International experts discuss Asian agri and rural development

Experts revisit old issues, chart possible directions and policy options critical to the region’s agri and rural development

SEARCA conducted the International Conference on “Agricultural and Rural Development in Asia: Ideas, Paradigms, and Policies Three Decades After” on 10-11 November 2005 in Makati City, Philippines. A total of 135 economists, development thinkers, academicians, scholars, and policymakers from Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, China, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, and the United States participated in the conference. The milestone event was part of the month-long celebration of the Center’s 39th anniversary, and marked the beginning of the year-long celebration of its 40th year, which will culminate in November 2006.

Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, SEARCA Director, said in his Welcome Remarks that the conference was aimed at bringing to the forefront new development ideas and concepts, which could have significant impacts on research approaches and policy perspectives of development practitioners.

Philippine Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban, in his Keynote Address read by Assistant Secretary Romeo Recide, underlined the need to strengthen agriculture in Asia and the rest of the world by drawing lessons from the past, noting that the conference focused on major ideas and paradigms that influenced policy and academic thinking on Asian agricultural and rural development in the last 30 years, and charted possible directions for future research along these areas.
Full November marks SEARCA’s 39th anniversary

SEARCA marked its 39th anniversary with a parade of activities all throughout the month of November 2005.

On 7 November, the Center’s monthly Flag Ceremony was the venue for the official launch of the month-long anniversary program. On 8, 15, and 22 November, the weekly SEARCA Agriculture and Development Seminar Series featured speakers who spoke on topics relevant to the Center’s focus on agriculture and rural development. (Please see ADSS list on Page 10.)

On 10-11 November, the SEARCA International Conference on Agricultural and Rural Development in Asia: Ideas, Paradigms, and Policies: Three Decades After was held in Makati City, Philippines. (Please see related story on Page 1.)

On 25 November, staff members of the Center held the re-launching of the SEARCA Employees’ Scholarship for the Maahas Elementary School in Los Baños, Laguna.

On 28-29 November, the Philippines-Netherlands Biodiversity Research Programme (BRP) for Development in Mindanao, one of the flagship projects of SEARCA, held the Conference-Workshop Toward a Regional Cooperation on Biodiversity Research-for-Development in Pasig City, Philippines. (Please see related story on Page 6.)

To culminate the whole month-long celebration, an Anniversary Program was held at the Center on 29 November, attended by SEARCA staff members, scholars, and former officials, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) officials, and heads and representatives of the different agencies belonging to the Los Baños Science Community. (Please see related stories on Page 3.) During the Anniversary Program, several new SEARCA programs were launched, and Memoranda of Understanding with several key institutions were signed. (Please see related story on Page 11.) (AJTAragon)

intellectual ideas among the participants and presenters as they revisited familiar themes and controversies in agricultural and rural development. The complete list of speakers, their topics and copies of their presentations, and other important information on the conference are on [http://web.searca.org/ard](http://web.searca.org/ard).

Dr. Edilberto de Jesus, former Education Secretary of the Philippines and now Director of the Bangkok-based Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Secretariat, congratulated all participants during his closing remarks for having charted possible directions for future research in the area of agriculture and rural development.

One major output of this conference is the publication of a conference volume with the same title, which is expected to become a major standard reference on agricultural and rural development in Asia. The book, which shall be published jointly by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) in Singapore and SEARCA, will be launched in November 2006 as a fitting celebration of SEARCA’s 40th anniversary. (AJTAragon and MLVRavago)
New UPLB Chancellor presents vision at SEARCA program

Dr. Luis Rey I. Velasco (right), UPLB Chancellor, receives a token of appreciation from Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, SEARCA Director, for gracing the 39th Anniversary Program of the Center.

Dr. Luis Rey I. Velasco, the new Chancellor of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), was the Guest of Honor at SEARCA’s 39th Anniversary Program last 29 November.

Dr. Velasco’s new post also makes him the newest member of the SEARCA Governing Board (GB), the Center’s highest policymaking body. SEARCA is hosted by the Philippine Government on the UPLB campus, and the University has been a long-time partner of the Center in its programs and activities. In his speech, Dr. Velasco acknowledged SEARCA and UPLB’s decades-long partnership, and commended the Center for initiating activities that address the agriculture and rural development needs of Southeast Asia. He also touched on his vision for UPLB, saying that in the next three years, he will “endeavor to transform UPLB into a national center of excellence in the natural and social sciences, engineering, agriculture, and the environment.” (AJTAragon)

SEARCA announces first SFRT grantees

The first grantees of the SEARCA Seed Fund for Research and Training (SFRT) were formally recognized by the Center during its 39th anniversary celebration last 29 November. Out of the 24 submissions from six countries in the first call for proposals for support under the SEARCA SFRT, the following were chosen:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awardee</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Asa Jose U. Sajise</td>
<td>Modeling Optimal Environmental Service Payments (ESP) in the Uplands: Income Distribution, Targeting Schemes, and Financing - Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Agham C. Cuevas</td>
<td>Integrating Environmental and Natural Resource Accounting Into Local Government Planning: A Modified Input-Output Model for LGUs - Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Thanh Son Nguyen</td>
<td>Integration of Socioeconomic Elements into GIS-Based Planning for Forestry and Community-Based Forest Management as a Tool for Biodiversity Conservation in Ha Tien - Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Tuan Son Nguyen</td>
<td>Comparative and Competitive Advantages in Swine Production and Policy Implications for Development Swine Sector in North Vietnam - Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Truong Tan Khanh</td>
<td>Capacity Building on Participatory Approach for Agricultural Researchers and Development Workers at Central Highland of Vietnam - Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Cely S. Binoya</td>
<td>Agro-Ecosystem’s Analysis for the Sustainable Development of Lake Buhi - Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Tran Ngoc Hai</td>
<td>Effects of Stocking Density of Tilapia to Shrimp Culture on the Rice Fields in the Mekong Delta - Vietnam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All promising Southeast Asian researchers and scientists, with high quality research and training background, and without significant funding support, may apply for the SEARCA SFRT.

