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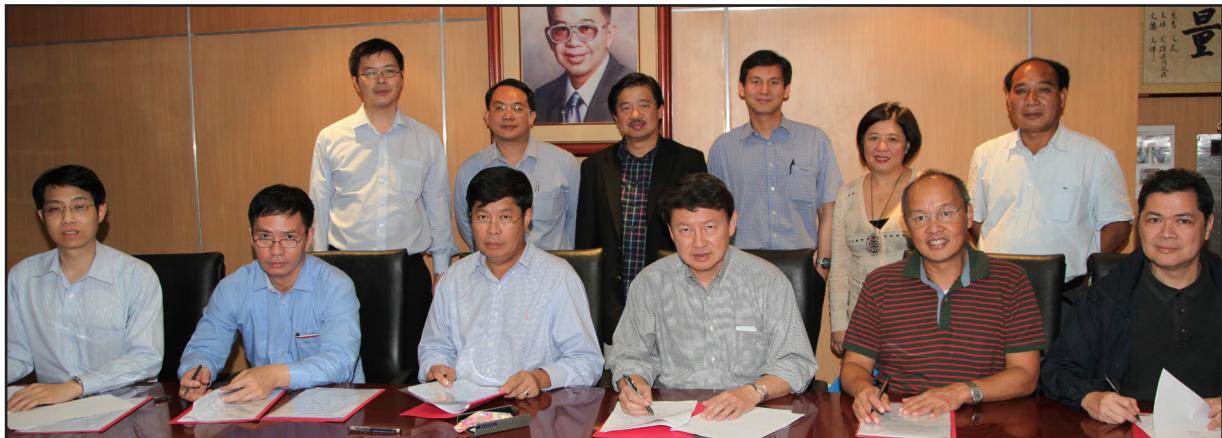
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## PH, Thai, Myanmar firms form rice consortium

MANILA, Philippines—Key agribusiness groups from the Philippines, Myanmar and Thailand have formed a consortium to develop a formidable Southeast Asian rice supply chain using the proprietary hybrid and premium rice technology of local firm SL Agritech Corp.

Henry Lim Bon Liong, chairman and chief executive of SL Agritech—which is part of the Sterling Paper group of companies—said his group signed a few weeks ago a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the IBTC group of Myanmar and Capital Rice Co. Ltd. of Thailand to set up the three-country private sector partnership.

"If we're talking about Asean [Association of Southeast Asian



Ph, Thai, Myanmar, MOA signing. Seated from left: Mr. Anant Pichetpongsa-Director,Capital Rice Intl.Co,Ltd, Mr. Aye Tun-Managing Director,Golden Hanthwaddy CO. Ltd, Mr. Aung Moe Kyaw-Chairman,IBTC Group, Mr. Henry Lim-Chairman and CEO, SL Agritech Corp., Mr. Jose Manuel Lopa and Mr. Norberto Ong, Managing Partner,Radiant Stone Pte,Ltd. Standing from left: Mr. Vinyoo Pichpongisa, Mr. Thanaphol Leelangamwong of Capital Rice Intl.Co.Ltd, Mr. Gerry Lim Bon Huan-President, Sterling Paper Group of Companies, Mr. Brian Lim – COO ,SL Agritech Corp., Ms. Jocelyn Farnacio, VP-Special Asst. to the Chairman & CEO, Prof. Zhang Zhaodong, Research Scientist, SL Agritech Corporation.

Nations] partnership, it's a good Asean partnership," Lim said in an interview with the Inquirer. He

said the vision of the collaboration was "to become the biggest rice consortium" in the region.

SL Agritech will contribute its rice technology and varieties  
*(Turn to page 3)*

## PHILS IS SEED SUPPLIER TO WORLD'S BIGGEST RICE PRODUCER VIETNAM

The Philippines shipped out in October 200 metric tons (MT) of SL-8H hybrid rice seeds to Vietnam.

It is part of a total of 800 MT volume that should be completed within 2012. SL Agritech Corp. started exporting to Vietnam three years ago with Vietnam's aggressive program to sustain its global leadership in rice.

"This is the fourth time that we're exporting seeds to Vietnam. We welcome this as an opportunity, and we're proud that

we can export a Filipino product," said SL Agritech Asst. Vice President-Supply Chain Donna T. Lim.

Despite its being known as the world's biggest (or second to Thailand) rice exporter, Vietnam is further strengthening its position through hybrid rice technology.

That further firms up its natural resources strength—with vast tracts of land that gets cost-effective irrigation via the Mekong

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# golden grain

By MELODY AGUIBA

## Remembering Mang Sanny

It is with joy and sadness that we remember the founder of this newsletter, Gintong Butil, Sanny Galvez or Mang Sanny as we all fondly call him. He was one who worked honestly and paid back with his whole-hearted service what you gave him in return.



GALVEZ

He was sensitive to the needs of others. I know because he volunteered to help me when I had a problem at home when our dog bit three people at the same time on the same day. I had to send those three people immediately for rabies vaccination.

My own former editor, Delfin Perez, remembers him as one who helped him at his most needy time. Sir Delfin's son was then dying. It was Mang Sanny, using his vehicle, who brought him to the hospital and was with Sir Delfin just when his son died.

oOo

Mang Sanny was a model of success for his perseverance amid hardships. Having married early, he went through much difficulties but he always rose above them.

oOo

It must be notable how Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Proceso J. Alcala has spearheaded the Food Self Sufficiency Program, and he marks this with an impressive investment in infrastructure. That is particularly on a P27.3 billion president's budget in irrigation for 2013.

DA's goal is to put up 190,000 hectares in irrigation capacity by 2013. But even by the end of 2012, much of this target area will have already been put in place. Any excess that will be achieved beyond 190,000 hectares by the end of 2013 will have been an additional bonus, according to Alcala.

oOo

SLAC is continuing to engage in many firsts in the hybrid rice sector after having taken the initiative to make it a tool to making many farmers known to

become entrepreneurs, rather than just mere rice growers.

