

THE CENTRAL LUZON AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL

Its Role In Philippine Agriculture

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Speaking about the Central Luzon Agricultural School, Dr. Gilbert S. Perez, Chief of the Vocational Education Division, Bureau of Public Schools, said in part:

"The Muñoz idea is distinctly a Philippine idea and when I returned from a trip to Denmark, Sweden, Germany and the United States, I reported to President Quezon that I had seen better agricultural colleges abroad but that I had not seen anywhere, even in America, a secondary school to equal our own Muñoz type of secondary school... The fact that all legislators want to have a Muñoz type of school in their province is a proof of that development. The people as a whole are aware of the truth that the salvation of this country rests in the development of an intelligent, work-conscious and technically-prepared group of agricultural producers."

The Central Luzon Agricultural School located in Nueva Ecija has been considered the best of its kind in the world. Foreign educators and others who have visited the school have affirmed this statement. It may be said further, without fear of contradiction, that the Central Luzon Agricultural School is the pivotal center of the evolution of agricultural education in the Philippines.

The national government established the Central Luzon Agricultural School as a model, a school that is dedicated to the service of the communities around it as well as those far from it. It must have been the magnificent obsession of

our educational top brass to have a community school which should minister to the needs of the country because it is publicly supported and maintained by the people whose best interests must be served to the maximum. They must have envisaged a school for agricultural producers who, after undergoing instruction and training or after completing the prescribed curriculum, can and are willing to go out unafraid into the world to harness the agricultural potentialities of our country and to contribute their fullest share in building our economic structure by utilizing the subterranean opulence of the good earth. In vocational parlance, the Central Luzon Agricultural School, the first of its kind in the Philippines, was established to enable Filipino youth over 14 years of age to prepare for, enter, and progress in the farming vocation.

But, it should be remembered that the Central Luzon Agricultural School was not built in a day. At the time that the Philippine public school system was starting elementary gardening in the lower grades, the Central Luzon Agricultural School was conceived to prepare the ground work for secondary agriculture. Executive Order No. 10, of the Governor-General, dated April 10, 1907, set aside a reservation from a public domain for the purposes of this school. But because of innumerable obstacles, no attempt was made to open the school until two years later. From

then on, the school forged ahead, first under American superintendents and later under Filipino administrators after the inception of the Commonwealth Government. The story of the rise of this institution from an unpopular farm school to a model regional national agricultural school is replete with bitter sufferings, countless impediments, frustrations and hopes, and genuine patriotism. Suffice it to say, that this institution now enjoys an enviable reputation not only in our country but abroad.

Objectives and Methods

The controlling purpose of the Central Luzon Agricultural School is "to fit the pupils for useful employment and to meet the needs of persons over 14 years of age who have entered upon or are preparing to enter upon the work of the farm home" (Act 3377). The Central Luzon Agricultural School provides the best possible means for training young Filipino boys and girls along agricultural endeavors. To attain this end, the curriculum gives a maximum amount of real work experiences and a minimum of theorizing, reflective thinking, and an adequate knowledge of the so-called liberal arts. One-half of the day's session is devoted to classroom instruction and the rest, to fieldwork (for boys) and practical work (for girls) in the field, shops, and other details in the school. There is a systematic correlation of farm life with classroom subjects in order to bring about the best results of instruction. In brief, the students under the guidance of their teachers learn by actual doing. This is premised on the aim of turning out producers and workers, of moulding young men and women who are not ashamed to soil their hands, to tend the flock and the fowls,

and to wallow in the mire. The main function of this school is to prepare the youth for actual life in the rural places; hence, instruction must have a natural setting and students must learn to love and live the life they will pursue after leaving this school.

The Central Luzon Agricultural School is a "finishing" school. When students complete their training and apprenticeship in this school, they are supposed to be real farmers, efficient homemakers, rural mechanics, agricultural or livestock breeders, and leaders in agricultural field, not mere tenants. Although this is a "finishing" school, its graduates can and may continue in the College of Agriculture in Los Baños, Laguna. A number of them study in non-agricultural colleges and universities and enrol in courses allied to the agricultural vocation.

Scholastic and Health Requirements; Deposits and Fees

Only elementary-school graduates who are healthy, at least 14 years of age, with an average of 85% and are able to pass the entrance examination are eligible for admission to this school. Only honor students from other agricultural schools are admitted to the Farm-Mechanics Course. Those who have serious physical defects or who have infectious diseases are refused admission.

Any student who receives three failing grades is advised to clear from this school. A student receiving one or two failing grades is warned to improve his work. Merit awards are given to those who have shown marked excellence in certain phases of work or activities.