Proposals to be submitted should be innovative and within SEARCA’s priority thrusts of agricultural competitiveness and natural resource management. They should have potential for large-scale impact on rural welfare and for attracting long-term funding support. SFRT will provide successful project proposals with start-up funds ranging from US$10,000 to US$15,000. Deadline of submission is every 1 September. For more information on SFRT, please visit www.searca.org. (AJTAragon and MLVRavago)
Supermarkets spreading fast across Asia, pose challenge to small farmers

With the rising standard of living of Asians in the past decades, a supermarket revolution is fast taking shape in much of the Asia-Pacific region, now including South Asia.

But these developments pose a lot of challenges to farmers in the region. Supermarket chains are introducing a lot of innovations and are doing business very differently from the traditional markets. These translate into the need for additional investments and new practices at the farm and post harvest level to meet product and transaction standards of the chains.

Economists Thomas Reardon and C. Peter Timmer said that under extreme competition, the constant striving to increase efficiency and to differentiate on quality put a lot of pressure on the usually asset-poor small farmers. Reardon is a faculty member of the Michigan State University Department of Agricultural Economics while Timmer works at the Center for Global Development in Washington, D.C.

The paper The Supermarket Revolution with Asian Characteristics by Reardon and Timmer, presented during the International Conference on “Agricultural and Rural Development in Asia: Ideas, Paradigms, and Policies Three Decades After” held recently in Makati City, Philippines, says that these small farmers cannot be left out. (Please see related story on Page 1.) Upgrading the assets of the farmers to meet the market requirements is an important goal in order that small farmers can cope with the new trend. They also said that governments should facilitate business linkages with small farmers.

Traditionally viewed as the shopping place for rich people, supermarkets are large-format modern retail stores constituting 90-95% of the retail sales in developing countries. But supermarkets are no longer just niche players for rich consumers in the capital cities of Asia. The rapid rise of supermarkets in Asia and elsewhere in the developing world has transformed, at different rates and depths across regions and countries, agricultural food markets.

“Retail transformation is in turn transforming other segments of food markets such as the wholesale, processing, and farming sectors,” Reardon said.

Consumers, finding in supermarkets a combination of convenience, quality, and cost that suits them, are “voting with their feet.” These variables allowed the spread of supermarkets deeper and deeper into the provinces and the food markets of the urban poor.

“The implications...are that farmers and processors/manufacturers will have to have more assets, be more capitalized, to participate in these new markets. One can say that...the fittest survive.”

The issue of globalization also comes into the picture as retail establishments do not just source products from the local level, but from outside domestic borders as well.

“Globalization and market transformation, at this speed, depth, and nature, is different – it is more challenging, and the challenges more urgent,” Reardon and Timmer said.

Many will continue to shop in the traditional markets, “but these alternatives are, statistically and seemingly inexorably, with the demonstrably temporary friction of the reactions of the small traders, declining, and the farm sector in the medium term will need to be ready for that reality.” (RMGalon)
**Funding facility for tropical forestry meets in Bangkok**

The European Commission (EC)-funded, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-managed Small Grants Programme to Promote Tropical Forests (SGP PTF) conducted last 3-7 October the third regional meeting to review the Programme’s efforts since its launching in eight Asian countries. SGP PTF is based upon and works closely with the existing Small Grants Programme, a highly successful program funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF SGP). SEARCA is its executing agency.

The event, held in Bangkok, Thailand, was attended by EC delegations from Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand; UNDP Country Office staff from all eight participating PTF countries (Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam); and representatives of SEARCA, GEF SGP New York, and SGP PTF.

The meeting was formally opened with messages from Ambassador Dr. Friedrich Hamburger, Head of Delegation of EC Thailand; Ms. Joana Merlin Scholtes, UN Resident Coordinator and Resident Representative of UNDP Thailand; and Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit Jr., SEARCA’s Deputy Director for Administration.

In her speech, Ms. Scholtes cited SGP’s various contributions in promoting community leadership in the sustainable management of valuable forest resources. She also emphasized that UNDP will continue to support the establishment of local knowledge management centres to ensure that the Programme’s impacts are sustained beyond its end.

Ambassador Hamburger cited the unanimous results of the recent evaluation missions in countries involved in the Programme. The Programme was assessed to have been successful in the

**SEARCA to launch 5 new training courses in 2006**

SEARCA is set to launch five new short-term training courses in FY 2006-2007. These are: 1) Executive Course on Natural Resource Use Negotiation and Decision-making for Rural Development in Southeast Asian Countries; 2) Executive Course on Integrated and Intersectoral Management of Natural Resources; (Please see related story below.) 3) Training of Trainers on ICT-based Extension Management and Delivery; 4) Training of Trainers in Postharvest Technology and Policy Management for the Globalized Market; and 5) Training of Trainers on Safe Transfer and Sustainable Use of Agrobiotechnology. The first two courses fall within the natural resource management thrust of the Center while the last three on agricultural competitiveness.

The fee-based courses will adopt participatory and peer-based learning approaches and will be implemented through classroom- and field-based activities.

**Experts to conduct SEARCA NRM executive course**

SEARCA recently tapped experts on Natural Resource Management (NRM) to constitute the core team for the implementation of its Executive Course on NRM in a Globalizing Asia on 8-12 May 2006 at SEARCA headquarters in Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines.

The team is composed of Dr. Percy E. Sajise, Regional Director, International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI); Dr. Ben Malayang III, Senior Fellow, Development Academy of the Philippines and former Undersecretary, Philippine Department of Environment and Natural Resources; Dr. Rex Victor Cruz, Program Director, Environmental Forestry Program, Institute of Renewable Natural Resources and Professor, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB); Dr. Nicomedes Briones, Professor and former Director, School of Environmental Science and Management, UPLB; Dr. Asa Jose Sajise, Assistant Professor at the Department of Economics, UPLB; and Dr. Teresita Borromeo, Professor at the Department of Agronomy, UPLB.