Through the Association of South East Asian Nation's food security group, SLAC has just entered into a support program to make Malaysia and Myanmar become capable of producing hybrid rice.

While the Philippines may fall behind in the competition in many farm goods—corn, sugar, due to the Asean Free Trade Agreement that will bring down tariff of goods to zero to five percent, it is emerging as a leader in hybrid rice.

It is partnering with no less than one of the world's largest exporters of rice, Thai Capital, which takes up around 20 percent of Thailand's eight million metric tons of rice export.

oOo

Malaya Business Insight's Madelaine Cabrera has taken note of the Dona Maria premium rice's new innovation in the market of hybrid rice through its sachet-packing. Here is part of Madelaine's report:

"Many companies sell their products in the form of millions of single-use sachets, particularly in developing and emerging markets."

Single-use sachet makes some brands affordable to people with low incomes. They give people the opportunity to buy products in small quantities when they need them.

Just like any other company that is into small packaging, SL Agritech Corp. (SLAC) has unveiled their premium quality rice in 300 -gram sachets – a third of a kilo – for P25 each."

oOo

The goal of DA now is to be able to raise the country's export of organic rice—the colored red, brown, black. Hopefully if it is to become fair to everybody—it should give every kind of assistance to whatever crop or farm good that a Filipino hopes to grow or raise.

That is much as how the United States Farm Bill tries to give support, still the so-called farm subsidy, for practically any type of venture—whether that is for a high technology farm venture or a niche venture as that in organic produce.

Nevertheless, DA and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) have prompted the present increase in the budget for agriculture research and development (R&D). For 2013, this budget is raised to P2.5 billion. This comes from a budget of just about a little more than a billion pesos around five to eight years back.

The new R&D budget is finally somewhat a fulfillment of what the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA) of 1997 envisioned. Still, this R&D budget falls below the AFMA-mandated budget allocation for R&D. Ideally it should be at least one percent of the gross value added (GVA) in agriculture. And if the basis for this GVA is the National Statistical Coordination Board's P660 billion, R&D budget now must be P6.6 billion, making the 2013 budget just one-third of the mandated level.

oOo

The distribution of Dona Maria premium rice in sachet form must achieve one thing—the popularization of a rice product worthy of becoming known as a Philippines-origin brand.

It can actually follow after the model of Hom Mali, an African-origin, globally-exported specialty rice, commanding a price of about \$1,000 per ton. It is an organic rice that has applied with the European Union for Geographical Indication as coming from Thailand's Thung Kula Ronghai region.

The 300-gram sachet may be consumed in three to four cups at an average of 80 grams per cup. It is affordable at a price range of P25 to P30 per kilo at sari-sari store barangay levels.

The retail distribution enables common Filipinos to consume a product earlier identified with consumption among the more economically well-off.



# gintong butil

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## THE FIRST AND ONLY HYBRID RICE PROGRAM ON AIR

Philippines' first radio program dedicated to creating awareness on raising farmers' income, rice sufficiency, and the country's capability to export rice through superior breeds is now on air.

"Usapang Hybrid Rice" was aired for the first time last July 28, 2012 over DZAR Sonshine Radio 1026 kHz. Its time slot is 6:00 to 7:30 a.m. every Saturday.

It is an information and education program of SL Agritech Corp. (SLAC), a hybrid rice pioneer not only in the Philippines but in South East Asia (SEA).

"We want to reach out to our farmers who need to learn effective ways of growing rice. It will create jobs that generate higher income for farmers. We want to see more farmers that drive their own SUVs (sports utility vehicle) that also help in their farm productivity," said SLAC Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Henry Lim Bon Liong.

Hybrid rice may become a major contributor to making the Philippines a net rice exporter which is a primary aim at

present of the Department of Agriculture (DA). Hybrid rice farming is in line with the government's aim to export rice at a bigger volume as hybrid rice can yield six to 10 tons per hectare as against usual inbred rice yield of three to four tons per hectare.

"Hybrid rice is our hope in becoming a rice exporter. We can only be competitive in the world market with hybrid rice. It will bring down our production cost close to Vietnam's very low P8 per kilo," said Lim.

"Yet we're able to produce higher-quality rice, the tender and aromatic type hybrid rice for the benefit of our rice-loving consumers," said Lim.

Dr. Frisco M. Malabanan, SLAC hybrid rice specialist and co-host of Usapang Hybrid Rice, said there are significant potential expansion areas in the country particularly in Visayas and Mindanao where farmers still find it difficult to make a good income out of farming.

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## USAPANG HYBRID RICE

@ DZAR 1026 (am dial)  
(DXRD 711 - Davao station)  
Every Saturday 6:00am - 7:30am

**SL AGRITECH CORPORATION**  
"Agritech for Manila"

**DZAR SONSHINE RADIO 1026**  
SMNI MANILA

## PH, Thai, Myanmar firms...

From page 1

Lim said initial investment in the venture would not be too big at about \$10 million to \$20 million.

SL Agritech will initially contribute its high-yielding SL-8H hybrid rice variety to the venture but Lim said this might also be a springboard for the premium Doña Maria rice variety.

"For Doña Maria rice, we have a big market also. Five years ago, there were Singaporean rice traders who wanted to place 200,000 MT order but it was impossible when we are importing 500,000 MT every year," Lim said.

Lim said SL Agritech was likewise working with the Tao group of businessman Jun Sy on the regional venture.

Even before the consortium, SL Agritech has been selling its hybrid rice seeds to other Southeast Asian countries.

SL Agritech started in 1998 as an unincorporated entity performing research work on hybrid rice, inspired by the success of China in becoming a surplus producer and exporter of rice despite its limited arable land. The Lim family sought and obtained the assistance of notable Chinese scientist Yuan Long Ping to develop

hybrid rice varieties suitable to tropical conditions prevalent in the Philippines.

Starting modestly with land provided by the provincial government of Laguna in 1999, the company initiated the development of several hybrid rice parental lines, which were later transferred to a 40-hectare farm in Sta. Cruz, Laguna, which now houses the research and breeding complex of the company. Its proprietary hybrid rice SL-8H, which was initially released during the dry season in 2002-2003, marked the start of the company's expansion and the development of its marketing organization.

