

### **NCPC Block Farm Holds Lakbay-Aral in Batangas**

The North Cluster Producers' Cooperative (NCPC) Block Farm of Tarlac held a 2-day Lakbay-Aral in the province of Batangas on December 7-8, 2013. Tarlac Mill District Officer Mr. Joel Ronario assisted the 22 participants in the whole course of the activity.



*Lakbay-Aral participants obviously enjoyed their visit in FILHOLLAND's office warehouse.*

The group first visited the office warehouse of FILHOLLAND, the distributor of New Holland Farm Tractors and Case IH Mechanical Cane Harvester. Company representatives Mr. Rey Lafiguera and Mr. Tony Sibulo oriented the group about their product lines and signified their plan to conduct a harvesting demonstration of their Case IH Mechanical Harvester in Paniqui, Tarlac in January or February 2014. Upon completion of their visit to FILHOLLAND, the team proceeded to Ibaan to visit the dairy farm of Mr. Cornelio Toreja, PHILSUCOR Board of Trustee. However, they only stayed there for a short time due to the former's prior appointment in Manila. From there, they made a side trip to the sack factory of Mr. Jimmy Tan in Batangas City, where they were shown how sacks and other related products are being manufactured.

After lunch the group arrived in Alitagtag and went to the house of SRA Board Member Mr. Pablito Sandoval. They lengthily discussed sugarcane farming as the enthusiastic farmer cum Board Member shared his success story with the group and encouraged them to improve cane production and thus produce more sugar. After which, he brought the participants to his farm where they observed a trash mulcher/incorporator in operation. He pointed out the importance of mulching in improving the condition of the soil and promised the group that he would lend them one unit of 6 tynes ripper implement.



*SRA Board Member Mr. Pablito Sandoval obliges for a photo op with the participants.*

At the Johndel Resort where they stayed for the evening, they had a planning meeting on the strategies they could employ in their block farm program. They discussed the harvesting schedule as well as the tractor operation because the members-enrolees were already requesting to fast-track the tractor operation in their farms. Several related concerns were touched such as nursery farms from SRA, bulk purchase of fertilizer materials, and organic fertilizer production.

The following morning, the group visited the KAMAHARI Multi-Purpose Cooperative in Nasugbu where they were welcomed by manager Mr. Juancho Maningat. The management of KAMAHARI MPC block farm was very busy during the visit so the discussion on important concerns and sharing of experiences regarding the program was only brief. "Cooperation and sacrifice is the key to our success," shares Mr. Maningat.