The Professional Regulations Commission (PRC) has awarded a certificate to the Philippine Association of Agriculturists, Inc. (PAA) as the Accredited Integrated Professional Organization (AIPO) for Agriculture having integrated in its fold different agriculture-related national professional organizations in the country.

Issued as Certificate No. AIPO-042 dated 25 July 2017, this accreditation recognizes PAA as the sole professional organization to represent the agriculture profession in PRC.

Based on Section 5 of PRC Resolution No. 1089, series of 2018, PAA as an AIPO has the right to submit nominees for vacant positions in the PRC Board of Agriculture and the annual outstanding agriculturists awards as well as to designate a representative to the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Council for Agriculture.

In addition, the CPD Council of Agriculture of PRC has also accredited PAA as a CPD provider for professional agriculturists in the country with its issuance of Certificate of Accreditation No. 2018-001 on February 7, 2018.

According to Mr. Arthur Baria, the current PAA President and one of three members of the CPD Council for Agriculture, PAA as a CPD Provider can now organize and implement learning events for professional agriculturists who will need the CPD points that is required for the renewal of their licenses. (RF Rañola & AD Gasmen)

PAA now the AIPO, accredited CPD Provider for Agriculturists

Do you know that the Philippine Association of Agriculturists, Inc. is now in its 25th year since its registration with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in 1993?

Based on record, the Association was conceived as early as 1991 by Tomas L. Claudio and Vicente L. “Sonny” Domingo who came up with the idea of organizing an “independent, strong, cohesive, responsive and viable professional organization dedicated to the development of agriculture in support of the development objectives of the nation.”

They were joined in this effort by then Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) Director Nerius I. Roperos along with other well-known agriculturists.

Their vision for the organization was for it to be “a leading advocate for rural development and sustainable Philippine agriculture and to contribute to the greater awareness and deeper understanding of Philippine agriculture.” However, it was only two years later in 1993 that PAA was officially registered with SEC.

For more information about the history of PAA, visit its website at www.paa.org.ph. (ADGasmen)
PAA NEWSLETTER

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PAA has new home in DOST-PCAARRD

PAA has its new National Office at the Innovation and Technology Center (DPITC) of Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic, and Natural Resources Research and Development (DOST-PCAARRD), Jamboree Road, Timugan, Los Baños, Laguna.

The transfer is a result of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed on July 25, 2017 by Dr. Roberto Rañola, PAA National Chair and Dr. Reynaldo V. Ebora, PCAARRD Executive Director, which specified that PCAARRD shall provide a permanent office to PAA.

Before moving to DPITC, PAA shared office at the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics in University of the Philippines Los Baños. (AV Oleta)

Note from the Editor

By Andrew D. Gasmen, PhD, Chairman, PAA Public Relations Committee

It is indeed with great pleasure to have this maiden issue of the PAA Newsletter!

As you can see, we still don’t have an official name. However, with the eager desire of the Board of Trustees to inform the members about the activities of the Association during the past several months, the Board urged the Public Relations Committee to come up with this first printed release of the newsletter.

So many things have happened after our convention in Naga City took place that the Board thinks the members should be informed. These include the future plans of the Association, its recognition as an Accredited Integrated Professional Organization and as a CPD Provider for Agriculture, the organization of different Regional Chapters that is almost complete, as well as their activities and growth of membership.

These are but a few of what have transpired. We hope to include those that we missed in the succeeding issues to come, whether in electronic or printed form. We also wish to already have an official name in next release of this newsletter. We welcome your suggestions on what that name would be.

We are inviting everyone to contribute articles to this newsletter that you think are worth sharing.

PAA holds Board Meeting and Planning Workshop

Officers of PAA National and Regional Chapters for the very first time have convened for a Board meeting and planning workshop on January 20-21, 2018 at the R.D. Guerrero Hall, DOST-PCAARRD, Los Baños, Laguna.

The activity aimed to provide avenue for the national and regional officers to meet and discuss issues facing the organization, strengthen linkages between and among the national and regional chapters and determine courses of action for the organization to move forward.

Participants from the regions presented their Regional Chapter reports as well as their plans for their chapters. The latter were then harmonized with the plan of PAA National in the workshop that ensued to come up with an Integrated Plan of the Association.