The team was formed to ensure the sustainability of implementing the course in terms of its curriculum relevance. It is also expected to provide technical guidance on finalizing the course design including identifying appropriate resource persons and serving as such in sessions where their expertise are called for. The team is backstopped by SEARCA staff members, namely: Dr. Arnulfo G. Garcia, Research and Development Department Manager and Project Leader of ACIAR-Landcare Project; Dr. Jesus C. Fernandez, Training Department Manager; Ms. Nyhria Rogel,
SEARCA biodiversity project holds key wrap-up events

The Philippines-Netherlands Biodiversity Research Programme (BRP) for Development in Mindanao: Focus on Mt. Malindang and its Environs, a flagship project of SEARCA, held several key events in the last quarter of 2005.

SEARCA BRP is a five-year (2000-2005), collaborative and participatory research project on biodiversity conservation and management supported by the Netherlands’ Ministry for Development Cooperation (DGIS). It is jointly undertaken by Filipino and Dutch researchers in the area of Mt. Malindang in the province of Misamis Occidental, Philippines.

Now on its final stretch, the BRP has been busy completing, consolidating, and contextualizing research results to achieve clear research-for-development outputs.

Exit Seminars in Mindanao

On 22 September–4 October 2005, the Programme held exit seminars at the Central Mindanao University (CMU), Mindanao State University–Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT), University of Southeastern Philippines (USEP), and Sangguniang Panlalawigan Session Hall in Davao del Sur. These exit seminars disseminated the research results of the various studies implemented under the BRP and provided the opportunity for the researchers to share their experiences, accomplishments and lessons learned during the conduct of research and their participation in the programme.

Conference-Workshop in Metro Manila

On 28-29 November 2005, more than 60 representatives from local, regional, and Dutch institutions involved in the Programme participated in the Conference-Workshop “Towards a Regional Cooperation on Biodiversity Research-for-Development” held in Pasig City. During the event, stakeholders in biodiversity research such as scientists and researchers, policymakers, members of the government and non-government organizations, and donor communities came together to determine a possible regional collaboration as well as potential regional research agenda and priorities for biodiversity conservation in the Philippines, Lao-PDR, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Indonesia.

Five country papers also detailed the current state of biodiversity in Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, the Philippines, and Vietnam. The presentations centered on the number of threatened, endangered, and newly discovered species; inadequate implementation of policies and laws created for biodiversity conservation; the need for more research and capacity building on biodiversity; and the need to strengthen institutions that conduct biodiversity conservation projects.

JPC Meeting in the Netherlands

On 14-16 December 2005, the 10th meeting of the BRP’s Joint Programme Committee (JPC) was held in the Hague, the Netherlands. Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, SEARCA Director, was one of the participants in the meeting.

The JPC is the governing body of the BRP responsible for formulating general policies and guidelines for the Programme. It is composed of representatives from the Philippines and the Netherlands. It is chaired by Dr. Perry S. Ong, Associate Professor at the Institute of Biology, University of the Philippines Diliman. Other members are Dr. Victor B. Amoroso, Director of Research at CMU; Dr. Gil C. Saguiquit, Jr., Deputy Director for Administration of SEARCA; Dr. Marc Lammerink, Director of Forestry Manpower Development (FMD) Consultants of the Netherlands; Dr. Leontine Visser, Chair of the Department of Rural Development Sociology at Wageningen University and Research Centre in the Netherlands; and Dr. Bram Huijsman, Director of International Agricultural Centre (IAC) and North-South Centre.

The 10th meeting tackled the activities of the BRP in the last year of its implementation and the official turnover of outputs, among others. Dr. Balisacan and the JPC also met with Ms. Caroline Wiedenhof and Mr. Ron Havinga of the DGIS to discuss the request for a budget-neutral extension to formally close and wrap up remaining activities.

Seminar in the Netherlands

The BRP also held a seminar in the Netherlands on 15 December 2005. Through its Support and Liaison Office (SLO), the BRP conducted a seminar on Biodiversity and Economic Development in Southeast Asia (A SE Asian Initiative): Lessons Learned from Demand Driven Research. This seminar, attended by representatives of SEARCA, JPC, DGIS, and other key institutions involved in the Programme, again featured the research results and achievements of the implementation of the BRP, and the lessons learned from it. The highlights and agreements made in the aforementioned Pasig City conference were also discussed. (CSFule and GDRivera)
Food safety cited as agricultural, public health issue

SEARCA and the SEAMEO Regional Tropical Medicine and Public Health Network (TROPMED) jointly organized a “Regional Consultative Workshop on Emerging Issues and Policy Responses on Food Safety” last 24-25 October in Bangkok, Thailand. Forty participants, composed of agriculturists, nutritionists, and development and public health practitioners from Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, and various regional organizations attended the workshop. His Excellency Prof. Dr. Suchai Charoenratanakul, Thailand’s Minister of Public Health, represented by Dr. Supachai Kunaratanapreuk, Deputy Permanent Secretary, was Guest of Honor during the workshop’s opening ceremony.

SEARCA and TROPMED, both Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) centers, recognize the need for countries in the region to go beyond awareness and into policies in the design and fortification of national food safety programs. Although outbreaks involving fatalities and debilitating illnesses might dramatize the need for these programs, quantitative losses in both domestic and international markets could prove more useful and reliable in communicating the need to urgently address these problems.

The workshop initially aimed to provide an overview of the status of food safety systems in the region, examine emerging policy and institutional issues relating to food safety, and identify regional initiatives intended to enhance food safety in Southeast Asia.

Issue papers presented in the workshop provided an overview of the scope of food safety and the requisites for effective national food safety programs, namely: a) underpinned by the universal right of all to safe and healthy foods, guided by appropriate policy and issuances; b) science-based, using the established tools of risk assessment, risk management and risk communication; c) competent officers guided by the principles of good governance, and supported by adequate and competent inspection and laboratory services; d) participatory and consultative, involving all stakeholders from government, industry and consumers; and e) good complementation, e.g. between regulatory and education/voluntary measures, government and non-government programs.