--DORIS C. DUMLAO  
Philippine Daily Inquirer



The production base of the consortium will be in Myanmar, where cost is very low and the government provides a lot of tax incentives, Lim said. It will also be in Myanmar where a company to be owned by the consortium will be incorporated.

Partner IBTC group is Myanmar's leading manufacturer, marketer and distributor of alcoholic beverages. Its agribusiness arm is ISMSA International Sun Moon Star Agricultural Co. Ltd.

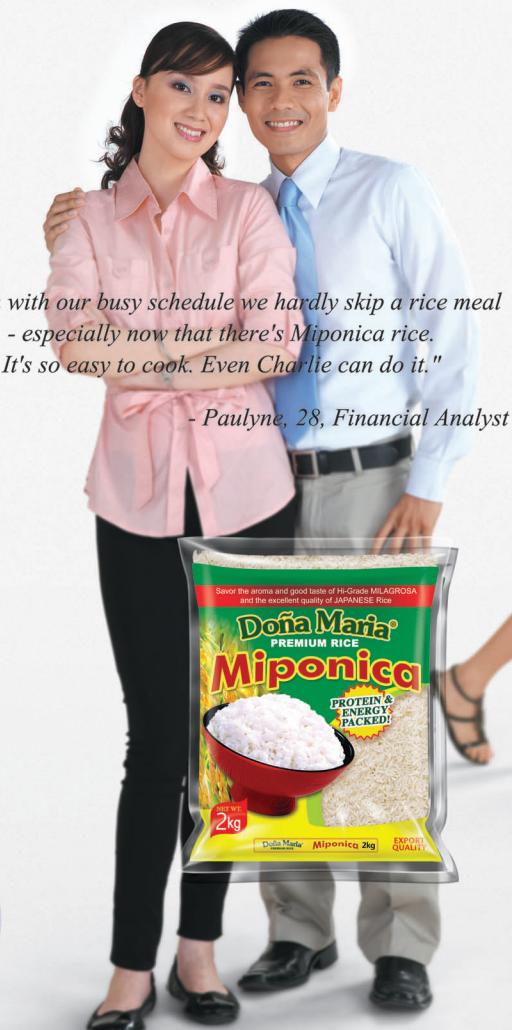
Capital Rice, which is part of the STC group, is one of Thailand's top rice exporters. Lim estimated the Thai partner's exports at 2.2 million metric tons in 2011 while the annual average was about 1.8 million MT.

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- Paulyne, 28, Financial Analyst



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- Kathy, 21, Student



*"We never thought rice could taste this good. The kids rush to the table once they smell the Jasponica rice cooking."*

- Carol, 38, Housewife



*"Whoever said that you have to make sacrifices to stay healthy has not tried Miponica brown rice."*

- Jean, 62, Retired Banker



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# SLAC TO CONTRIBUTE TO MALAYSIA'S 100 PERCENT RICE SUFFICIENCY

SL Agritech Corp. (SLAC) is taking part in the transformation of Malaysia aim to attain a 100 percent rice sufficiency as envisioned by its government.

Malaysia is currently producing 65 percent of its rice needs. It has no commercial hybrid rice production. But with SLAC's assistance through Sabah's Ministry of Agriculture, Malaysia's dream is coming a reality.

The government itself is all-out in its support for rice production. It supports farmers with inputs (fertilizer seeds) which are almost 100 percent free. It also buys their production, 100 percent, at a higher price compared

to market.

The government-supported, corporate-type of farming is ensuring success of Malaysia's rice program.

Dr. Frisco M. Malabanan, SLAC hybrid rice technical expert, met with Malaysia's rice officials in the private sector and the government during a BIMP-EAGA meeting in Balikpapan, East Kalimantan led to discussions on SLAC's aid to Malaysia.

BIMP-EAGA or Brunei Indonesia Malaysia Philippines-East Asia Growth Area has a long-standing objective to help each member-country on food security.

This meeting in also led

to the visit of the Sabah mission team to the Philippines last Sept. 17-21. The Sabah team visited the research and experimental station of the Philippine Rice Research Institute in Munoz, Nueva Ecija and SLAC's SL-8H, SL-9 and Dona Maria production areas.

"They were impressed to see our rice production!" said Dr. Malabanan.

Planting of S-8H will start in Sabah in the ongoing dry season- November- December 2012. And the expectation is high.

"The yield there is low at three tons per hectare using old inbred varieties. It will be their

first time to plant hybrid in Sabah. But they are inspired with the testing in Sarawak province where initial results indicated higher yield of SL-8H varieties of close to Philippine performance of eight to nine tons," he said.

The Ministry of Agriculture of Sabah is expected to grant approval for the field testing. The objective though is to immediately go into commercial production in order to aid in speeding up Malaysia's food security objective.

Rice area in Sabah is in Kota Belud. Target area for hybrid rice is 10,000 hectares. But more areas may be opened up considering the rice sufficiency target.



## PHIL TO BEGIN EXPORTING RICE NEXT YEAR - ALCALA

Manila, Philippines - Agriculture Secretary Proceso Alcala said yesterday the Philippines will begin exporting rice next year.

Alcala said hybrid rice producer SL Agritech, which businessman Manny V. Pangilinan is considering to invest in, is planning to produce the rice seed varieties for long grain and aromatic rice for export.

"We will start to export (rice) next year whatever happens because we need to develop the market," he said during the release of the first semester farm output report. "We are in the process of determining the volume."

In an earlier press conference, Pangilinan said his group

is interested in making new investments in agriculture, particularly with SL Agritech. Pangilinan recently said that First Pacific Co. Ltd. is in talks with the hybrid rice seed producer about a partnership in large-scale commercial farming.

"We were approached by them," said Pangilinan. "They will supply the hybrid seedlings then we will provide the land for large-scale commercial farming," Pangilinan told reporters.

