo – Utility Worker I Jayvee B. Gabatin – Utility Worker I Jerwin P. Tapulao – TPRO I Joemar M. Casibang - TPRO I Dennis Dan M. Sacramento - TPRO I Joe Dexter R. Taguinod - TPRO I Chelsea Joy R. Danguilan - TPRO / Maricar M. Borja – TPRO I Glynee P. Marcelo – TPRO I Harold Z. Quilang - Surveyor-KPP Lea T. Berbano – Research Assistant Jonathan O. Caronan - Research Assistant



ALICIA A. MALAB
Acting Chief Agriculturist

NTA KADIWA NI ANI AT KITA

National Highway, Nanguneg, Narvacan, Ilocos Sur Tel Nos.: (077)-6047-7817 / Email Address: ntaagripinoy@gmail.com



Seated (L-R): Shirley M. Velasco (Showroom Cashier), Sylvia C. Caballes (Accounting Clerk), Gina C. Cabotage (Production Officer), Weniefreda V. Fangon (Cashier III), Orlando O. Galdones (Administrative Officer V), Jannalie T. Esquierdo (Accountant III), Mary Rose D. Canaoay (Executive Assistant), and Gina G. Artates (Administrative Aide V); Back (L-R): Sofronio Aaron A. Baba (Waste Water and Water Treatment Operator), Estephany C. Agustin (General Maintenance Officer), Bryan A. Corre (Butcher), Albert V. Beñas (Driver), Jimmy F. Calixterio (Utility Worker), Arturo D. Castillanes (Head, Slaughtering Section and Trainor), Elizardo S. Bernal Jr. (Storageman/Butcher), and Antonio V. Que (Butcher).

The NTA Kadiwa ni Ani at Kira, formerly NTA AgriPinoy Tobacco Farmers Food Processing Plant and Trading Center, was established in October 2013. The building complex is composed of the Slaughter House, the Meat Processing Plant, and the Poultry Dressing Plant, all accredited and GMP-certified by the National Meat Inspection Service.

One of the major highlights of the NTA AgriPinoy is the launching of the NTA AgriPinoy Training School for butchers. The Certificate of TVET Program Registration for Slaughtering Operation NC II was handed over to the Training School on July 25, 2015. The first batch completed the training on October 30, 2015. Arturo A. Castillanes, holder of National TVET Trainer

Certificate (NTTC), head of the Slaughtering Section, is also the trainer of the Program.

To date, Batch 12 trainees completed the course in Slaughtering Operations (Swine) NC II. Batch 13 trainees are scheduled for Final Assessment, prior their final completion of the course/program on Slaughtering Operations (Swine) NC II.

The facility was also host to various livelihood seminar/ trainings, catering to tobacco farmers and their dependents.

The facility was first headed by its Project Manager, Minerva P. Mizal, from 2013 to 2017. She was succeeded by Nora A. Corre and held the post from 2017 to 2020. Felicisimo T. Lazo succeeded Corre in March 2020. ■

TOBACCO DUST PROCESSING PLANT

Brgy. Fernando, Sto. Tomas, La Union

The interim staff of the Tobacco Dust Processing Plant (TDPP) was reconstituted on April 26, 2022 through Special Order No. 0219-1 s. 2022. The TDPP ceases its operation in November 2018, and its resumption is a key response to the program of the Department of Agriculture on the implementation of organic farming and fishery systems as well as the promotion of food safety and good aquaculture practices. Tobacco Dust Plus, a product developed by the National Tobacco Administration, is an effective biopesticide and "lab-lab" growth enhancer used in aquaculture.



Seated (L-R): Lee Marja R. Mercado (Marketing and Sales Officer), Engr. Albert C. Casison (Administrative and Supply Officer), Leonora P. Nudo (Acting Project Manager), Engr. Warner J. Batugo (Production Supervisor and Plant Engineer), Justito A. Ambros (Quality Assurance Officer / Pollution Control Officer); Back (L-R): Orlando L. Apilado (Administrative Aide I), and Erick T. Obena (Administrative Aide I).

NATIONAL TOBACCO ADMINISTRATION EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

Topacco Agringation

THE NTA Employees Association (NTAEA) was first registered with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and Civil Service Commission (CSC) in November 1989 and accredited by the Civil Service Commission on March 28, 1990. It is affiliated with PGEA, NAFEDA and COURAGE and is the one and only employees association recognized by NTA Management. Membership covers all rank-and-file employees occupying positions of a Division Chief and below and management employees of the Agency occupying plantilla positions with Salary Grade 25 and above under the DBM-approved Organizational Structure and Staffing Pattern (OSSP).