Considering the constraints faced by Southeast Asian countries, the following specific needs were identified, namely: a) human resource development and capacity building in risk analysis, particularly risk assessment; preventive risk management measures including good agricultural practices (GAP), good manufacturing practices (GMP) and hazard analysis critical control points (HACCP); relevant laboratory techniques, including validation and inter-laboratory proficiency testing; emergency preparedness; and information, education, and communication materials and approaches; b) regional R & D cooperation covering epidemiological studies on food-borne diseases; analysis of food additives and contaminants; assessment of risks of regional concern; profiling of initiatives and available expertise in the region; socio-economic impact of food-borne diseases and food safety programs; c) food safety information dissemination through networking and other modes, to complement rather than duplicate initiatives in the region; and d) food safety-related policy analysis and evaluation, e.g. government intervention vs. initiatives from the private sector.

In view of the current food safety problems besetting the region and their implications with respect to health, agricultural productivity, food availability and accessibility, as well as international trade in food, the concerns and regional initiatives required were deemed urgent and of a high priority by the workshop.

Speakers at the workshop included Ms. Noraini Bt. Dato’ Mohd. Othman from Food Codex Alimentarius and Malaysia’s Ministry of Health; Dr. Carolyn C. Benigno from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific; Dr. Clive Blackburn of global manufacturing company Unilever; Dr. Untung Suseno Sutarjo M. Kes from Indonesia’s Center for Health Human Resources Management; and Prof. Sudip K. Rakshit from Thailand’s Asian Institute of Technology. Country papers were presented by Mr. Sok Kunthy from the Royal University of Agriculture in Cambodia; Mr. Sitha Kemmarath from the National University of Laos in Lao PDR; Mrs. Mi Mi Maw from Myanmar’s Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation; and Dr. Dang Van Minh from Vietnam’s Thai Nguyen University. (CCLizada and MLVRavago)
Thai education minister opens 28th SEAMEO High Officials Meeting...

His Excellency Mr. Chaturon Chaisang, Minister of Education of Thailand, formally opened the 28th SEAMEO High Officials Meeting (HOM) held in Phetchaburi, Thailand on 23-24 November 2005. The meeting, convened annually by the Bangkok-based Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Secretariat, gathers high-ranking officials of the respective education ministries of countries in the region.

This particular meeting was chaired by Mr. Lim Chuan Poh, Singapore’s Permanent Secretary of Education. Among the 84 participants were representatives of nine SEAMEO member countries, five associate member countries, 15 SEAMEO Centers, and staff from the SEAMEO Secretariat.

SEARCA Deputy Director for Administration Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. attended the meeting, along with Ms. Althea Joyce T. Aragon, Public Relations Specialist.

SEAMEO is a chartered international organization established on 30 November 1965 to promote cooperation in education, science, and culture in the Southeast Asian region. Its member countries are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Australia, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and Norway are associate members.

SEAMEO has 15 centers spread across Southeast Asia, among the first of which to be established is SEARCA, back in 1966.

During his Keynote Address, H. E. Chaturon Chaisang welcomed the representative of Norway, SEAMEO’s newest associate member country. The Minister also stressed the need for collaboration between SEAMEO and other regional organizations with similar goals and objectives, most notably the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The Minister also commended the SEAMEO Secretariat for initiating collaborative efforts with the Thai Education Ministry.

Apart from SEAMEO administrative matters, the topics discussed during the 28th HOM include the following projects of the Organization, namely: 1) Post-Tsunami Rehabilitation and Disaster Preparedness Program; 2) Nutrition and Food Supply and Quality Issues in Schools; 3) Quality Assurance in Higher Education; and 4) SEAMEO-UN Cooperation in Values-based Water and Sanitation Education (VBWSE) in Southeast Asian Schools.

For more information on SEAMEO and SEAMEO Centers across the region, visit www.seameo.org. (AJTAragon)
His Excellency Prof. Dr. Nguyen Minh Hien, Vietnam’s Minister of Education and Training, has committed to endorse a SEARCA initiative to review the academic curricula of selected agriculture institutions in Southeast Asia during a visit to SEARCA last 12 December. The Minister, who is the current President of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Council, cited the proposal as a strategic way to identify needs and gaps in Southeast Asian higher education, toward making the region’s agriculture human resource internationally competitive.

Dr. Edilberto C. de Jesus, former Philippine Secretary of Education and now Director of the Bangkok-based SEAMEO Secretariat, and Mr. Teodoro Catindig, Assistant Secretary at the DepEd, accompanied the Vietnamese Minister during his visit to SEARCA in Los Baños, Laguna.

SEARCA Director Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan presented the SEARCA proposal, entitled “Enhancement and Strengthening of Agriculture Curricula of Selected Universities in Southeast Asia,” set to start in mid-2006.

“Globalization has created wave after wave of changes in Southeast Asia, affecting all sectors of society, including agriculture. The changes are happening so fast and while there have been modifications in the agriculture curricula of Southeast Asian schools, the enhancements are not up to par with the rate of change in, say, technologies, consumer demands, and even the challenges of food safety,” Dr. Balisacan said, giving the rationale for the proposal.

According to Dr. Balisacan, the proposed project will initially include a survey of the current status of agriculture curricula in selected colleges and universities in the region, the holding of a Conference cum Workshop to review and assess such curricular programs, and the development of an enhanced and globally competitive agriculture curriculum for Southeast Asia. With the conduct of said activities, SEARCA aims to identify strategies and activities that would enhance, strengthen, and standardize the agriculture curricular programs offered by selected higher education institutions in the region so that they will be internationally competitive.