He said talks with SL Agritech are still in the initial stage.

"It is still in the initial stage although they have good products so they should be encouraged," he said.

Pangilinan said the group is also interested in banana and sugar projects in Mindanao.

He noted that agriculture is a neglected sector in the Philippines while agriculture in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam and even Myanmar is vibrant.

SL Agritech ships parental lines of hybrid rice seeds to Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Myanmar. The parental lines are cultivated in these countries to produce the seeds that are sold to farmers.

The firm is considering to start exporting seeds to Nigeria and is planning to expand its operations in Indonesia, Bangladesh and Myanmar as well as in Vietnam where currently exports it seeds.

SL Agritech is a subsidiary of the Sterling Paper Group of Companies. It was formed in 1998, performing research work on hybrid rice.



SEC. ALCALA

The company has been planning to conduct an initial public offering but has decided to defer it for next year, believing that tension between Filipino and Chinese naval forces in the Panatag Shoal can disturb trade relations between China and the Philippines and upset the stock market.

Alcala earlier said he would resume talks with Pangilinan regarding possible investments in the agricultural sector.

**-Czeriza Valencia**  
**(The Philippine Star)**  
**August 14, 2012]**

## CONG. MALIKSI SATISFIED IN PLANTING SL HYBRID RICE SEEDS VARIETIES

After planting hybrid rice for three seasons, Congressman Enrico "Ayong" Maliksi has been convinced hybrid rice is the way to go in raising yield especially in specialty premium rice .



**Si Imus, Cavite Congressman Enrico "Ayong" Maliksi ay nagsimulang gumamit ng SL Agritech Hybrid Seeds noong Oktubre 20, 2011. Ang mga binhing ginamit niya at ang SL-8H, SL-7H, SI-9H at SL-18H.**

His use of SL-7, Dona Maria Jasponica premium rice, and SL-9, Dona Maria Miponica premium rice, enabled him to double his previous yield in his farm in Imus, Cavite.

He is now trying to demonstrate to other provincial officials and Imus's rice farmers how to successfully plant hybrid rice.



**Si Congressman Ayong Maliksi kasama ang CEO ng Nature's Clean and Green International Corporation na si Joselito Cirilo Salvador Perolino.**

## BOHOL TO EXPAND HYBRID RICE PLANTING TO 2,600 HAS IN A SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

The province of Bohol is expanding hybrid rice planting in this ongoing dry season to 2,600 hectares with its successful public private partnership (PPP) model that has propped up farmers' rice yield by 50 percent.

The tie-ups forged between the local government unit (LGU) in Bohol and of the private sector movers have brought about a win-win partnership that is making Bohol a model to follow in other provinces.

"We just started in Bohol with one cluster of only around 40 to 50 hectares. Then when we conducted a big harvest festival, farmers were able to see the advantage of hybrid rice. Now hybrid rice planting is further expanding," said Dr. Frisco M. Malabanan, SL Agritech Corp. hybrid rice specialist.

Two districts in Bohol—the second and third districts—will be involved in this expansion.

Cluster size is now expanding to as much as 100 hectares. From a total area of 1,300 hectares in the last planting season in Bohol, this may be doubled this current season.

The PPP in Bohol became a success with the support of the LGU of Bohol led by then Rep. Eric B. Aumentado and of then Department of Agriculture Secretary, now congressman, Arthur C. Yap. Aumentado used his own PDAF (priority development assistance fund) to finance farmers' needed inputs in hybrid rice planting.

When the national government phased out subsidy for hybrid rice planting a few years back, Bohol's provincial and municipal leaders took it upon themselves to take care of their farmers. This is by providing needed support in the form of fertilizers.

It was easy for farmers to take the risk to plant a rice variety that was then still somewhat new to them since the hybrid rice program was linked to traders-millers in the province.

Traders-millers were tapped to



**Cong. Aumentado**

commit to buying their produce at a premium. It is at a price P1 per kilo higher than market price. There is no limit to the volume that traders can transact.

Traders-millers also finance some inputs like fertilizers. SL Agritech provides the seeds.

"We're able to show the province an incremental yield in rice of close to 50 percent. Their yield then was only three tons per hectare," said Malabanan. "Our PPP was really a very good model."

SL Agritech has a vision to duplicate this model PPP in other areas.

"The success of the Bohol model has inspired us to promote that PPP in other areas where hybrid rice is not commercially planted," he said.

The LGU of Bohol has also supported the distribution of inbred seeds. But since hybrid rice has exhibited its benefit of raising farmers' income and expanding rice sufficiency level of Bohol, the LGU is raising its support for hybrid rice.

"There are districts that are rice-sufficient. But the whole Bohol province is not 100 percent sufficient which is why they're pushing for hybrid rice expansion as no current technology will give them that yield which is close to 50 percent increase as their experience last season," said Malabanan.

# SL-18 TO RAISE FARMERS' POTENTIAL YIELD TO 12 MT PER HECTARE

SL Agritech Corp. is set to launch a new rice variety that will be a big leap in raising farmers' income with its potential 12 metric tons (MT) per hectare yield.

The company has submitted to the National Cooperative Testing-Philippine Rice Research Institute for validation the results of experimentations conducted on SL-18. The variety has intensified resistance against bacterial leaf blight compared to SL-8H. It has been developed by SL Agritech's rice breeders led by Prof. Zhang Zhaodong.

"We have yet to develop a

brand to promote SL-18. But one thing we're amazed about it is its good taste and high yield. If results of our study are stabilized, SL-18 will really be the solution to farmers' problem on low yield. It will help them raise their harvest in a significant way," according to Donna T. Lim, SL Agritech assistant vice president-supply chain.

Much of farmers' concerns regarding pest and cultural management are answered by SL-18.

"It's really about crop care," said Lim.

