

DAIRY DELIGHTS



If you happen to be in the vicinity of Rizal province, you will find a packet of farmers engaged in carabao raising.

The place is in Jalajala, Rizal. To oldies, it bespeaks of the many foregone memories when it was still under the now defunct KKK Program of the Ministry of Human Settlements. To the veteran technicians, they called it "Saudi Arayat" in reference to Saudi Arabia, local form since it seems far flung if you get to have this as your assignment. It is near Manila but, if you are lucky to be assigned there, you'd feel like in some remote places. Lights are not so common despite its proximity to geothermal plants. The land area is vast, but come to think of it, it's mostly rocks and the river beds are dried up. Circling the Laguna de Bay on the south side, it's lacking in activity. Not so many people could be seen except for some barrio folks with some goats lagging behind them. The teenagers are playing basketful, but they are quite a handful. By 5 in the afternoon, it seemed the sky has turned to grey with amber streaks of the sun already folding with the clouds in cover. Nothing could be as boring if you'd look at it. However, if you traverse some more kilometers after Pillia Rizal, you will see the town of Jalajala. In it, is a peculiar barangay of Llano. Some people have cows, goats and carbaos. They happen to comprise the Llano Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc. There are 90 members but only twenty of them have carabao holdings. The cooperative produces roughly a hundred liters of milk per day during peak season and the least is twenty liters during dry season. Farm gate price is set at Php 35.00/ liter.

They market their produce in the vicinity and goes as far as Manila for special deliveries. This usually happens when there is a national Trade fair and cooperatives under the regional level are encouraged to participate.

As per Roxan Halili, the Chair of the Coop, at least 15 liters of carabao's milk are sold to Tanay, Cardona and Morong towns in Rizal.

The very visible Board members are Roxan, he being the Chairman; Ms. Remedies Drecheo, Board in the dairy Division, Mr. Faustino Buenaventura, Chair, Audit and Inventory Committee and Mr. Zaldy Panguito, Chair of Elecom.

The wife of the Elecom Chair serves as their dairy processing technologist.

These officers albeit a few, have a grand dream of someday going great in their production. In its present state, they are content with the traditional pasteurization method of preserving their produce. However, their ultimate dream is to go mainstream. So to fulfill this dream, they wanted a product that is homogenized. They aver that, homogenized products would appeal more to the mainstream market for fats could be broken down into smaller globules and eventually will lend a smooth flavor to their products when consumed.

The local government supports their vision of producing good quality product. The local council has granted funds to upgrade their local processing unit. They are into the process of looking for dairy equipment in this manner, a small scale homogenizer to improve on the quality of their products.

Another member is lucky to be seated in the local Sangguniang council. He is the one primarily egging the group to go for improved equipment. He is pushing the group to write and come up with their proposal and submit it to the local council. The is positive that the council will act on this in their favor. This is their ticket to more government support and opportunities for market linkage and networking.

To date, dairy delights products varies from : fresh carabao's milk, choco flavored milk, milk-o-gel, lacto flan, yogurt in four flavors namely: strawberry, pineapple, mango and blueberry. They also prepare plain yogurt for the picky customers. The other line is on confectionery: that of Pastillas de Leche and yemas . These sweets are made from pure carabao's milk and priced affordably for the buying public. They also have soft cheese or Kesong Puti to complete their line up.

So what are you waiting for? Visit their processing center and experience the Jalajala 's traditional carabaos milk products priced reasonably but tastes delightfully.

Enjoy every bit of bite of Dairy delights and help propel a towns' dream of "One Town, One Product!"

Let's drink to that.....

02/04/08