Dr. Robert Zeigler, Director-General of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), likewise support the idea, citing human resource development as one of the current priority thrusts of IRRI. The Vietnamese Minister also visited IRRI while in Los Baños. (AJTAragon)
The weekly SEARCA Agriculture and Development Seminar Series (ADSS) continues to be a venue for dynamic and vibrant discussion of scientific findings, research results, and perspectives within the purview of agriculture and development. It has had high-profile researchers and practitioners from the academe, government, and industry as resource persons. Open to the public and held at the Center every Tuesday at 4:00 p.m., the ADSS is attended by students, academics, scientists, and other members of the Los Baños community and beyond. The following were the seminars held from October to December 2005.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
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<tr>
<td>4 October</td>
<td>The Economic Impact of Bt Corn in the Philippines</td>
<td>Dr. Jose Yorobe and Dr. Cesar Quicoy, Professors, Department of Agricultural Economics, College of Economics and Management, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 October</td>
<td>Micro-Algal Biotechnology: Achievements and Prospects</td>
<td>Dr. Avigad Vonshak, Director, Jacob Blaustein Institute for Desert Research, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Sede-Boqer Campus, Israel</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 October</td>
<td>Furosine as Index of Lethality in Thermally-Processed Foods</td>
<td>Mr. Dennis Cantre, Instructor, Food Science Cluster, College of Agriculture, UPLB</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 October</td>
<td>Resource Allocation’s Trade-Off in a Peri-Urban Production System</td>
<td>Dr. Sergio Francisco, Chief Science Research Specialist, Policy, Planning, and Regulation, Philippine Department of Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 November</td>
<td>Bridging Leadership</td>
<td>Professor Ernesto Garilao, Executive Director, Asian Institute of Management-Mirant Center for Bridging Societal Divides</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 November</td>
<td>From Scholarship to Entrepreneurship: Emerging Challenges to State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in the Philippines</td>
<td>Dr. Salvador P. Catelo, Dean, College of Economics and Management, and Prof. Rolando T. Bello, Dean, College of Public Affairs, UPLB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 November</td>
<td>Development of Community-based Enterprises in the Context of the Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Development Agenda</td>
<td>Ms. Zorayda Amelia C. Alonzo, Undersecretary, Philippine Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and Chair and CEO, Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corporation Philippines</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 December</td>
<td>Conservation for Development (Mt. Malindang Experience: A Landscape Approach)</td>
<td>Dr. Paul J. Hillegers, Consultant, The Philippines-Netherlands Biodiversity Research Programme for Development in Mindanao (BRP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 December</td>
<td>UPM-APSB’s Airborne Hyperspectral Imaging for Precision Agriculture</td>
<td>Dr. Kamaruzaman Jusoff, Head, Center for Precision Agriculture and Bio-Resource Remote Sensing, Institute of Bioscience, University Putra Malaysia</td>
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Report underscores need for peace toward Philippine development

The Fifth Philippine Human Development Report (5th PHDR), launched on 25 October 2005 in Pasay City, underscored how religious and political conflicts have continued to pose a challenge to peace, stability, and long-term development of the country.

With the theme “Peace, Human Security and Human Development in the Philippines,” the 5th PHDR was prepared by the Human Development Network (HDN), a group of Filipino experts who explore issues that impact the country’s development, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The report was co-funded by the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID).

Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, Director of SEARCA and President of HDN, said in his Welcome Remarks that the 5th PHDR seeks to explore the various dimensions and major sources of conflict in the country; analyze the current dynamics that may assist to resolve or aggravate conditions; and relate these to the concept of human development and human security in the context of the country’s development strategy.

During the launch, top performing and most improved Philippine provinces in terms of human development were also recognized, namely: Benguet, Laguna, Batanes, Rizal, Cavit, Ifugao, Quirino, Tarlac, and Capiz.

The 5th PHDR was also launched in Davao City on 9 November 2005. (AJTAragon)

SEARCA Director elected PES President for 2006

The Philippine Economic Society (PES) has elected Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, SEARCA Director, as its President for 2006 during its Annual Meeting last 23 November held at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) Conference Center. (Please see related article on Page 16.) The Society was founded in 1962 and is the only recognized professional organization of economists in the country, with members from the academe, business, government service, and private sector. PES is recognized internationally as one of the founding members of the Federation of ASEAN Economic Associations (FAEA). (JSCSugui)
SEARCA renews ties with FFTC, PCARRD, PCAMRD, SEAMOLEC

SEARCA has formally renewed its partnerships with three development agencies based in Taiwan ROC and the Philippines, and a fellow Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Center, through the signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with them.

The agencies are the (1) Food and Fertilizer Technology Center for the Asian and Pacific Region (FFTC-ASPAC); (2) Philippine Council for Agriculture and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD); (3) Philippine Council for Aquatic and Marine Research and Development (PCAMRD); and (4) SEAMEO Regional Open Learning Center (SEAMOLEC).

FFTC-ASPAC is an organization based in Taipei whose mission is to promote the collection, sharing, exchange, and dissemination of technical and practical information on agricultural production and the adoption of modern farming methods in order to achieve increased output and higher incomes for small-scale farmers. It also aims to provide opportunities for technological complementation in agriculture to help close the technology gap between developed and developing countries in the Asian and Pacific region.

PCARRD and PCAMRD are agencies under the Department of Science and Technology of the Philippines. Both are based in Los Baños, Laguna. SEAMOLEC, on the other hand, is SEAMEO’s center of excellence on information and technology exchange in open and distance learning. It is based in Jakarta, Indonesia, and headed by Center Director Prof. Dr. Paulina Pannen.

The MOU between FFTC and SEARCA binds both organizations to collaborate in undertaking capacity and institution-building programs, projects, and other activities related to agriculture within the Asian and Pacific region, whenever and wherever feasible opportunities present themselves. They also agreed to set up a systematic and sustainable mechanism for the exchange of scientific materials, information, and publications in order to help promote sustainable agricultural development in the region.

Similarly, SEARCA agreed to collaborate with PCARRD, PCAMRD, and SEAMOLEC in undertaking programs, projects, and other related activities should there be opportunities to do so. They also agreed to exchange scientific materials, publications, and information.

The SEAMOLEC-SEARCA agreement was signed by Dr. Pannen and Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, SEARCA Director, on 28 October 2005 in Bangkok, Thailand.

On the other hand, the FFTC-SEARCA agreement was signed by Dr. Sing-Hwa Hu, Director of FFTC, and Dr. Balisacan on 15 November 2005 during Dr. Balisacan’s visit to FFTC.

Lastly, Dr. Patricio S. Faylon, Executive Director of PCARRD, and Dr. Rafael D. Guerrero III, Executive Director of PCAMRD, signed their respective agencies’ MOU with SEARCA during the 39th Anniversary Program of SEARCA held on 29 November 2005. (LiTallafer)
SEARCA signs MOA with Mekong Institute, Khon Kaen University

SEARCA signed last 8 December a Memorandum of Agreement with Thailand’s Khon Kaen University (KKU) and Mekong Institute. The agreement is for collaboration in undertaking programs, projects, and other related activities as well as exchange scientific materials, publications, and information.

