

LUIS SANCHEZ
Dairy Goat Raiser

Many farmers remain poor all their lives. A lack of scientific agricultural methods and the unwillingness to leave the poverty comfort zone chain them to an unproductive piece of land and a miserable existence.

Others realize that they have a passion and capacity for growing and producing agricultural products, through bits of industry gossip, which serve as the thrust to plunge into the tough but fulfilling world of commercial agriculture. They go beyond mere farming into becoming agricultural entrepreneurs.

This is the path of Engineer Luis Sanchez, a mechanical engineer turned farmer, dairy goat breeder, milk producer and producer of skincare products from goats' milk.

Engr. Sanchez started his four-year old dairy goats' milk production when friends of his from a major dairy multinational company, told him that milk sold in tetrapaks was merely milk powder mixed with water and sold as "fresh milk".

Seeing a market development opportunity from this bit of industry gossip, Luis lost no time in importing Saanen dairy goats from Australia to start his dairy goats' milk production.

At present, he has a herd of 160 animals with twenty animals on the milk line, producing around 15 liters a day.

He prefers producing goats' milk because goats are much cheaper to invest in. His present market consists of family and friends. He sells goats' milk (250 ml. bottles) at P40.00 each.

Having some knowledge in chemistry, he decided to come up with his own formula for goats milk lotion, soap and facial moisturizer under the Cleo brand name, which he took from the name of famous Egyptian queen Cleopatra. Legend says that among the great queen's beauty regimen was to bath herself in milk.

While there is indeed a market for goats' milk, his greatest challenge nevertheless is to meet the Bureau of Food and Drugs' rigid requirements to get a permit. But he intends to do it this year so he may proceed with more confidence into the commercial market. He is also looking out for the best marketing strategy for his skincare line.

Nevertheless, friends and family are on the watch for new Cleo products, one of which is goats' milk lotion with moringa (malungay) extract, mixed with honey.

Although his farm is based in Toledo City, which is some 65 kilometers away from Cebu City, Engr. Sanchez has no qualms about coming over to deliver his products to eager buyers, or joining trade fairs so his Cleo products are able to grab their share of customers in the market.