First Rice Experimental Project in Albay

By PAQUITO SERRANO

Aimed to increase the yield and production of rice of Albay by means of scientific and modern method of rice farming, three cooperative experimental plots are being conducted in the three representative rice municipalities of Malinao, Camalig and Polangui under the office of the provincial agricultural supervisor with the technical assistance of Mr. Francisco P. Octubre, Assistant Agronomist of the Bureau of Plant Industry.

Knowing full well that no experiment of the kind had ever been attempted in the province before, the Provincial Board of Albay passed Resolution No. 110 calling for the establishment of said projects in order to encourage the farmers to devote more time in the proper cultivation of their lowland rice fields so as to realize better production. The amount of P630 has been set aside for labor, giving P210 for each hectare experimental plots.

These variety tests of palagad rice will serve as initial and practical demonstration on how to select the best variety suitable to local conditions. The effect of commercial fertilizers in the improvement of rice production will also be shown in these undertakings. This was made possible thru the initiative of the Provincial Governor and the Provincial Agricultural Supervisor who are deeply concerned with the improvement of rice yield of the province. At present Albay planters realize only from 18 to 25 cavans of palay per hectare.

After making field observations and laying the foundation of each project, Rice Research Man Francisco P. Octubre recommended the application of complete fertilizers suitable for rice like corona arroz, which contains 20% nitrogen. 10% phosphoric acid and 5% potash, and ammonium sulphate at reasonable quantity per hectare to obtain the best results.

Malinao Cooperative Palagad Rice Experimental Plots.

Located in barrio Cabunturan, three kilometers from the poblacion along the provincial road to Tiwi, the plots are level and represent the lowland rice field condition of Tiwi, Malinao, Tabaco, Malilipot, Bacacay and Libog. Although the soil is of yellowish brown clay loam containing a lot of sulphur, rice plants grow normally. Due to the uniformity of the soil condition, Mr. Octubre found out that repetition of the variety plots was unnecessary. Planting of inawayan (BPI and local), Sinadyaya and Kaawa had been done on November 25, 1946.

Camalig Cooperative Palagad Rice Experimental Plots.

This project represents the ordinary rolling lowland rice fields in the valleys between Mayon Volcano and the low hills of Legaspi, Daraga, Camalig, Jovellar and Guinobatan. The fields are not level and the soil is a mixture of black fine sand and clay loam of volcanic origin, according to the Rice Expert. While the higher fields at the foot of the hills noticeably lack organic matter, the lower ones are comparatively rich. Due to this condition, the four varieties planted were replicated three times. The plots are located in the barrio of Libod one and one-half kilometers from the centro.

Polangui Cooperative Palagad Rice Experimental Plots.

Planting here is late because harvesting of rice in the municipalities represented by this project, viz. Ligao, Oas, Polangui and Libon, is also late, similar to that of Camarines Sur. Proper outhilne, including cultural instructions, have already been made by Mr. Octubre. The soil here is ordinary dark brown, clay loam, level, low and rich in organic matter.

As a corollary to these experiments it is worthwhile to discuss here the condition obtaining in the province regarding the production of rice. Albay, like the southern part of Quezon, Camarines Sur and other provinces of the Bicol Region, belongs to type B — no pronounced dry season and capable of planting twice a year. The first crop is usually planted during May and June and harvested about October and the second crop (palagad) is planted in November and harvested in March and April. Heavy rains occur from November to January, the months considered by the planters as wet.

Incidentally the three representative experimental projects are around the perfectconed, active Mayon Volcano, hence the soil is of volcanic origin which is mostly of dark sandy loam, either sufficient or deficient in organic matter.

Even if it is claimed that there are more rains and irrigation water available during the second planting the average production of the first planting, as can be deduced from the above data, is still greater than that of the second cropping.

Personnel of the local Bureau of Plant Industry are leaving no stone unturned to make these projects a big success in order to encourage the local farmers in increasing their rice yield.

Albay's basic area of lowland rice fields is 14,076 hectares planted to the following varieties:

Apostol (Senador)	4,565	ha.,	ave.	22 — 24 cavans
Bacao	320	"	"	21 — 25 "
Baranay	450	"	"	22 — 26 "
Bolibod	230	"	"	25 — 28 "
Bulao	880	"	"	20 — 28 "
Cruz	210	"	"	24 — 28 "
Elon-elon	705	"	"	22 — 26 "
Casongsong	300	"	"	20 — 22 "
Kinawayan	1,900	"	"	20 — 22 "
Pangasinan	949	"	"	25 — 28 "
Maguinsalay	770	"	"	22 — 25 "
Pinursigue	1,650	"	"	24 — 26 "
Other varieties	506	"	"	20 — 25 "

The basic area of palagad rice reaches the 14,500 ha. mark, planted to the following varieties:

Binisaya	1,575	ha.,	ave.,	16 — 20 cavans
Bulao	930	"	"	18 — 20 "
Cruz	1,210	"	"	15 — 20 "
Dumali	865	"	"	18 — 20 "
Gayangang	850	"	"	16 — 20 "
Kagting	1,415	"	"	17 — 22 "
Katorsa	635	"	"	15 — 18 "
Kinawayan	2,105	"	"	17 — 20 "
Maguinsalay	1,335	"	"	16 — 20 "
Pangasinan	1,565	"	"	18 — 20 "
Siruma	945	"	"	15 — 20 "
Other varieties	1,070	"	"	15 — 20 "

(Note: This article is based on the report of Mr. Francisco P. Octubre, Assistant Agronomist)