The signatories to the agreement are (seated, middle) Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, SEARCA Director, and (seated, first from left) Dr. Anake Topark-ngarm, Mekong Institute Director, and Dr. Sumon Sakolchai, Khon Kaen University President.

The agreement acknowledges negotiations between SEARCA, KKU, and Mekong Institute toward an Academic Bridging Program for qualified nationals of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam to prepare them for graduate studies and ensure their admission into the graduate school of any university in Southeast Asia towards an MS degree in agriculture.

Through the assistance program, SEARCA will support each scholars’ one-year academic course program at KKU for credit into the scholar’s undergraduate program. On the other hand, KKU and Mekong Institute will support the participation of scholars in some training courses to be conducted at its KKU Faculty of Agriculture and KKU Faculty of Science. The program is set to begin in school year 2006-2007.

Four UPLB Faculty get SEARCA Prof Chairs

Four faculty of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) were awarded the SEARCA Professorial Chair for academic year 2005-2006.

The awardees, their colleges and titles of research are: Dr. Arnold R. Elepaño, College of Engineering and Agricultural Technology, “Development of a small-scale processing system for the production of semi-refined carrageenan;” Dr. Ernesto J. del Rosario, Colleges of Arts and Sciences, “Recovery of growth hormones in coconut water using micellar-enhanced ultrafiltration;” Dr. Jose M. Yorrobe, Jr., College of Economics and Management, “The cost of biosafety regulation for rice in the Philippines;” and Dr. Cleofe S. Torres, College of Development Communication, “Enhancing compliance with environmental quality standards in the Laguna de Bay region through public disclosure.”

The four new awards bring to 215 the total number of SEARCA professorial chairs awarded to UPLB faculty since 1974. Of these, 84 professorial chairs were granted under the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Since 1989, SEARCA has awarded a total of 115 professorial chairs to faculty of UPLB, Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB) and Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) in Indonesia, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), and Kasetsart University (KU) in Thailand under the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The new fellows who graduated from IPB are Mr. Anwar Fitrianto, Indonesian, in statistics and Ms. Tin Tin Win, Myanmar, in information technology in natural resource management. The topic of Mr. Fitrianto’s thesis is “Survival analysis of Asian countries’ food security.” Ms. Win’s thesis is titled “Dynamic floodplain visualization and flood analysis using HEC-RAS hydraulic modeling and Arc View GIS (A study case of downstream Ciliwung, Jakarta, Indonesia).”

Mr. Oupakone Alounsavath, Laotian, obtained his MS in tropical forestry from University of Göttingen. His thesis is titled “Analysis of forest research plots in the central part of Laos: A case study of Eucalyptus camaldulensis and Acacia mangium in the Lao-ADB plantation forestry project.”

The 10 new fellows brings to 966 (413 PhD, 553 MS) the total number of SEARCA fellows to date.
Physiological and Biochemical Bases of Blackheart Disorder Alleviation in Waxed “Queen” Pineapple (Ananas comosus L. Merr.) Fruits

Soe Soe Aung
Myanmar
PhD in Horticulture
University of the Philippines Los Baños

The study investigated the mechanism of alleviation of blackheart (BH) disorder by waxing in “Queen” pineapple fruits. To determine the critical temperature at which BH disorder will develop, fruits were stored at 5, 10, 15, 20°C or at ambient (28-30°C) temperature. Various wax formulations were used to identify the concentration that will effectively alleviate BH disorder.

The critical temperature at which BH disorder developed was at 20°C, while severe BH was observed in fruits stored at 15°C. Waxing, using with 20.58% mineral oil formulation, significantly alleviated BH disorder during four weeks storage at 15°C and additional two days holding at ambient temperature. Significantly high internal carbon dioxide (CO2) and low oxygen (O2) levels during the first and third weeks of storage period were consistently noted in waxed fruits compared with unwaxed fruits. Associated with BH alleviation by waxing were reduced ion leakage, respiration rate, ethylene production, total phenolics, and reduced activities of polyphenol oxidase (PPO) and ascorbate oxidase (AAO) concomitant with insignificant changes in the levels of ascorbic acid (AA). Waxing also delayed changes in peel color and pulp quality. On the other hand, weight loss, changes in pH, TSS, TA and internal ethylene level were not significantly influenced by waxing. High sensory ratings in terms of flavor, aroma, firmness, and good blend of sweetness and sourness were obtained in waxed fruits stored at 15°C and in both waxed and unwaxed fruits stored at ambient temperature for three weeks.

Pure and Crude Papain and Bromelain as Carabeef Tenderizers

Promote Srisung
Thailand
MS in Animal Science
University of the Philippines Los Baños

Three studies were conducted to determine the cooking values, sensory qualities, and tenderness of loin muscles from eleven female carabeef of mixed breeds with an average age of 11 yrs old and body weight of 466 kg. In study 1, the carabeef was injected with either 0.1g/kg or 0.3g/kg of pure papain or bromelain solutions to determine cooking and shear force values and either 0.01g/kg or 0.03g/kg of pure papain or bromelain solutions for the sensory quality determination. Crude papain and bromelain extracted from papaya and pineapple, respectively, were used in study 2. The crude papain or bromelain and their mixture were injected into the meat at the rate of 10% of the fresh weight. In study 3, the carabeef was injected with either 0.1g/kg or 0.3g/kg of pure papain or bromelain solutions and either crude papain or bromelain extracts or their mixture to study the histological changes of muscle fiber.

Cooking loss, cooking recovery and shear force value (lbs/in2) were significantly (P<0.05) affected by pure and crude papain and bromelain treatments. The shear force values were reduced by as much as 38% to 63% in the enzyme-treated carabeef compared to the control. There was a 13.42% to 37.96% improvement in the tenderness score of carabeef treated with the enzymes.

The muscle fiber treated with the pure and crude enzymes under the Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM) showed partly or completely degraded connective tissues and fragmented myofibrils.

