

A PASTOR LEADS FLOCK IN DAIRYING



Pastor Roger plows the field in preparation for planting legumes for dairy animals

The achievements of Mr. Roger Alcantra are truly commendable when it comes to community service. "Pastor Roger" is an active Pastor of the Santa Cruz Baptist Church in Sto. Tomas, Batangas, 42 years old, married with six children, two girls and four boys. His calling is not limited within the four walls of the church. Realizing that poverty and ignorance weakens the soul, he established the Learning Center, a 2.5 hectare land, fully developed pasture under coconut trees - an ideal integrated coco -dairy farm in Balintawak Lipa City , Batangas.

Pastor Roger narrated that he established integrated farming with livestock and poultry, vegetables, crops and fruits trees, " This is my contribution in alleviating poverty , malnutrition and provide means of livelihood he said . It is very interesting to note that he advocated dairying by putting up one in 2005. He purchased seven dairy animals from the St. Francis Small-coconut Farmers in Sto. Tomas, Batangas and these animals are expected to calve this December. Through the assistance of NDA technical staff seventy (70) Brahman cows were artificially inseminated with dairy semen.

" Mr. Johnny Katigbak President of Battings Agribusiness Center supplies the milk for the milk feeding program and at times the milk is not sufficient thus I decided to raise our own dairy animals" he said . He added that this provided him many opportunities to help in the community. It is heartening to note that the spirit of "bayanihan " is very much alive in this part of the city, everybody learn and contributes to further develop and sustain the farm.

As part of his commitment to further equip the community with knowledge and skills he was able to send four young men to be trained at the Dairy Training and Research Institute for Artificial Insemination. He also coordinated with NDA staff Mr. Cesar Almarez and Ms. Socorro Mejino both National Dairy Authority (NDA) Project Development Officers to assist him in the management of the dairy farm. On the other hand , NDA conducted orientation and the basics of dairying led by Dr. Jaime Lopez , OIC, Regional Manager of NDA South Luzon Field to the members of the community.

Indeed Mr. Alcantra is an extraordinary Pastor he is a farmer, an office educator, and philanthropist with a big heart .