The 4th Regional Agrifair and Seminar at CPU on November 17 to 21 is relevant to the ASEAN integration in 2015. The event, sponsored by the Department of Agriculture Region 6 and Central Philippine University, aims to tackle issues on organic food production and technology. This year’s theme is “Organic Agriculture: Opportunities and Challenges in ASEAN 2015”.

The opportunity for farmers and local government units to develop agricultural technology that is in line with the advocacy of organic food production are availed at the technology and livelihood seminars prepared by the organizers. The DA Regional Office 6 under Director Larry Nacionales and his hard-working technical Director Dr. Joyce C. Wendam and her staff, the CPU administration headed by President Dr. Teodoro C. Robles, and the Agrifair 2014 committee chaired by Mr. Joel Somosierra have ensured that this year’s Agrifair is significantly linked to the global cooperation that is the ASEAN Integration in 2015.

Several events are scheduled for the weeklong Agri-fair. Seminars and art contests were held on Monday November 17, but the grand opening kicked off on Tuesday, November 18 with a 4-K Farm Run. Running enthusiasts, agency representatives and students participated in the run which started at the CPU grounds going through the Diversion Road towards Barangay Sambag, Jaro and back.

The opening program started at 9:45 A.M at the CPU Alumni Promenade and Concert Park. Guests and participants were welcomed by Dr. Robles. Director Leo Cañeda, CESO III, Executive Director, Bureau of Agricultural and Fisheries Products Standard (BAFPS) was the keynote speaker.

Director Cañeda, Dr. Robles, Mr. Naciones, and Dr. Wendam cut the ceremonial ribbon for the opening of trade exhibits. An Agri-quiz, other contests and technical demonstrations are also included in the week-long Agri-fair activities. The closing ceremony and awarding of certificates will be held in the afternoon of November 21.

By Cyrus A. Natividad

UNSALTED BALINGON (Anchovy) among the organic products sold at the Agrifair 2014 Exhibits at the Alumni Promenade and Concert Park.
Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is traditionally represented by a cornucopia of goods known as blessings. We also see posters of a basket full of food - bread, fruits or vegetables on Thanksgiving day. While people can always give thanks anytime of the year, Thanksgiving is a special occasion celebrated on the month of November. Some events happen with an impact in our lives. These we have to be thankful about.

We recall the onslaught of Typhoon Yolanda in the Visayas a year ago. Iloilo was not spared as many towns particularly in the North were devastated. The disaster claimed thousands of lives, properties, and rendered people homeless. We are thankful to God for protecting us, and also for providing us with resources so that we were able to extend assistance to victims of Yolanda.

Typhoon Yolanda made people realize the importance of humbleness and gratitude. In Tacloban, Leyte where Yolanda landed its strongest blow, the rich and the poor were the same devastated victims who stared blankly in the sky. In the aftermath of the typhoon, they realized they lost their businesses, homes, their children and loved ones.

As we celebrate Thanksgiving Day in November, we shall thank our Creator for even providing us with reflections, and opportunities to change.

By the way, it is with thanksgiving that we welcome the farmers and agri-business entrepreneurs of Panay and Guimaras to Central Philippine University, as we host the 4th Regional Organic Agrifair Seminar and Exhibits from November 17 to 21. The annual event is a week-long activity that includes lecture seminars on agriculture and organic farming, art competitions and technical demonstrations. It is in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture and CPU.

There are added events and new topics in the seminars every year, so that the Agrifair 2014 kicked off with a 4K Agri-Run, a Fun Run Organized by the DA and CPU planning committees.

The event theme is “Opportunities and Challenges in ASEAN 2015”. We look forward and thanking God for the foreseen opportunity which the ASEAN Integration can bring to our country.

Finally for their support and encouragements we thank the Department of Agriculture Regional Office 6 and the CPU administration, the participating municipalities and the working committee members. To God be the glory!

A Letter of Thanksgiving

Dear Friends,

Greetings!

We have a lot to be thankful to God. Psalm 100:3 reminds us to be thankful about 3 things:
First, God is our Creator.
"Know you that the LORD he is God: it is he that has made us, and not we ourselves..."
As our response, we need to be responsible stewards.
Second, God is our Owner.
"... we are his people..."
As our response, we need to always consult God about our actions.
Third, God is our Great Shepherd.
"... and the sheep of his pasture." As a response, we need to allow God to lead our lives.

Let us strive to have a thanksgiving attitude like that of Psalm 100:4 "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful to him, and bless his name."

May God bless us all!

Sincerely,

Rev. Francis Neil G. Jalando-on
LEMONGRASS STUDIES, ADJUDGED BEST PAPERS

by Hope G. Patricio

The CPU Lemongrass CHED-funded studies were adjudged as best papers both in the Natural/Biological Science and Development/Technological Research Categories during the 24th Regional Symposium on Research and Development Highlights (RSRDH) of the Western Visayas Agriculture and Resources Research and Development Consortium (WESVARRDEC) held on October 14, 2014 at West Visayas State University.

“Antioxidant Activity and Citral Content of Lemongrass Tea and Ready-to-Drink Products” bested 17 other research papers in the Natural/Biological Science Research Category. On the other hand, “Formulation, Package Development and Shelf-Life Testing of Lemongrass Ready-to-Drink Beverage Products” won first place against 7 other entries in the Development/Technological Research Category. The research team is headed by Prof. Mizpah C. Villalobos from the Chemistry Department. With her in the team are Prof. Emma T. Gico and Prof. Evelyn R. Ybarzabal from the College of Hospitality Management, Engr. Bernie C. Cangrejo and Mr. Hugh Tremucha of the Packaging Engineering Department, Prof. Isah Lou G. Nocal from the Chemistry Department, Prof. Leticia Vencer from the Life Sciences Department, and Prof. Irene D. Salonga from the Water Analysis Laboratory. The next direction of the research is to produce and commercialize the ready-to-drink lemongrass beverages as CPU’s contribution to society’s concern on health and wellness. These beverages are not only good sources of antioxidants and citral but also taste great.

These awards, according to Prof. Villalobos, are a testimony of God’s faithfulness over the lemongrass research through the years. To Him alone be the glory!
The Agrifair 2014 officially took off at 6:00 AM on November 18 with a 4K Farm Run dubbed the Agri-Run 2014. The first ever fun run included in the week-long Agrifair program was participated in by farmers, students, employees and other running enthusiasts. Dr. Joyce S. Wendam welcomed participants of the fun run which moved along Sen. Benigno Aquino, Jr. Highway (Diversion Road) from CPU grounds to the Ford Bldg. at Sambag, Jaro, and passing by the SM City going back to CPU. More than two thousand runners registered in the event.

The first 10 finishers were awarded with medals by CPU President Dr. Teodoro Robles, DA Regional Technical Director Joyce Wendam, and Agrifair 2014 Chair Joel Somosierra.

DA Region 6 personnel treated the participants with organic snacks after the run. / C.A. Natividad