The results of the three studies show that either pure or crude papain or bromelain were both very effective as meat tenderizers. Furthermore, carabeef treated with these enzymes were all acceptable to the sensory panel.

Survival Analysis of Food Security in Asian Countries

Anwar Fitrianto
Indonesia
MS in Statistics,
Institut Pertanian Bogor

The study applied survival analysis in determining food security of Asian countries. The technique examined the effects of covariates on food insecurity among Asian countries in a period of 40 years starting 1961. The analysis was conducted to determine “warning signs” of food insecurity. Sources of data are the online databases of the United National Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Bank, which include detailed information on 32 Asian countries.

Findings revealed that 21 of 32 (65.62%) Asian countries experienced food insecurity. The stepwise Cox’s regression was used to select which among the 24 independent covariates are deemed to be significant contributions to the model. Initial run of the SAS code found six covariates to be significant.

Based on the adopted model, at each time point, the countries in the West Asian region were found to be more likely to experience food insecurity compared to those countries in the other regions. The model also determined that the incidence of food security for East Asia countries is more likely than for in the other regions. It can also be seen that countries in the lower-middle income group are more likely to reach food insecurity level than those in the other groups. The analysis also shows that the high-income countries have high risk of exposure to food insecurity.

Since Cox regression analysis follows the basic assumption of proportionality, the adopted model was tested to find out if it meets this condition. Graphical method and formal test of this assumption was conducted. In the presence of ties, the ties-handling method of Breslow, Efron, Exact, and Discrete were compared with respect to Wald statistics, parameter estimate, the hazard ratio, and p-value.

The availability of the determined dataset permitted the assessment of food insecurity levels, i.e., low, medium, or high, which were useful in describing the nature of food insecurity conditions. The analysis determined the variables that play important roles in each stage of food insecurity condition of each country.
Filipino SEARCA Fellows hold conference on poverty in Southeast Asia

The SEARCA Fellows Association of the Philippines (SFAP) organized a conference on the theme “Winning the War on Poverty: Failures and Lessons of Southeast Asia” held on 11-12 October 2005 at SEARCA. The event was funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Philippine Commission on Higher Education (CHED), SEARCA, and SFAP.

Former Philippine Senator Leticia Ramos-Shahani was guest of honor and keynote speaker. In her keynote speech, she talked about various advocacy projects that aimed to enable farmers to improve their livelihood, most of which she had been involved in. She stressed that “you will only win the war on poverty by empowering farmers to empower themselves.”

The Development Counsellor of the German Embassy in Manila, Ms. Karin Jahr de Guerrero, represented the DAAD in the conference. In her message, she related some of the various programs offered by DAAD, including the “alumni program,” which she said not only aims to maintain contacts with former scholars from developing countries who graduated from German universities and have returned home. “More importantly,” she noted, “the program aims to enable the alumni to play a part in development cooperation with Germany.”

To set the tone of the technical discussions, Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, SEARCA Director and Fellow, presented a paper titled “Winning the War on Poverty: Failures and Lessons of Southeast Asia.”

Other SEARCA fellows also presented papers on various topics, among them Dr. Ricardo T. Gloria, Chief Technical Adviser, Mindanao Rural Development Program, on “The Mindanao Rural Development Program: Lessons Learned;” Dr. William C. Medrano, CHED Executive Director IV on “State Universities and Colleges as Engines of Growth: Programs and Directions of the Higher Education Sector Towards Poverty Alleviation;” Dr. Kamolrat Intaratat, Associate Professor, Communication Arts Institute, Chiangmai University, on “Information and Communication Technologies as Essential Tools for Poverty Alleviation in Thailand;” and Dr. Kasem Soytong, Associate Professor, Department of Plant Pest Management and Natural Resource Management, King Mongkut’s Institute of Technology Ladkrabang (KMITL), on “Winning the War on Poverty: Failures and Lessons in Southeast Asia on Poverty Alleviation in Thailand” at the SEARCA Conference on Winning the War on Poverty: Failures and Lessons of Southeast Asia on 11 October 2005 at SEARCA. (Please see related story on this page.)

Four Thai SEARCA fellows renewed ties with SEARCA during their visit in the last quarter of 2005. They are Dr. Kamolrat Intaratat, Associate Professor, Communication Arts Faculty, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University in Nonthaburi, Bangkok; Dr. Kasem Soytong, Associate Professor, Department of Plant Pest Management and International Coordinator, King Mongkut’s Institute of Technology Ladkrabang (KMITL); Dr. Wattanachai Pongnak, Dean, Faculty of Agricultural Technology, KMITL; and Dr. Vicha Sardsud, Director, Postharvest Technology Institute, Chiangmai University (CMU).

Dr. Kamolrat presented a paper titled “Information and Communication Technologies as Essential Tools for Poverty Alleviation in Thailand” at the SEARCA Fellows Association of the Philippines’ Conference on Winning the War on Poverty: Failures and Lessons in Southeast Asia on 11 October 2005 at SEARCA. (Please see related story on this page.)

Dr. Kasem and Dr. Wattanachai met with Dr. Jesus C. Fernandez, Training Manager, and Dr. Arnufla G. Garcia, Acting Manager, Research and Development Department on 22 November 2005 to discuss possible collaborations between SEARCA and KMITL.

Dr. Vicha called on Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, SEARCA Director, and discussed with Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, Manager, Graduate Scholarship Department, possible collaborations in graduate study programs between SEARCA and CMU. (LLDDomingo)

and a Filipino gets special UPLB award

Dr. Cecilia N. Gascon, Acting President, Southern Luzon Polytechnic College, received a Special Award for Research and Administrative Achievement from the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) Alumni Association during the 87th Loyalty Day Celebration and Alumni Homecoming on 8 October 2005 at UPLB. Dr. Gascon obtained her PhD in forestry from UPLB in 1998 under SEARCA scholarship. (LLDDomingo)
SEARCA trains 61 more SRT leaders

SEARCA, in partnership with the Quedan and Rural Credit Guarantee Corporation (QUEDANCOR), conducted the 8th and 9th batches of the course on “Skills Enhancement and Social Awareness for QUEDANCOR Self Reliant Team (SRT) Leaders”. This undertaking is part of the five-year capability building project entitled “Strengthening the Capacity of QUEDANCOR SRT Leaders in Agribusiness and Credit Management” funded by QUEDANCOR and implemented by SEARCA. QUEDANCOR, being the credit arm of the Philippine Department of Agriculture, provides financing to small businessmen in the agriculture sector. The course aims to strengthen the capacity of the SRTs, to equip them with enterprise development skills, and to complement the formation of SRT Municipal Cooperatives being launched by QUEDANCOR to forward countryside development.