The prescribed savings deposits

and fee for each year are as follows:

YEAR	Savings	Matric.	Subs.	Misc. Fees	Book
	Deposit in	Fee Lib.	to	Red Cross	
	Students'	& Athletic	School	Med., Den-	Rentals
	Bank	Fee	Paper	tal, etc.	
First Year	P40.00	P4.00	P5.00	P1.00	P5.52
Second Year	55.00	4.00	5.00	1.00	4.43
Third Year	70.00	4.00	5.00	1.00	4.49
Fourth Year	60.00	4.00	5.00	1.00	6.07
High School					
Graduate Student	70.00	4.00	5.00	1.00
Farm Mechanics	60.00	4.00	5.00	1.00

Revised Secondary Agricultural Curriculum

Department Memorandum No. 22, s. 1945, of the Department of Education (formerly Department of Instruction) prescribed the revised secondary agricultural curriculum which is followed in the school.

The pertinent features of this curriculum are:

"a. Seven units of credit are prescribed in each year. Twenty-eight units are required for graduation.

"b. Horticulture and Agronomy (crop production) and Animal Husbandry are offered simultaneously in the first three years. This arrangement will enable students who cannot continue beyond the First or Second Year to acquire basic experiences in all of the three principal agricultural areas; it will make possible a greater correlation of practical work and classroom instruction; and it will better serve the aims of exploration and guidance in the lower years.

"c. Fieldwork in the First Year is to consist of general farm experiences in all phases of plant and animal production as well as experience in the farmshop. In the Second and Third Years fieldwork will also be of a general character but will gradually emphasize for the individual students the farm experiences related to the speci-

fic phases of plant and animal production in which they desire to undertake their major and minor enterprises. Fieldwork in the Fourth Year is to be devoted by the individual students or groups of students to a major enterprise and to contributory or minor enterprises which have been selected with the guidance and help of a teacher adviser and which should be carried out on the school farm or on any other farm on a scale approaching the commercial. Fieldwork in all years is to be correlated with the corresponding course in Horticulture and Agronomy, Animal Husbandry, Farm Physics and Farm Engineering, Applied Chemistry, and other courses.

"d. Practical work for girls in all years will include the following: light gardening and orchard work; poultry, swine and goat raising; dairying; handicrafts or home industries; marketing farm products; menu planning and mess control; mending of laundry work; house and yard management; first aid; club work and social welfare work; and similar home-centered activities and community extension work."

In addition to the agricultural subjects, the boys take Reading, Grammar and Composition, Current Events, National Language, and Health and Physical Education, in all years. General Science is taken in the first semester and General Mathematics in the second semester of the Second Year;

World History (first semester) and Philippine Social Life second (semester), in the Third Year; Philippine History and Government (first semester) and Farm Economics (second semester), in the Fourth Year; and Pre-Military Training in the Third and Fourth Years.

The girls have more subjects than the boys because they take Homemaking subjects from the First to the Fourth Year. The boys finish the vocational agricultural course in four years and the girls, the agricultural homemaking course also in four years.

Other Courses

Besides the agricultural and homemaking courses, the following are offered in the Central Luzon Agricultural School: one-year Farm Mechanics Course for graduates of agricultural and rural high schools; two-year Special Agricultural Course for general high school graduates; and 6 months to one year Special Course in Poultry Raising for war veterans and special students. Professional classes for agricultural teachers are held for six weeks during summer.

Miniature City

The Central Luzon Agricultural School is organized like a city. Its area is divided into two major portions: the campus proper and four student barrios. The Superintendent is the Head, the Principal is the Executive Officer, and the teachers and employees compose the instructional staff. The school population consists of 1144 students, 47 teachers, 16 employees, and 333 dependents of the school personnel for the school year 1949-1950.

The school has all the conveniences and facilities that a city has, such as a hospital, dormitories and cottages for the residents, co-op store, bank, post-telecom office, cine, bakery, recreational centers, barber shop, tailor shop, shoe repair shop, light and water systems, telephone facilities, and others. Good roads traverse the campus proper and connect the "poblacion" with the outlying school barrios. It has a student police force to keep and maintain internal peace and order.

Although there are school rules and regulations, the students are largely governed by a Student Government headed by an elective mayor. The student officials are vested with rights and prerogatives which enable them to help and cooperate with the school authorities in guiding their fellow students in democratic school life. Besides the mayor and vice-mayor, there are student officials in charge of social affairs, athletics, health, and public welfare, who compose the cabinet of the mayor. The Student Council, made up of the representatives and officials of the different classes, is the legislative machinery of the students. They also have a Student Court over which judges preside.

The students are classified as insiders and independent farmers. The freshmen and seniors who form the first group, live in two big dormitories and other quarters inside the campus proper.

The insiders render detail or fieldwork in different directed school projects as a practical application and follow-up of classroom instruction. They are shifted during the year in different details so that they can acquire ex-

perience in various phases of agricultural work. During their senior year, they do their specialization or major work. For their detail work, they receive free subsistence.

