

Nemesia Saradat
Cashier, Milk Collection
BADAFA

MILK IS A BLESSING!
By: Ching M. Lumanta

Thirty eight (38) and single , Ginging as she is fondly called, went against the wishes of her parents. They did not want to get the dairy animals on loan as they have no one else to call to take care of these.

She vividly recalls the dates the seminar was held; January 30, 2008. A cousin who works as a technician in the local government unit invited her to participate. Through her, Ginging was encouraged to join the seminar slated in Barangay Bacong.

Prior to her being a dairy farmer, Ginging tended to some piglets , 3 native cows, 6 cows on "paiwi" to other farmers. The high cost of feeding these animals made her change her mind.

To better appreciate what she will be getting into, she joined other would-be dairy enthusiasts in a Lakbay Aral trip to Cebu dairy project sites. In their trip, she noticed there is indeed money in dairy. The farmers told them that while there will be hardships in the initial stages, these will just pass when the milk starts pouring in.

She also observed marked changes in the farmers' lifestyle. Farm families have more than the basic amenities in life. Houses of nipa have been converted to cement, electrical gadgets are common , with a steady cash flow for their everyday needs.

So as soon as they went back to their hometown in Dumaguete, they decided to have a go into dairy. She got 3 head for a start. Unfortunately, one dam, became a downer and died of hypocalcemia last December 24. However, this did not deter her from pursuing her dream to have a dairy holding. She still has 2 cows and three calves in her hands.

She says it's hard for her but there is hope. To quote from her own words: " naa pay padulngan!" Nagdako ako utang pero nangandoy pa sa additional nga baka. " Her parents get mad whenever she arrives late in the evening. Aside from being a cashier, she also works as a volunteer BOD in the plant. She gets an additional .50 centavos /liter of milk received at the plant. That means Php 19/day added to her income.

For now, Ging hires a motor to transport her milk to the collection center. But when the operator started asking for an increase in the rate , she decided to return to her old reliable bike which she herself drives. Now she is very happy. "Milk is indeed a blessing!" Daily, she now delivers an average of 47 liters to the plant. A sure cashflow to tide her family's everyday needs.

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