

# Farmers discover advanced crop solutions

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Rice production in the country went up by 4.61 percent during the first quarter, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority. Reports also showed that the cost of rice production in the country remain high due to the usage of traditional fertilizers with low nutrient efficiency.



Low efficiency fertilizers often produce low yield which affects farmer's profitability. Majority of the Filipino farmers are small-scale and are dependent on farming as their main source of livelihood.

There is a high demand for crop productivity in order to sustain the growing demand for food in the Philippines, minimize importation of rice and corn and provide a sustainable livelihood for farmers.

Traditional practices of planting and harvesting will not meet the demand. Hence, farmers need to be equipped with more knowledge and new technologies in order to adapt to the agricultural challenges.

Yara Fertilizers Philippines Inc. aims to share knowledge on crop nutrition through its rice and corn roadshow to help address the strong need to provide solutions that improve productivity and profitability for farmers.

## Knowledge grows

At the heart of Yara is knowledge that fuels its vision to impart quality crop nutrition solutions for farmers. Starting this year, Yara embarked on a regional roadshow to promote new nutrient technologies, crop knowledge, tools and services, and enhanced fertilizer formulation to help farmers.

"Our company slogan is 'knowledge grows'. We want to help farmers grow, improve their method of production, and increase competitiveness. That's why we have implemented a roadshow," said Kim Huat Low, Yara regional director.

## Common farming challenges

Farmers are still faced with two major farming problems: low production and lack of access to new farming technologies.

“Filipino farmers have two biggest challenges. It is low production and adapting new technologies. We still import rice even if we are an agricultural country. And when you go to the farms, they still use traditional ways of planting and harvesting rice and corn,” observed Nestor Menguita, Yara premium products manager.

Yara offers a variety of premium products that are designed to best suit growing rice and corn in the Philippines. Two new technologies on crop nutrition solution were launched during the roadshow. The crop programs provide balanced and complete nutrition composed of essential macro, secondary and micro nutrients required to attain the crop’s full yield potential. The first technology is composed of YaraMila Aktibo (21-6-12+MgO+S), YaraLiva and YaraVita for irrigated farms, while the other technology, with YaraVera Viking Ship Zn, YaraMila Grower, YaraLiva, and YaraVita are suitable for rainfed farms. Farmers will now have nutritional solutions based on their crop ecosystem that will help improve productivity.

“Yara helps address farmers’ problems by introducing new products to enhance production, encourage the use of new technology, and educate farmers about the importance of balanced and complete crop nutrition,” added Menguita.

Yara also provides tools and services to help farmers identify nutrient deficiencies in their crops through CheckIT and remove the guesswork with crop nutrient recommendations through soil and leaf analysis with Megalab.

#### Benefits for farmers

Yara’s visit to the farms started in Isabela, Nueva Ecija, Nueva Vizcaya and Pangasinan. The company aims to reach out to farmers from as far as Visayas and Mindanao.

“The main purpose of this activity is to bring the knowledge to the farmers. Many of whom have yet to know more about crop nutrition,” Kim Huat explained. “We want to contribute by helping enhance their knowledge and provide support even after the roadshow.”

Kim Huat said the company will continue giving after sales support to the farmers, including the training on how to apply the fertilizers.

“We can’t really reduce work involved. What we can do is help improve nutrient utilization efficiency which is integral. If you increase the yield, you increase the profit. Hopefully, it could lead to better livelihood, better quality of life,” he said.

Yara has been pioneering agricultural growth and production for over 100 years. Yara is based in Oslo, Norway and operates in 60 offices worldwide and sells products to more than 160 countries. Since its operation, Yara has served more than 15 million farmers and helped produce 240 million tons of grains. Yara Philippines was established in 2004. Since 2009, Yara Philippines has been offering its premium products to Filipino farmers.