SL-18 is noted for its long panicle and hefty grain count



SL Agritech Corp will soon launch another hybrid rice variety - SL18H. Right now it is under demo trial in Philrice and planted in other provinces nationwide. Initial result shows a promising yield of more than 240 cavans or 12 tons per hectare.

which is at 500 pieces per panicle while ordinary varieties may just have half of that. On consumers' benefit, it gives a sticky type of rice, although

not as sticky or as sushi-apt as Miponica. And it can be equally priced as the prevailing premium rice varieties of SL Agritech at P62 per kilo.

# HYBRIDS KEY TO BEING TOP RICE PRODUCER --CAGAYAN GOV. ANTONIO

ALCALA, Cagayan – Having witnessed the bountiful harvest achieved by rice farmers here during a recent hybrid rice harvest festival, Governor Alvaro Antonio said he now believes that "planting this high-yielding rice variety is the right answer to my long-time wish that someday, our province will be No. 1 in rice production."

"We have not achieved this average record of 180 to 200 cavans per hectare ever since. Ngayon na lamang sa pagtataniam ninyo ng hybrid rice," Antonio said, as he expressed high hopes that more and more of the province's rice farmers will shift to the new rice production technology.

In a brief talk with farmers who attended the festivity, Gov. Antonio said that while majority of its farmers are still planting the

inbred rice variety whose average production is only about 40 to 60 cavans per hectare, "our main goal now is to go hybrid which, I believe, will be the fulfillment of my dream to make our province the country's top rice producer."

Gov. Antonio was the main guest during the festival which is one of the festivities being sponsored yearly by SL Agritech Corp. in the different provinces to promote the planting of hybrid rice.

Of the province's total rice area of 150,000 hectares, only about 20,000 of them were planted to hybrid rice, mostly SL-8H variety which is produced by SL Agritech Corp., and the rest planted to inbred rice variety.

Over in Nueva Ecija, provincial agriculturist Serafin Santos said 15 farmers from the towns of San Jose and Sto. Domingo, were

adjudged winners in the Highest Hybrid Rice Yielder competition sponsored by SL Agritech. The top two winners were Februnio Abad of San Jose City and Gregorio Alcantara of Sto. Domingo, whose per hectare production was 226.81 and 214 cavans, respectively.

Representatives from the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPA), the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Unit (DA-RFU), NIA-National Irrigators' Association and SL Agritech composed the members of the evaluating committee.

The other prize winners from San Jose City were Paulo Domingo, 202 cavans per hectare; Victoriano Ariz, 201.92; Arthur Castro, 189.52; and Cirilo Gaygay Jr., 189.42 cavans per hectare. Farmer-winners from Sto. Do-



GOV. ANTONIO

mingo were Rodolfo Bautista, 202 cavans per hectare; Elisa Mangahas, 182; Anselmo Santos, 181; and Edwin Ambrosio, 179.6 cavans per hectare.

Other winners in the water pump area category were Rolando Samonte, 181.91 cavans per hectare; Oscar Cacabillos, 169.68; Jimmy Morales, 160.75; Carolina Vergara, 154.39; and Rogelio Cabico, 151.72 cavans per hectare.

## SPECIAL FEATURE

(Taken from MANILA BULLETIN, Business Agenda)

# MICHELLE LIM-GANKEE

Production and Marketing Director, Sterling Paper Products Enterprises, Inc.; and Special Assistant to the Chairman and CEO of SL Agritech Corporation



Jokes are half-meant—and can come true. Describing herself as “heir apparent” one day to a broadsheet reporter may have gotten her father, Henry Lim, laughing, but Michelle’s quip held some weight and prophetic power. Starting as a formulator of SOPs for Expressions bookstore (one of their family’s companies), she moved her way up to become production and marketing director of Sterling Paper, the company founded by her grandfather in the 1960s.

“There was no special treatment,” she emphasizes. “Never, ever, ever should people think I had it easy.”

Because Michelle herself doesn’t take it easy. Alongside her responsibilities at Sterling, she was tasked just a mere three months ago by her father to personally assist him in the sales and marketing of SL-8H, the rice seed developed by their company, SL-Agritech.

SL Agritech is the developer of SL-8H, the hybrid super seed discovered 12 years ago that could very well be the country’s answer to long-term food security. It’s accredited by the National Seed Industry Council of the Department of Agriculture and is now the leading hybrid rice in the country and the only local variety that has been also accredited by the respective government authorities in Indonesia, Bangladesh and Vietnam. SL Agritech Corporation is supported by Professor Yuan Long Ping of China, known as the Father of Hybrid Rice. “It is because of Professor Yuan’s hybrid rice technology that allowed China to achieve food security and even export their rice,” says Michelle.

It’s become Michelle’s personal mission to be a part of the solution for food security, and the welfare of farmers, as well. “Out of the four million hectares of arable land in the Philippines, we only need 800,000 hectares to plant SL-8 for us to be self-sustaining,” Michelle says emphatically.

Now, she talks about the whole gamut of agriculture like she’s been at it for several years. She’s constantly doing her homework, often visiting the company’s rice center in Nueva Ecija to receive updates and speak with the farmers.

Being hands-on, thinking quick on her feet and firm with her decisions are just some of the lessons she learned from her father. “You have to think like an entrepreneur, not just like a manager. Marketing is not science, it’s common sense. And an entrepreneur knows how to spot opportunities and grab them. That’s why we’re so diversified—we have a call center, real estate. And the greatest risk of an entrepreneur is not to take risks—but those risks must be calculated,” she says.

She’s also very competitive. Another Henry Lim trait. “My rice seeds are number one in terms of yield. And we continue to develop new varieties,” she informs. SL-18 is currently in the works, a new variety. “Some (grains) are exceeding SL-8, some pareho lang. But I want all of this next variety to exceed SL-8.” This hard-nosed approach to business can best be illustrated by a quote by Konosuke Matsushita, founder of Panasonic: “You pray for the survival of your rival because you want another chance to demonstrate your superiority.” How can you be number one if you’re the only one?”

Here, she extols the virtues of her new post concurrent the one in Sterling, and which probably may be the next big thing in agriculture.

BA: How is it working with farmers?