Concerned not just with the benefits that accrue to the employees, the NTAEA more importantly, has always been the partner of NTA Management in the pursuit of programs and projects addressed towards the development of the local tobacco industry and all the stakeholders including NTA employees.

The employees, are represented through the NTAEA, in the Human Resource Merit Promotion and Selection Board (HRMPSB), Change Management Team, NTA Housing Committee, among other committees.

Central Office Officers:

President
Neyo E. Valdez
Vice President
Kathlyn Mae A. Tejano
Secretary
Rosalie P. Catura
Treasurer
Carmelita V. Albaco
Auditor
Evangeline Y. Isip
Asst. Treasurer
Merilene V. Sansano

Central Board of Directors



NEYO E. VALDEZ Central Office President



JOSE A. TACLAS JR. Vigan Vice-President



SATURNINO A. AGATEP
Ilocos Norte
Member



ROMEO Y. PACULDO Abra Member



ORLANDO O. GALDONES Candon Member



CHRISTOPHER R. SUPANG
La Union
President



ALMA G. TORALBA Pangasinan Vice-President



PERPETUO C. DALLORAN Isabela Member



MOISES D. DURAN Cagayan Member



RANDY I. ABELLA Research (FTSD-IRD Batac) Member



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TOBACCO FARMERS ASSOCIATIONS AND COOPERATIVES



BERNARD R. VICENTE
National President

N 2011, the tobacco farmers group reorganized themselves and formed the National Federation of Tobacco Farmers Associations and Cooperatives, Inc. (NAFTAC), which since that year is the duly recognized partner of NTA in bringing about significant developments in the social and economic lives of the farmer-members and the tobacco farming community in general.

Its primary purpose is to (1) establish a federated association of free and genuine registered tobacco farmers from all the tobacco producing areas of the country; (2) represent the interests of tobacco farmers, of whatever lawful nature, in all its official dealings and coordination

with any person or entity, whether private or public; and (3) act as a focal group in any or all consultations, conferences, seminars, hearings, meetings, and other official gatherings where the interests of the tobacco farmers are affected.

NAFTAC is the only farmers group accredited by the Agency to represent the farmer sector in the bi-annual Tripartite Consultative Conference for the Floor Price of Tobacco.

NAFTAC was first headed by Ernesto Calindas of Candon City as founding president. In 2013, Mario C. Cabasal of Narvacan, Ilocos Sur was elected president and over-all chairman, replacing Calindas. ❖

Bienvenido G. Millare (Abra), Executive Vice Chairman; Cesario Gapatan (Candon), Vice-Chairman (Virginia Neutral); Orlando Valenciano (Ilocos Norte), Vice-Chairman (Virginia Improved Flavor); Saturnino Distor (Pangasinan), Vice-Chairman (Burley Neutral); Zosimo Solito (Isabela, Vice-Chairman (Burley Improved Flavor); Reymund Piñon (Cagayan, Vice-Chairman (Native Cigar Filler); Franklin Dumpit (La Union), Vice-Chairman (Native Batek); Arlyn Vega (Vigan), Secretary; Nestor Padron (Ilocos Norte), Treasurer; and Donie Bernardino (Isabela), Auditor



CENTRAL OFFICE: 3/F & 4/F Ben-Lor Building, 1184 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City

BRANCH OFFICES: NTA Ilocos Norte, NTA Building, City of Batac, Ilocos Norte; NTA Vigan, Zone 5, Bantay, Ilocos Sur; NTA Abra, Washing St., Zone 6, Bangued, Abra; NTA Candon, City Hall Compound, Candon City; NTA La Union, National Highway, Payocpoc Norte-Weste, Bauang, La Union; NTA Pangasinan, Poblacion Zone 1, Villasis Pangasinan; NTA Isabela, Brgy. Osmena, Ilagan City; NTA Cagayan, Bagay Rd., San Gabriel, Tuguegarao City. Project Management Office: NTA Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita, National Highway, Nanguneg, Narvacan, Ilocos Sur; Tobacco Dust Production Plant, Brgy. Fernando, Sto. Tomas, La Union





