

Plant Doctors consulted by Marinduque farmers on pests



A hundred farmers recently participated in the “PPS Plant Doctors on the Go” (PDOG) program to address problems on the ground with new and innovative biotechnology solutions.

The event organized by the Philippine Phytopathological Society (PPS) and the Provincial Government of Marinduque with support from CropLife Phils. Inc. was held as an outreach and capacity building initiative for farmers and key stakeholders to introduce sustainable agriculture practices among the participants.

Among the “doctors” who shared their expertise were Lolita M. Dolores, Chair, PPS Training and Extension Committee; scientist Evelyn B. Gergon (Pest and Disease Management in Rice); NCPC and UPLB researcher Maureen Ceres dL. de Roxas (Pests Management in Vegetable Crops), NCPC and UPLB researcher Mary Joy C. Mendoza (Diseases and Disease Management in Vegetables) and IPB and UPLB Director Elmer E. Enicola

(Vegetables and Legume Seed Production). Meanwhile scientist Merdelyn C. Lit and IWEF and UPLB Associate Professor discussed the Major Pests and Diseases of Corn.

The comprehensive workshop also tackled topics like Major Weeds of Rice and Vegetables discussed by Corteva Agri Science scientist Jenina dL. Signabon; Root Crop Production by IPB and UPLB researcher Speedy Crisostomo and Major Diseases of Banana and Management by IPB and UPLB Director Fe M. Dela Cueva. New technologies developed (GM Crops and PBI) and good agricultural practices (stewardship and importance of quality/certified seeds) were also discussed by Corteva Agriscience's Jenny A. Panopio.

The "consultation" with the doctors was made even more relevant when farmers brought samples of their crop pests, damaged plants, insects, and weeds to be diagnosed by the experts who later provided them with advice.

"We are incredibly happy about the interest of the local government to partner with us and the reception of the farmers to this activity. It just shows that they are willing to upgrade their skills to increase their production and income, and we are more than willing to help them along through our stewardship programs at CropLife," CLP Executive Director Ramon Abadilla said.