Michelle Lim-Gankee: It’s very touching sometimes, especially when I give talks. I tell them how it was growing up; how our father wouldn’t give us allowance. He brought us up learning to appreciate money. So we

didn’t grow up spendthrifts, up to today. I tell that to my farmers, and they appreciate it. I also like listening to their stories, how SL-8H has helped them, how their children were able to go to school and are now nurses and doctors because of SL-8H.

BA: Just how well can a regular farmer earn with SL-8H?

MLG: With the regular seeds, P20,000 to P25,000 net a hectare; with SL, P50,000 to P100,000 a hectare.

BA: That’s huge. What’s the payoff?

MLG: Often, it’s the pricing that we have a problem with, but I addressed that by coming out with a five-kilo sack for P1,400, and good for one-third of a hectare. But really, what is an extra P2,000 investment when you can have an extra income of P20,000? P40,000? P50,000?

Then of course you have climate change, and blight. Things we can’t control. But things like poor germination? Wala (that’s nothing). Confident ako. And in case you do have a problem with germination, we have a six-tonner milling machine in Talavera that is also a service center and a seed germination center.

There’s also the process. (During germination), you have to change the water every three hours. With inbred seeds, it’s easy—just leave it for 12 hours, it’s ok. But I think the extra effort is worth the returns.

Farmers are sometimes stubborn, though. They like to stick to what they know. It takes a good sales and technical person to explain to the farmer what to do and how to do it. I want the farmer to learn the right technique in raising hybrid rice; you sustain the plant, and it’s not always about fertilizer, it’s about space.

BA: What makes SL-8H a good investment to both small farmers and bigger businessmen?

MLG: Not only does SL-8H promise more income for the farmer, it brings pride to our country as well. The unrivaled performance of SL-8H in the Philippines has been attracting great interest from other tropical rice-growing countries specifically Indonesia, Bangladesh and Vietnam, where the commercialization of SL-8H is being undertaken with success.

Some traits of SL-8H are: a very high grain yield of 10 to 14 metric tons per hectare with a record high of 17 metric tons, compared to the inbred variety that yields three to five metric tons per hectare in a 105 to 115-day planting period. That means farmers can earn at least P60,000 net income per hectare—even up to P100,000, versus the net income of inbred rice that goes around P25,000 per hectare. The recorded highest yielder in the Philippines is 17.3 or 345.60 cavans per hectare obtained in the dry season August 2009 by Severino Payumo of Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija.

Generally, it is a very good investment to farmers because it will double, triple and even quadruple their net income

versus using an inbred variety. Yield can further be maximized by religiously following the steps in planting hybrid rice.

BA: Farming seems the next big thing to a lot of people—is it for everyone? What are the things to consider before farming, especially rice?

MLG: Former president of China Jiang Zhe Min once said, “If you are a statesman of a developing country, there are three things you should know—agriculture, agriculture, agriculture! If agricultural farmers are rich, the entire nation will become rich; if the agricultural industry flourishes, 1,000 other industries will follow; if the agricultural sector is stable, heaven and earth will be stable”—no crime, no insurgency, etc.

In order to be a farmer or to go into this business, it requires patience because of the many challenges—the open environment is subject to pests, typhoons, drought, plant diseases, and also other factors like irrigation, seed quality, working capital, etc. In order to maximize yield and productivity, it is important to use the right seeds to ensure farmers of optimum results. Due to SL-8H’s deep roots and strong stem, it can absorb water even in muddy soil, it will not easily lodge (dapa) unlike other varieties. It can also be planted in coastal provinces because it is saline-resistant.

BA: Are there fake SL-8H seeds? How do you detect if you’re buying the real thing?

MLG: We have a number of security features in terms of the serial number, labeling, stickers, and how we pack our seeds.

BA: How do you make SL-8H more accessible to regular farmers?

MLG: We have different programs to support the farmers like our Plant Now, Pay Later plan, tie-up with farmers’ cooperatives, tie-up with Irrigators Association, and we also set up a foundation to support farmers with limited or no capital. We’re also looking at loyalty rewards.

BA: Back in your office environment at Sterling, how are you as a manager? What do you like most and dislike most?

MLG: I hate getting bored. I don’t like doing the same thing everyday. Ayoko ng walang challenge (I don’t like not having challenges). I like keeping busy. And I like a team that’s gung-ho, that has a sense of urgency. That doesn’t wait for others to fix what they can fix already.

In retail, if you want to keep things exciting, go into merchandising. You get to choose, (experience) pricing, negotiation, and going to trade fairs. Forecasting. Lahat nandon (everything’s there). But you have a feel...you have to see and grab the opportunity. Because if you miss it, magsisisi ka talaga (you’ll regret it).

Written by Regina Abuyuan

# NUEVA ECIJA TYphoon VICTIMS GET HIGH RICE YIELD

Nueva Ecija farmers who were victims of last year's typhoons "Pedring" and "Quiel" have turned beneficiaries of high rice yield at an average of eight metric tons (MT) per hectare from hybrid seeds grant from SL Agritech Corp. (SLAC).

Such average yield doubles the

Jose with 14,000 cavans-- an average of seven MT per hectare; and Sta. Rosa with 33,839 cavans or with an average of 8.5 MT per hectare.

"While others helped by giving relief goods to victims of the recent typhoons, the Philippine Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Philippine

Chua, Employers Confederation of the Philippines President Ed LAcson, PCCI President Leo Sy, Isabela Governor Faustino "Bojie" Dy, Isabela Vice-Governor Rodolfo Albano III.

"The mayors were thankful that the disaster program had

increased their rice production and definitely enabled their farmers to recover from a decrease in their harvest last season brought about by the typhoons," said Lim, also the chairman of the Chinese chamber's agriculture committee.

As the Philippines experiences at least 20 typhoons every year, Filipino farmers need assistance specially in good seeds which contribute to at least 25 percent of yield increase, according to plant breeders.

## PHILS IS SEED SUPPLIER...

*From page 1*

river delta.

"Vietnam has not yet optimized rice yield. Its inbred rice's yield can be increased by two to three times more with hybrid rice," she said.