On 24-28 October 2005, 32 corn and rice farmers from the Bicol Region underwent the training in Naga City; and on 14-18 November 2005, 29 vegetable, rice, strawberry and cutflower farmers from the Cordillera Administrative and Ilocos Regions attended the course in La Trinidad, Benguet.

Since the project commenced in March 2005, it has already covered nine regions and trained 258 SRT Leaders nationwide. (See The SEARCA Diary Vol. 34 No. 2, June 2005 and Vol. 34 No. 3, September 2005.)

Four course offerings in Central Luzon, Zamboanga Peninsula, Northern Mindanao, and SOCCSKSARGEN Regions are being arranged for implementation in the first quarter of 2006 by the Project Management Team comprised of Dr. Maribec A. Campos, Project Manager, Ms. Adoracion T. Robles, Project Management Associate, Mr. Alvin G. Tallada, Project Management Assistant, and Ms. Minerva A. Salcedo, Clerk. (ATRobles)

‘Lakbay Biotek’ enhances public appreciation of biotechnology

They come from different walks of life. Six lucky winners of the ‘Lakbay Biotek Educational Visit’ recently went on a 3 to 4-day ‘all-expenses-paid’ visit to various institutions doing biotechnology research and development activities.

In October, Ms. Remedios Yolola, a municipal agriculture staff of Muntinlupa City visited several laboratories and scientific institutions in Los Baños, Laguna, in Quezon City, and in La Trinidad, Benguet.

In November, Mr. Aries and Lesley Ann Manuel, employees of private companies, were briefed on the fisheries and aquaculture biotechnology R&D program of the University of the Philippines Visayas and the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC).

Also in November, Ms. Elisa Selvido, a private school teacher from Quezon City, visited the facilities of the University of the Philippines Mindanao, and other scientific institutions in Southern Philippines.

Ms. Analyn Sambayan, an undergraduate student of Rizal Technological University and Ms. Lorna Santos, a research manager of the Philippine Department of Agriculture (DA) flew to Bangkok in December, where they visited several biotech laboratories.

The six winners won the prizes at stake during the celebration of the Philippine National Biotechnology Week held in July 2005. The “Lakbay Biotek Promo,” aimed at enhancing public awareness on innovative biotechnology applications in agriculture, fisheries, medicine and environmental protection, was sponsored by SEARCA BIC and DA. (RBLapitan)

Landcare farmer-leaders gather in South Cotabato

Farmers representing the Landcare Federations of South Cotabato, Bukidnon, Misamis Oriental, Bohol, and Agusan del Sur finally met for the first time after almost 10 years of Landcare in the Philippines and six years into the Landcare Project. This meeting, attended by 25 farmer leaders of the different Landcare Federations, was held in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato on 1-2 December 2005. SEARCA Landcare South Cotabato Team hosted the event.

“Sustaining and Growing Landcare Systems in the Philippines and Australia” is one of SEARCA’s flagship projects. It is a three-year project funded by the Australian Center for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).

During the event, the participants shared their experiences, learnings, and insights from the project. They also identified strategies to enhance their respective organizations, and explored possible mechanisms for information exchange between and among Landcare Federations. Landcare members and officers also briefly presented developments in their respective areas. Field visits to farms were also conducted to facilitate the sharing of experiences and knowledge among farmers. (ELGarcia)
SNAPSHOTS

PES Annual Meeting

At the Annual Meeting of the Philippine Economic Society (PES) on 23 November 2005, Mr. Manuel V. Pangilinan (second from left), Chairman of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT) Group, shared the management experience that transformed PLDT to a telecommunications and technology conglomerate. With him in the photo are (L-R) Mr. Alex C. Escucha, First Vice President of Chinabank and immediate past President of PES; Professor Solito C. Monsod of the UP Diliman School of Economics and member of the SEARCA Advisory Committee; and Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, SEARCA Director and PES President.

“The Morning Show”

On 9 December 2005, SEARCA staff members were the featured guests of “The Morning Show” on NBN Channel 4, where they spoke about the Center’s activities and programs. Shown in photo are (L-R) Ms. Veronica Baluyot, co-host of the show; Dr. Jesus C. Fernandez, Training Department Manager, SEARCA; Dr. Lorna C. Malicsi, Knowledge Management Unit Head, SEARCA; and Mr. Bobby Guanzon, main anchor of the show.

SEARCA Publications

“Proceedings of the First National Congress on Philippine Lakes”

“What the Experts Say About Water Governance in Rural Areas”

For more SEARCA publications, price inquiries, and orders, please visit www.searca.org.

CIRAD, RAWOO officials at SEARCA

On 30 November 2005, Dr. Gerti Hesseling, Chair of the Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council (RAWOO), visited SEARCA. RAWOO is among SEARCA’s Dutch partners in one of its flagship research projects, the Philippines-Netherlands Biodiversity Research Programme (BRP) for Development in Mindanao: Focus on Mt. Malindang and its Environs. Dr. Hesseling was briefed by SEARCA Management on the different programs and activities of the Center. She also discussed the programs of RAWOO as well as possible areas of collaboration between the two agencies. The Netherlands is an associate member country of SEAMEO.

SEARCA at UPLB parade

SEARCA joined the Loyalty Parade of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) last 9 October. The event, held annually, was in celebration of the University’s 87th Founding Anniversary. SEARCA officials, scholars, and staff members, led by Director Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan (third from left), paraded around the campus bearing the Center’s greetings for UPLB, which has been its home since its establishment in 1966.