The activity also included the election of Representatives of the three Island Groups to the PAA Board of Trustees. Winners were: Dr. Honorio Soriano, President of the Tamarind Chapter for Luzon; Mr. Virgilio Jakosalem, President-Central Visayas Chapter for Visayas; and Dr. Anna Notarte, President of Davao Eagle Chapter for Mindanao.

The total number of participants who attended the workshop was 41.
The PAA National Officers took an extra mile to lobby for the enactment of the Professional Agriculturists (PA) Bill.

For this year, a series of consultative meetings between the Association and the Philippine Regulations Commission (PRC) together with the Board of Agriculture were held to deal with the content, substance and form of the Bill with the aim of getting legislative support.

The first consultative meeting was held on March 8, 2018 at PRC, Manila, upon the request of Commissioner Jose Cueto, Jr., PRC Commissioner for Technology Cluster, where both PAA and PRC together with the Board of Agriculture presented and discussed among themselves their own versions of the Bill.

The second meeting followed in the same venue on March 26, 2018 where PAA and PRC along with the Board of Agriculture further discussed the Bill with the purpose of harmonizing their two versions and come up with only one.

On May 29, 2018, a team of PAA Officers composed of Dr. Roberto Rañola, Arthur Baria, Dr. Rosalina Lapitan, and Dr. Jessica Rey, also met with the technical staff of Senator Kiko Pangilinan in Senate upon his invitation to explain the provisions of the PA bill.

In stressing the need to pass the Bill, Dr. Roberto Rañola, PAA Chairman, cited the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act of 1997 (AFMA) that called for the professionalization of the Philippine agriculture. He said that this professionalization is a prerequisite for agricultural modernization. However, there is only one PRC resolution providing for the implementation of that provision in AFMA.

According to Dr. Rañola, agriculturists are generally viewed as sheer technicians and not as professionals that are at par with other professionals in other fields. As such, many of our agriculturists are complaining that they are among the lowest paid in government. This could be one reason why many young people are not attracted to work in agriculture. It is hoped that this bill and a Magna Carta for agriculturists will help in uplifting the conditions of our agriculturists and achieve the modernization of the agriculture sector.

To date, the Bill has been filed in the House of Representatives as House Bill 7246 by Congressman and former Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap. PAA aims to get the unanimous support of both Senate and House of Representatives, and eventually the President of the Philippines. (AD Gasmen)
**Tamarind Chapter Conducts First Reg’l Convention**

The PAA-Tamarind Chapter held its 1st Regional Convention of Agriculturists on June 4-6, 2018 at Pam- panga State Agricultural University (PSAU) in Mag- galang, Pampanga. The theme of the Convention was “Facing the Challenges of ASEAN Integration through Smart Agriculture”. The convention served as a platform for academicians, technicians and professionals from the field of agriculture in Region III and its neighboring regions, as well as a venue to meet and interact with other members.

It also provided opportunities where members learned from the latest updates on research and development outputs from different pillars of the agriculture industry as well as on extension activities. Furthermore, members were updated on the latest issues and concerns about Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements.

The Convention congregated more than 350 participants from different regions and provincial agricultural offices in Luzon. About 150 individuals headed by Chapter President Dr. Honorio M. Soriano, Jr. took their oath as new PAA Tamarind Chapter members and officers. (R. Alfonso, S. Medina, A. Cruz and A. Zapatos)

**Davao Eagle Chapter implements the first PAA CPD-accredited Program**

The Davao Eagle Chapter made a historic record among PAA Regional Chapters after implementing the first CPD-accredited Program of the Association through the 1st Mindanao Agriculturists Convention on May 16 to 18, 2018 at the Davao del Norte Sports and Tourism Complex, Mankilam, Tagum City. With the theme “Food Security and Safety Towards Global Competitiveness: Agriculturist's Challenge,” the activity served as a learning event for the 620 participants who came from local government units, national offices, academe and private companies from Regions IX, X, XI, XII, XIII and ARMM.

Participants benefited from the discussions about relevant issues and updates on the agriculture profession, and dealt with ways on how professional agriculturists shall extend crosscutting technologies to farmers to ensure resiliency, sustainability and competitiveness of the agriculture sector in the midst of the ASEAN Integration.

The activity also provided a venue wherein Agriculturists developed camaraderie, shared experiences and insights towards effective and efficient service delivery as they get back to their respective areas of service. (ANotarte)
PAA Regional Chapters almost complete

The National Office of PAA has been encouraging and supporting the formation of Regional PAA Chapters in its effort to reach out and support the needs of licensed agriculturists in the entire country.