SL-8H seeds have made Philippines establish a reputation as a significant hybrid seed producer along with suppliers India and China, although both countries may have embarked on hybrid rice research ahead of the Philippines.

China started hybrid rice research as early as in 1964, while India started its program with the International Rice Research Institute in the 1990s. Even Vietnam started its own hybrid rice program in the 1990s.

Succeeding commercially in a rice program ostensibly needs government support. This is especially true in raising Vietnam's rice yield which is still at a low level of three to four MT per hectare.

"We're surprised Vietnam (its government) gives a subsidy (equivalent to) P2,000 per hectare for fertilizer and other inputs. Planting hybrid rice for them means more money for farmers and the economy," said Lim.

Vietnam has supported hybrid rice production through extension work and research and development (R&D).

"Experimental results show that hybrid rice outyielded inbred rice by 18-45%," according to Hanoi University of Agriculture. "To promote hybrid rice production, Vietnam's government has spent a large amount of money importing hybrid seed, on R&D for hybrid rice production, and on subsidizing

hybrid rice seed production. Vietnam spent a total of \$130.3 million importing seed during the period 1998 -2006."



Vice President Jejomar Binay leads in donation of SL-8H hybrid rice.

traditional harvest of farmers from inbred seeds at just about three to four MT per hectare.

Farmers in four towns in Nueva Ecija that experienced the worst damage in these typhoons have been identified by SLAC in collaboration with the towns and their municipal agriculturists.

They received a total of 600 bags of hybrid rice seeds which they began planting in November 2011 and harvested in April. The seeds were distributed to Cabiao, 200 bags; Licab, 100 bags; Sta. Rosa, 200 bags' and San Jose, 100 bags.

"Our farmers are among the worst victims everytime we experience typhoons. But instead of allowing them to just wallow in misery from the damage, we can help them learn technologies that can help raise income significantly in a way that they can save up for future needs," said SLAC Chairman Herny Lim Bon Lioang.

The SL-8H seeds grant is part of a Joint Disaster Rehabilitation program of SLAC with Philippine Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) President Francis Chua, PCCI Chairman Sergio Ortiz Luis, and the town leaders including Cabiao Mayor Baby Congco.

The average rice yield actually varied between the towns. Licab had a total of 14,799 cavans which translates to an average of 7.6 MT per hectare. This was followed by San

Chamber of Commerce and SL Agritech Corp. distributed palay seeds that is most needed by farmers to recover from the disaster," said Vice President Jejomar Binay during an earlier grant ceremony.

A grant of 200 bags of SL-8H seeds were separately extended to Isabela farmers in a ceremonial distribution held at the Coconut Palace last Feb. 12. Also present in the ceremony were PCCI Vice President Oscar

## SLAC SPONSORS AGRICULTURE STUDENTS EDUCATION

SL Agritech Corp. has put up a scholarship program in an aim to support agricultural development in the Philippines.

The "SL Agritech Scholarship For Agriculture" started in the first semester of academic year 2012-2013.

It is sponsoring the education of two students at the Foundation University in Dumaguete City.

The scholars were chosen by the university based on these qualifications: A candidate must be 1. A BS Agriculture (BSA) student 2. must be in third or fourth year in the course program 3. must maintain an average grade of 2.0 or higher 4. and must have no grade below 2.25 in any subject.

The scholars are Burton S. MAngao , BSA-IV, and Faith B.



Patay, BSA-IV.

With this grant to the Foundation University, SL Agritech Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Henry Lim Bon Lioang was invited by the university to speak before its 2012 Commencement Exercise class.

The Foundation University acknowledged Lim's role in the rice sufficiency goal of the country.

"With farmers getting as much as 12 tons per hectare with SLAC's hybrid rice variety SL8H, agriculture experts see the country gaining self-sufficiency in rice by 2013. The government has a goal of expanding hybrid rice coverage of 500,000 to 700,000 hectares by 2013 from the current coverage of 375,000 hectares," according to the Dumaguete Metropost.



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# THE NEW DONA MARIA RICE SURPRISE: KANIN, PA LANG, ULAM NA!

**Kanin pa lang, Ulam na!** That is how to perfectly describe SL Agritech's new "Dona Maria Rice Surprise" as it offers this delicious rice now exclusively topped with your choice of all-time favorite viands.

Dona Maria Rice Surprise's variants come in these six toppings-- Lo-Ma (Chinese-style adobo), Korean Chicken, Sisig, Chicken Teriyaki, Bicol Express, and Binagoongan.

Rice Surprise is presently being distributed in two pilot areas—the Sterling Place at 2302 P. Tamo Ext, Makati City and 15th Floor, Raffles Corporate Center, Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center. The objective is to enable the masses within the vicinity-- students, call center agents—to get a taste of it.

Dona Maria Rice Surprise comes with a big bonus—cheap price at only between P50-P60! It's given away to anyone just so that everybody will have the chance to taste this delicious rice, the best tasting rice in the Philippines and probably the whole world.

## Kanin pa lang, Ulam na!



## THE FIRST AND ONLY...

*From page 3*

Potential areas that can raise farmers' income mainly through SL-8H hybrid rice seeds include Iloilo, Negros Occidental, Cebu, Davao and Cotabato provinces, Sultan Kudarat, and Zamboanga.

"In Bohol, we just started with 40 hectares. In the last season, the area expanded to 1,300 hectares as many government officials—mayors, barangay chairmen—and farmers saw how much the rice harvest piled up one cavan upon the other," said Malabanan.

In Nueva Ecija where the largest hybrid rice area in the country can be found, farmers now earn P50,000 per hectare from hybrid rice, Malabanan said. Having taken the risk in pioneering hybrid rice research and commercial release, SLAC has contributed to the country's becoming the fourth largest hybrid rice-producing country in SEA region in 2004 at 208,000 hectares.

To co-host Usapang Hybrid Rice are former National Food Authority Administrator Jesus T. Tanchanco and DZAR "Bukid at Buhay" host Susie Carpio.

