Hybrid Rice Farmers in Visayas Enjoying Bountiful Harvest

Tagumpay Sa Palay Article for December 2011
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Hybrid rice remains to be the most profitable variety to plant compared to inbred and certified rice seeds.

A number of farmers in Visayas have already proven this and they have enjoyed better harvests, which have yielded more than what they expected. These farmers had positive experiences with hybrid rice, and have decided not to go back to their previous inbred varieties, as these have limitations in terms of earning potential.

There are many challenges facing rice production here in our country. The rising cost farm inputs, changing weather conditions, and the increasing resistance of pests and plant viruses to pesticides and fungicides are just some of the problems faced by rice farmers. Then there is the slowing rate of expansion for rice production due to the scarcity of water irrigation resources for agriculture, and the diminishing land area for arable lands due to the conversion of farmlands for industrial and real property use.

The way to win over these mounting challenges is to increase the average yield at the farm level. Hybrid rice technology will help here, and this is now easily available to rice farmers across the country. Farmers in Visayas are already enjoying bountiful harvests from hybrid rice technology. Recent advances in hybrid rice research are making an impact in addressing the gap between rice production and consumption.

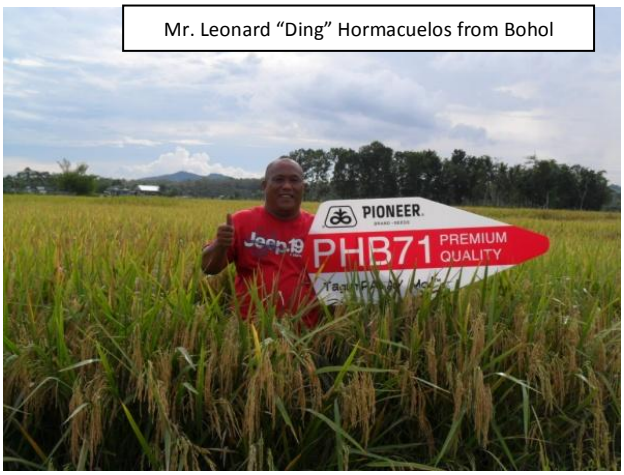
Rice Farmers in Bohol enjoying Bountiful Harvests

One of the fastest-growing hybrid rice seeds currently available is PHB71. It is Pioneer Hi-Bred's first hybrid rice variety introduced and commercialized in the Philippines. Released in the market in 2008, PHB71 has a yield potential of 11-14 MT/hectare. This hybrid is medium maturing and can be harvested in as early as 110 days after sowing. PHB71 is also moderately resistant to rice blast and is recommended for Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao for both wet and dry

season. This hybrid has premium quality grains that can be sold at a higher price compared to regular harvested rice. The milling recovery of this variety registers at 65%, which is comparable to that of the IR64 variety. Its head rice recovery is at 54%, which is more than that of the IR64, which is only at 52%.

The potential of hybrid rice, once properly managed with the recommended fertilization rate, can lead to better and higher harvests than those of inbred varieties, which have an average potential of 4-5 MT per hectare. The recommended fertilization rate can help produce better grain filling among hybrid rice varieties. The fertilizer recommendations for PHB71 are as follows:

Timing of Application	Dry Season (160-60-90)	Wet Season (120-60-90)
Basal (1 day after Transplanting)	5 bags 14-14-14	5 bags 14-14-14
Mid-Tillering (38-41 days after seeding)	2 bags 16-20-0	2 bags 16-20-0
	2 bags 46-0-0	1 bag 46-0-0
	2 bags 0-0-60	2 bags 0-0-60
Early Panicle Initiation (53-56 days after seeding)	2 bags 46-0-0	1 bag 46-0-0



Mr. Leonard "Ding" Hormacuelos from Bohol

Leonard "Dingdong" Hormacuelos of Bohol was very happy about his bountiful harvest last month. Hormacuelos, an experienced rice farmer for more than 15 years, is now a certified hybrid rice fanatic! He was very delighted with the result of his hybrid rice harvest last season, achieving 9.1 MT per hectare of PHB71 fresh rice grains.

He sold this at P15 per kilo in Barangay Mahayag, San Miguel, Bohol, earning him P136,500. With a total production cost of P42,700 per hectare, his total net income is P93,800 per hectare. These earnings helped him improve his current living conditions, and he was able also to help some of the farmers working for him whose main source of monthly income is manual labor during harvest season.

Homacuelos has committed to continue using the PHB71 hybrid rice variety in the coming planting season. Likewise, a number of farmers within his community who saw his rice farm were convinced to plant hybrid rice this November 2011 planting season.