On the other hand, the independent farmer (second and third year students) work on their farms and do barrio improvement work. They live in government cottages in the barrios, cook their own food, and live independently, like the regular farmers outside the school. They stay with smaller groups. They are provided with library, light, and water facilities. They receive 75% of their rice crop which is their major enterprise. In addition, they have also some farm secondary crops, swine, poultry, and vegetables which they raise for study.

The girls take the agricultural homemaking course. They till the soil, utilize farm products, and convert raw materials into useful articles. The idea behind the homemaking curriculum is to develop our girls into countrywomen who can work and live along with the farmers. All homemakers stay in the Ladies' Hall under the care and guidance of teacher-matrons.

Every student has a savings account in the Students' Bank. All his earnings while studying are deposited in the bank. He is allowed to make withdrawals from time to time. When he graduates, he gets the balance of his bank account.

The life of the students in this school is not all work and study. There are varied extra-curricular activities which call for their special talents and interests and, in a positive way, help to mould their character.

School Projects and Shops

The school projects and shops are a necessary part of the school; their existence alone gives meaning to a practical agricultural education. The school maintains the farms, field crops, horticulture, animal and poultry projects, and the machinery, carpentry and blacksmith shops. In these projects the students work for the school under the supervision and management of vocational teachers.

There are 119 cultivated rice farms, each of which has an average of 2.8 hectares. This year's rice harvest reached 22,041 cavans. The field crops project grows sugarcane, corn, cassava, peanut, bananas, onions, and other secondary crops. Two horticulture projects occupying an area of 16 hectares, maintain an orchard, vegetable gardens, a floriculture garden, a botanical garden, and two nurseries. These projects supply the school and outside farmers with seeds and planting materials.

The animal project, which occupies an area of 75.25 hectares, has at present 500 pigs, mostly of foreign breeds, 79 dairy goats of Toggenburg and Anglo-Nubian breeds and grades, 128 work carabaos, and five heads of cattle. This project is an animal breeding center for other agricultural and rural schools and the adjacent towns. The poultry project, which is run on a self-supporting basis, is the distributing center for pure White Leghorn and New Hampshire chickens. It has 948 breeding stock, 2,552 growing stock, 1,500 chicks and 128 ducks, and operates five kerosene incubators with a total capacity of 2,600 eggs.

The machinery department takes care of the water system,

power plant, stationary and farm machinery, and all vehicles of the school. The carpentry shop undertakes the construction and repair of the school buildings and the making of essential furniture and equipment. The blacksmith shop makes and repairs farmshop tools and equipment, takes charge of the water lines and sewerage system, and does other sundry jobs.

Guidance and Placement

Guidance work for the students is carried out by teacher-advisers who act as parents to them. These teachers discover the students' aptitudes, vocational inclinations, and ambitions; see to it that they form the right attitudes and develop wholesome appreciations; and counsel them regarding their everyday problems.

A guidance counselor does more than these. On his shoulders devolves the responsibility of placing them in remunerative jobs.

Not a Poor Man's School

An erroneous belief prevails among our people that the Central Luzon Agricultural School is a "poor man's school"—a school, so they say, for the poor, a dumping ground for dull students. The right conception is, and should be, that this school is for individuals who are preparing themselves for vocational proficiency in agriculture. It must be acknowledged that agricultural methods and processes are not so simple and easy as they seem. Agricultural training is not concerned merely with the ability to use the hands skillfully; it demands the full exercise of intelligence and understanding in the proper application of farm science.

The Central Luzon Agricultural School educates men and women who have a liking for rural life,

for the farm and field. This school turns out country gentlemen and women who are productive, useful and socially efficient citizens—men and women equipped with manual skills and endowed with high occupational intelligence.

Service to the Nation

Hundreds of graduates are turned out yearly, fully prepared to assume their places in community life. These graduates do not join the long caravan of unemployed because they always find some worthwhile work somewhere. Even before completing their course, good jobs already wait for them. At least, if they do not engage in actual farming, they accept jobs as farm managers, poultry and swine husbandmen, farm mechanics in different mechanization projects, employees of the Bureau of Plant Industry and Animal Industry, or teachers in elementary and general high schools. Those who spurn work after graduation continue pursuing higher studies in colleges and universities.

One thing true is that there are Central Luzon Agricultural School graduates in every province who contribute to the agricultural development of our country.

Our government has embarked upon a huge program of mass economic mobilization. The success of this long-range venture is altogether dependent on our agricultural progress. The Central Luzon Agricultural School has been doing its share toward this end, through the work of its thousands of graduates. This school will continue producing citizen-workers for the land because, as Dr. Perez said, "the very future of the country depends upon production—continued production and more production."