Among the skills to be learned from Usapang Hybrid Rice are land and seed preparation, transplanting hybrid rice, irrigating, care against pests, and harvesting.

An interactive program that encourages farmers and farming enthusiasts to learn by asking questions, DZAR telephone lines will be open to inquiries through telephone numbers 801-9836, 836-3875, 822-1464, and 0927-540-2241.

**SA KABUKIRAN**  
Ni JOH DUNGCA

*Mula sa pahina 12*

ng mga bisita mula sa Myanmar, Malaysia at Indonesia, Sila ay dumalaw sa Pilipinas upang makita ang mga palayan na tinataniman ng SL hybrid varieties – SL-8, SL-7, SL-9 at SL-18. Ang mga bisita sa Myanmar ay dumalo sa isang harvest festival sa Lupao, Nueva Ecija at nasaksihan nila kung paano ginagawa ng kumpanyang SL Agritech ang pagpropromote at iba pang marketing programs dito sa Pilipinas. Nais din nilang gawin ito sa kanilang bansa sa Myanmar upang mahikayat nila ang kanilang magsasaka na magtanim ng hybrid rice tulad ng SL-8H at upang mapataas din ang kanilang mga ani.



From left: Mr. Zay Ar Myint, MAO-Lupao; Ms. Michelle Lim-Gankee (3rd from left) and Mr. Aung Mon of IBTC group during a harvest festival in Lupao.

# SL-8H SEED USER IS 2012 GAWAD SAKA AWARDEE

An SL-8H hybrid rice seed user has been recognized as a Gawad Saka awardee for 2012, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA).

Sixty-two year old Ricarte "Mang Carte" J. Corpuz of Madil-adig, Laoag City, Ilocos Norte, likens himself to a bamboo that is resilient, withstands strong winds and seldom breaks.

Due to poverty, he was not able to pursue a college education, but he persevered and worked hard, helping his parents and siblings tend their farm.

After more than four decades, he has become a model and successful farmer-entrepreneur.

Last year alone, from his three-hectare farm planted mainly to hy-

brid rice, he attained a record harvest of more than 34 metric tons (MT) or 685 cavans (of 50 kilos each) of palay (paddy rice) per hectare: 240 cavans for the 1st crop, 245 cavans for the 2nd crop, and 200 cavans for the 3rd crop.

It was only in 2002, when he learned of and adopted hybrid rice farming technology. From then on, he said his harvest has increased, at times triple than his previous harvests.

During the last two years, Mang Carte has earned a combined income of P1.5 million from hybrid rice and other crops that include corn, mongo and watermelon. He also earned more than P185,000 from the sale of other livestock and fishery products



(swine, cattle, goat, duck, chicken, and tilapia).

He attributes his success partly to the knowledge he acquired in attending training and seminars conducted by the DA in Ilocos Norte,

among them are the Farmers Field School (FFS) season-long and hands-on training on rice production, and on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) or Kasakalikasan.

Despite his success, Mang Carte remains modest and unpretentious, and graciously shares his blessings and knowledge to fellow farmers, so they could also increase their harvests and incomes.

Gawad Saka is a national award for outstanding farmers from different sectors of agriculture and is an award given by the Philippines's Office of the President after a competitive search carried out by the DA.

Mang Carte now lines up with other SL-8H users who have made history in Philippine hybrid rice. Among other high yielders that made the records using SL-8H seeds were Severino Payumo, 17.28 MT per hectare in Nueva Ecija; Aida Badong, 17.2 MT, Camarines Sur; Fernando Gabuyo, 16.75 MT, Nueva Ecija; and Eduardo Policarpio, 15.8 MT, Nueva Ecija.



## gintong butil

### SA KABUKIRAN

Ni JOH DUNGCA

### Hanapin ang SL-8H security seal



Taniman na naman! Abala na naman ang ating mga magsasaka sa paghahanda ng kanilang palayan. Suggestion lang po, gumamit po tayo ng binhing maaasaahan at pang-bawi sa tag-ulan – SL-8H hybrid rice seeds na ang inyong itanim. Para makasiguro na genuine ang binibili ninyong binhi ang kumpanya ng SL Agritech (producer at distributor ng binhing SL-8H, SL-7H at SL-9H) ay nagdagdag ng security features sa sako. Tingnan ang mga sumusunod upang magarantiya na tunay ang nabili ninyong SL-8H – 1) May yellow tag 2) may security seal (matatagpuan sa itaas na bahagi ng sako) 3) ang sako ay kulay berde at pula (tingnan ang larawan sa itaas).

Para sa magsasaka ng Region 2 at Region 3, ngayong Dry Season cropping ay may pa-raffle ang SL-8H entitled "Doble Panalo sa SL-8H Super Hybrid Rice Seeds". Sa bawat sako ng SL-8H na inyong bilhin ay may nakalakip na raffle coupon – 3

coupons sa 18 kg at 1 coupon sa 5 kg. Sulatan ang coupon ng Pangalan, address, cellphone number, lot number (makikita sa sako) at lagdaan at ihulog sa mga drop boxes na makikita sa MAO, dealers at cooperative. Maari kayong manalo ng mga sumusunod

### PAPREMYO SA TAG-ARAW

**Doble Panalo!** sa  
**SL-8H**  
**Super Hybrid**  
**Rice Seeds**



Ang promo na ito ay para sa REGION 2 (Cagayan at Isabela) at REGION 3 (Nueva Ecija, Bulacan, Pampanga at Tarlac) lamang.

See Posters and Print Ads for details.  
Per DTI-NCR permit no. \_\_\_\_\_ series of 2012.

: 1st prize - Tricycle ; 2nd Prize - Hand tractor w/trailer ; 3rd Prize - Water pump set at may consolation prize pa na knapsack sprayers. Ang promo period ay mula October 3, 2012 hanggang January 15, 2013. Ang raffle draw ay gaganapin sa February 14, 2013.

Noong nakaraang mga buwan ay nagkaroon ang SL Agritech  
(Sundan sa pahina 11)