PROJECT BRIEF

Revitalizing Calamansi Industry in Victoria, Oriental Mindoro through Strengthening Linkages Among Farmers, LGU, NGAs, SUCs, CSOs and the Private Sector: An ISARD Pilot Model

BACKGROUND

Under SEARCA's *Piloting and Up-scaling Effective Models of Inclusive and Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development* program, one of the two (2) pilot projects in the Philippines is the calamansi industry intervention in Victoria, Oriental Mindoro, which is being co-implemented by the Mindoro State College of Agriculture and Technology (MinSCAT) and the Local Government of Victoria.

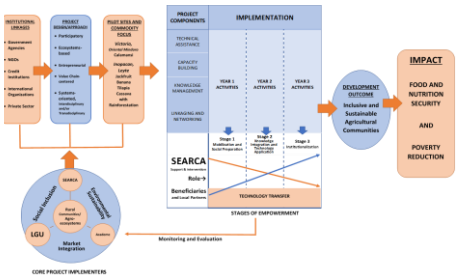
In the Philippines, one of the important and broadly cultivated agricultural commodities is calamansi, and Region IV-B, or the MIMAROPA Region, contributes largely in terms of production volume, and is actually known to be the top producer (source: Department of Agriculture, Philippine Rural Development Program). In 2011, the Region supplied 58 percent of the Philippines' total harvest, or 102,628 metric tons production (Bureau of Agricultural Statistics 2012). Moreover, among the four (4) provinces in MIMAROPA, Oriental Mindoro produce 99 percent of total production volume, or 101,601 metric tons, thus, the moniker "Calamansi King" was given to the Province (BAS 2012).

Among the fourteen towns in Oriental Mindoro, Victoria contributes the highest calamansi production in terms of volume, number of hectares planted, and average productivity. In 2012, Victoria reached peak production at 7,325.5 metric tons, or 58.58 percent of the total production in the province, and was reported to have the highest average yield of 13.1 metric tons per hectare (Oriental Mindoro Provincial Agriculture Office).

In recent years, owing to a lack of appropriate institutional and marketing arrangements as well as value adding activities for calamansi, the industry faced an oversupply problem and unsold marketable surplus of fresh produce during peak production periods which, in turn, resulted to heavy losses, lower prices and smaller income received by the farmers. Thus, the calamansi farmers opted to shift to other commodities and veered away from maintaining their calamansi farms. This resulted to a decline in the area planted to calamansi in Victoria- from 2,105 hectares in 2008 to only 884 hectares in 2012 (Victoria Municipal Agriculture Office 2012). Despite this shift in supply and demand, which resulted to price problems, there is still a growing market demand for processed calamansi in the domestic market in the form of pasteurized juice, jellies, puree, and the like, given the fast growing market for healthier and naturally grown food with environment friendly production processes and packaging technology (Agribusiness & Marketing Assistance Division, DA RFU IV-B).

In view of this, SEARCA recognizes the need to revitalize the calamansi industry in Victoria, and take advantage of the potential and actual growing demand for processed calamansi products. As such, the Municipality of Victoria can not only regain its status as "Calamansi King", but can afford better livelihood opportunities to the predominantly small upland farmers in the municipality. Hence, the project will address these challenges through the improvement of production and processing technologies, building capacities, and strengthening producer-market linkages and promotion of networking with other key players in the industry.

The project period is from 01 December 2015 to 30 November 2018.



PROJECT PARTNERS

ABOUT SEARCA

The Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) is one of the 21 regional centers of excellence of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO). Founded on 27 November 1966, SEARCA is mandated to strengthen institutional capacities in agricultural and rural development in Southeast Asia through graduate scholarship, research and development, and knowledge management. It serves 11 SEAMEO member countries, namely: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste, and Vietnam. SEARCA is hosted by the Government of the Philippines on the campus of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) in Laguna, Philippines. It is supported by donations from SEAMEO member and associate member states, other governments, and various international donor agencies.

CONTACT SEARCA

Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture
College, Los Baños
Laguna 4031, Philippines

Phone: +63-49-536-2290
Fax: +63-49-536-7097
Email: post@searca.org

OBJECTIVES

The project's primary goal is to revitalize the calamansi industry in Victoria, Oriental Mindoro in a way that is inclusive and sustainable, through technical assistance, capacity building, knowledge management and linkaging and networking.

Specifically, the project aims to:

1. Improve the production and processing technologies and practices of calamansi farmers;
2. Build capacities of farmers, LGU staff and other stakeholders on organizational strengthening, innovative technologies and adaptation know-how; and
3. Strengthen linkages and promote networking with the other key players in the industry, both private and public.

.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The activities under the Calamansi Project is in line with the four general components of the ISARD Framework – Technical Assistance, Institutional Development and Capacity Building, Knowledge Management, and Linkaging and Networking.

Under Technical Assistance, there are two major activities, namely, the rehabilitation support proper as well as the establishment and maintenance of the demonstration and nursery farm. Trainings on agricultural production and primary processing are also being provided to the farmer beneficiaries.

Institutional development and capacity building trainings on action research methodologies, results-based monitoring and evaluation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, farm record keeping, and supply chain improvement and value chain analysis are being conducted to increase capacities of the farmer federation, LGU, MinSCAT, and other stakeholders.

Knowledge management for social preparation such as trainings on organizational development, financial and marketing management, climate smart and conservation agriculture, and sustainable organic and ecological farming are being undertaken as well as preparation and distribution of IEC materials, ISARD webpage development, and LGU caravans with forum on entrepreneurship, for Social Marketing.

The linkaging and networking component includes the investment fora, preparation of feasibility studies, training on rural- and micro-financing schemes, business registration and licensing, and food safety regulations.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

By revitalizing the Calamansi industry through strengthening linkages among various stakeholders, the farmers of Victoria, particularly in the upland communities, will gain from the following benefits:

1. Increase in Calamansi yields and Calamansi-based products;
2. Diversification of product forms and potential-market penetration; and
3. Increased income due to high prices and reduction in post-production losses during peak harvest periods.

To realize this goal of revitalization, specific and appropriate project activities are designed to introduce innovative and sustainable farm technologies and practices, utilize primary processing technologies, generate processed products, support human capital formation, and strengthen linkages and networking with other key players in the industry.

The project activities, in turn, are expected to increase the area devoted to calamansi production and, more importantly, increase adoption of improved production and post-production technologies and practices. Moreover, the trainings lined up are expected to enhance knowledge, skills and attitude (KSA) of farmer cooperators and other stakeholders. The linkages and networking activities, on the other hand, promote greater output; value-adding enterprises; and access to credit and markets. The project is also expected to engender additional community projects. Ultimately, all of these are envisaged to improve productivity and quality of fresh calamansi and calamansi-based products, and increase household incomes as well as achieve product and market integration.