

## Agricultural biotechnology's role in climate change mitigation among key topics of PhilRice hybrid seminar



Climate change is making a huge impact on the agriculture sector and this was the main focus of the recent Biotechnology Policies for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation conducted by the Philippine Rice Research Institute as part of the 2022 National Biotechnology Week.

The program was organized by the DA Biotech Program, DA Climate Resilient Agriculture Office, DA Crop Biotechnology Center, and USDA-FAS (Manila), and the Biotechnology Coalition of the Philippines.

The hybrid seminar discussed the importance of biotechnology in agriculture as a means to counter the impact of worsening weather conditions.

According to data from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), "agricultural biotechnology provides ways to both mitigate and enhance adaptation to environmental

changes. Products developed with agricultural biotechnology may contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, such as cover crops that provide sustainable biofuels, fruits, and vegetables that stay fresh longer and reduce food waste. Researchers are also developing ways to draw excess carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere with trees and even microbes.”

Studies cited by the agency also cited the positive impact of agricultural biotechnology as plant and animal breeders can develop plants and animals that are adapted to changing environmental conditions, such as drought, increased temperatures, new diseases, and other stressors.

During the seminar, attendees discussed what policies were in place to mitigate the impact of climate change, especially for small farmers in the Philippines. Among the important issues tackled during the open forum was the modernization of the agriculture industry in the country and what needs to be done to be at par with other Asian neighbors in terms of production and development.

Participants were also encouraged to share their experiences on the field as well as their views and suggestions on how the government can help them improve their production.