

OPSI Training Held in Carsumco



OPSI participants pose for a group shot along with SRA's Extension team which sponsored the training.

An OPSI seminar for potential trainers in the Carsumco Mill District was successfully staged on December 17-19, 2013 at the Carsumco Conference Hall in Sto. Domingo, Piat, Cagayan. The Extension team from SRA (Quezon City) which facilitated the training was comprised of Dr. Dina Padilla-Fernandez, Alicia Sabordo, Zyus Oliver Montiel and Joseph Peter Gonzales.

On the first day of the seminar Carsumco Operations Manager Mr. Michael Martin Alviar delivered an inspirational talk, to the delight of everybody. In his message, he stressed the importance of improving the mill and its programs as well. This is an effective way to put up with the challenge of 2015. He encouraged the participants to move and maximize the local cooperative or else, others will grab the spotlight. He commended all attendees by saying they were selected to be future trainers themselves because they possess the potential.



Carsumco Operations Manager Mr. Michael Martin Alviar commends the participants.

Before the official start of the lecture proper, MDO Mr. Lito Caranguian reported first on Carsumco's mill district performance for a clearer understanding of the participants. The charts and figures revealed that when it comes to production, the area is considered a sub-performer, the reason why the OPSI training was timely and relevant.

In the line-up of speakers, first to take the floor was Dr. Fernandez who talked lengthily on three topics namely, "The Philippine Sugar Industry Situationer", "Sugar Quedanning" and "AFTA and Sugarcane Farming." She presented

important data to the participants' great interest like "Sugar Tariff Schedule and Its Implications", the rivalry between sugarcane and bio-ethanol, how the attitude of farmers help them reach their goals of bigger production, the vital role of SRA in stabilizing sugar and encouraging livelihood programs for the farmers.

Dr. Fernandez did a great job by introducing the participants to the probable scenario in 2015 when the sugar tariff will be down to 5% and the entry of imported sugar will push downwards the mill site price of locally-produced sugar. This caused alarm among the attendees as shown in their concerned faces. But Dr. Fernandez revealed that SRA is doing its best to combat the effects if ever. She encouraged the body to use idle lands wisely by planting sugarcane to maximize its potential. The most important thing is to decrease production cost without reducing productivity.

The bulk of the topics tackled on the second day were about the study of the sugarcane plant. Mr. Montiel took charge of the subjects: "Understanding the Sugarcane Plant", "Soil Requirements of the Sugarcane Plant", "Proper Land Preparation and Cultivation", "Nutritional Requirements of the Sugarcane Plant", "Fertilizer Computation and Application" and "Harvesting and Ratoon Management." The participants reacted so well with the group activity called "International Trade Game." The game put into fore the decision-making skills, cooperation and strategies of the attendees which are important in the successful operation of block farms and in combatting the AFTA concerns in 2015.

Kick-starting the third day was Ms. Sabordo's talk on "Sugar Processing and Factory Operations" which was a great follow-up topic after studying everything about sugarcane. Towards the end of the seminar, a bonus topic was given to the participants. Mr. Gonzales lectured on "Communication Skills" that served as the perfect wrap-up for the affair, considering how heavy the previous subjects were. It zeroed in on making effective presentations especially since the participants were potential trainers in the future. They were given tips on how to handle stage fright, how to deal with hostile audience, the ideal fonts to be used in Power point presentations, etc.



As the training came to a close, Certificates of Participation were distributed to the participants. Mr. Alviar vowed that the seminar should be brought to smaller barangays as the next important phase. The objective is to multiply the number of canes to help the farmers.