

Allan Bernales' Dairy Farmland
Talakag, Bukidnon

It was in the late 90's when an event turned fortuitous for the Bernaleses . They were raising imported Brahmans for beef when some cows died of hardware disease. This led to orphaned calves . They had to find surrogate dams for these calves.



In June 2005, Mr. Cresencio Barros Jr., then Chairman of the Northern Mindanao Federation of Dairy Cooperatives, had a chance to go to Thailand. He visited various dairy farms and observed dairy activities and from there gathered marketing ideas. Allan took the cue and started planting improved grasses. His first planting materials were Kennedy Ruzi variety, a close relative of the signal grass species.



They had no bulls in his area so they resorted to artificial insemination to produce replacement bulls and heifers. They crossbred Brahman with Holstein bloodlines and selected 10 weanlings for breeding. These were then impregnated with pure Holstein semen again.



Dairy for starters is not easy, but eventually, the people in his farm learned the ropes . However in late September of 2009, technical trainings were done which provided knowledge for his people. Minor trainings on animal health were likewise done. This paved the way towards better appreciation of dairying as an alternative business or rather as a complimentary business to what they have been accustomed before.



At present, Allan has some 20 dairy animals aside from his usual fatteners. His current dairy herd averages 15-16 liters a day. Allan says, "di naman paramihan ng baka kundi quality ang pinag-uusapan". He has infused improved grasses on his 30 hectare pasture area. He started on centrosema and embarked on a trial feeding using a formula also being used by Pastor Roger Alcantara and Joey Tarnate.

For his health practices, he observes proper deworming, dehorning, TB and Brucella tests.

Feeding consists of pasture, concentrate feed and legumes. Molasses is also a regular fare for his animals. They practice twice-a-day milking. These start at 4:00 am and 3:00 p.m. His current dairy herd averages 15-16 liters a day.

In the meantime, his mother makes use of a part of his production to making milk bars. They produce 1,000 pieces of milk bars which retail at Php 4.00 each. Their raw milk is sold to the NMFDC at Php 30 per liter.



Being young at 39, Allan says he does not go for numbers at this stage. Instead, he wants to emphasize on the quality of the herd in his farm. Male calves are sold as fatteners while the females are retained for replacement as heifers.



So far, he is happy with his lot. He surmises he still has a lot to learn. The NDA has been instrumental