As of July 10, 2018, 14 Chapters of the 17 administrative Regions nationwide have already been recognized by the PAA Membership Committee, one was already organized but yet to be recognized, two (Region 8 and MIMAROPA) are in the process of being organized.

According to Ramon A. Oliveros, Chairman of PAA Membership Committee, the recognition of Regional Chapters entitles them to enjoy the rights and privileges of PAA while advancing the cause of professionalizing agriculture in the Regions.

The minimum requirement to organize a Regional Chapter is 20 licensed agriculturists. (ADGasmen & RAOliveros)

PAA-NCR considers championing urban agriculture

With its youthful energy and enthusiasm to pursue the relevance of agriculture to urban societies, the Philippine Association of Agriculturists – National Capital Region (Nila) Scyphipora Chapter is starting to make waves.

The Chapter was initiated by a group of young agriculture professionals, and the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) through the Partnership and Accreditation Division. Its membership is mainly composed of registered agriculturists who are currently working with the Department of Agriculture and its attached agencies in Quezon City.

Its current Chapter President, Mr. Earwin Belen, a consultant for the Philippine Rural Development Project, was elected along with other chapter officers: Dr. Josephine Aben from ATI as Vice President, Ms. Jamaica Catimbang from DA Central Office - Secretary, Mr. Vicente Limasan Jr. from Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards - Treasurer, and Mr. Valerio Ablaza Jr. from the Bureau of Soils and Water Management - Auditor.

The Chapter is symbolized by the Nila Plant, also known as the Indigo Plant (Scyphipora) which is a kind of mangrove, from which ‘Manila’ was taken from. Being a non-producing region, PAA-NCR is looking forward to promote Urban Agriculture in Metro Manila as an alternative source of food supply in addressing food insecurity. It also plans to engage with different stakeholders to address pressing issues in agriculture. (EA Belen & JLCano)

PAA National assists Region 1 Chapter organization

STA. BARBARA, Pangasinan -- Professional agriculturists in Region 1 gathered to organize their regional chapter called PAA Amianan Chapter on March 21, 2018.

The meeting was in conjunction with the 2nd Pangasinan Umaani Expo 2018 held at the Sta. Barbara Provincial Nursery and the Agew na Umaani Extension Workers (Agricultural Extension Workers) Day.

Mr. Nestor P. Batalla, Acting Assistant Provincial Agriculturist, presided the meeting that resulted in a registration of 88 new members.

As part of regional assistance by PAA National, Dr. Rosalina M. Lapitan, Vice President, presented the Manual of procedure for Chapter organization and governance as well as some updates on accreditation of PAA as CPD provider and requirements on the renewal of license.


6th National Congress to tackle climate and disaster issues

Amid issues and grave concerns facing the agriculture sector given the changing climate conditions and concomitant natural disasters, the 6th National Congress and 2018 Philippine Agriculturists Summit to be held in Cebu City shall take on the theme: "Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction: Role of Philippine Agriculturists."

The event will engage experts and authorities from public and private institutions who will shed light on the present policies and initiatives undertaken by the government and other institutions to address these issues; and likewise provide guidance and directions in identifying adaptation and risk reduction measures.

Moreover, they will share insights in helping agriculture professionals define their specific contributions to such measures.

There will be plenary sessions, oral and poster presentations that will give opportunity for participants to share their research findings and best practices related to the theme thereby increasing their knowledge that can be applied in the practice of their profession and ultimately benefit those in the agriculture sector through increased resiliency and improved and sustained agricultural productivity.

The PAA Congress also expects to have a special session with Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel F. Piñol who will give the keynote address. (ADGasmen)
PAA in the limelight....

PAA taking part in honoring Topnotchers of the November 2017 Agriculture board exam at PICC, January 26, 2018

Participants of the Board Meeting and Planning Workshop held at DOST-PCAARRD, January 20-21, 2018

PAA President Arthur Baria taking Oath as Member of CPD Council for Agriculture

Honoring Dr. Emma Sales as 2018 Outstanding Professional of the Year at the Manila Hotel

Chapter organizational meetings: on top—Magat Chapter, May 31, 2018; below—NCR Chapter, April 6, 2018

Participants of the Tamarind Chapter Regional Convention at PSAU, Magalang, Pampanga, June 4-6, 2018