

LOL sets groundwork for dairy development in Mindanao

The Land O'Lakes (LOL) Foundation Philippines Incorporated has started its operation for the dairy development assistance in Mindanao.

For the month of June, the LOL, in partnership with the NDA-Mindanao Field Office (MFO), has conducted a series of meetings with five (5) primary dairy cooperatives out of the targeted 22 primary dairy cooperatives in Mindanao.

The meetings discussed the result of the baseline survey conducted by the Research Institute for Mindanao Culture (RIMCU) of Xavier University, Ateneo de Cagayan. The result of the survey serves as the guide for the coops in formulating their dairy development plan.

A participatory approach was used in assessing the coop's status, in identifying issues and in seeking solutions and directions. This provides a wholesome opportunity for dairy farmers to get involved in the affairs of their cooperative. The five (5) primary cooperatives that have undergone the cooperative assessment and planning workshop have already formulated a three-month action plan starting July. The LOL headed by Managing Director Marilyn Mabale and NDA-MFO Manager Jesus So will conduct a quarterly evaluation on the performance of the primary cooperatives. The next evaluation is set on September this year.

LOL committed to provide an initial equipment and facilities grant worth an estimated Php6.6M or Php300,000.00 per primary cooperative. The equipment support varies according to the needs of each coop. This includes motorcycle units, multi-cab units, silo, forage chopper, water pump, generator set, motor engine and computers. The grant aims to improve the income potential of farmers through enhanced milk production capacity and an improved breeding program.

The LOL and NDA-MFO have already conducted other related activities during the summer. This includes the conduct of the training on Animal Nutrition: the Importance of Vitamins and Minerals Supplementation among the primary cooperatives. Mineral blocks were also distributed at 10 kilos per farmer respondent who were interviewed by RIMCU during the survey. To prepare and update NDA staff in handling organizing work, a Train-the-Trainers seminar was also conducted in March entitled: Training on Monitoring and Evaluation Tools. The training was facilitated by LOL's Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist Elizabeth Hutchinson.

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