

QC, Caloocan next urban farming venues

A percentage of the earnings from this will go to the parish to help sustain our program and the rest will be divided among those who planted the crops. At the same time, this is a good source of fresh and inexpensive vegetable for the community

Daily Tribune (Philippines) · 4 Jan 2021 · A7

Following the success of its urban farming project in Tondo, Manila, Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) Secretary John Castriciones said the effort will soon be replicated in Quezon City and Caloocan City.

Castriciones made the announcement during yesterday's harvest at the Buhay sa Gulay project in St. John Bosco Parish in Tondo.

DAR will start the project in Quezon City next week in coordination with the **QC local government** that has already allotted about seven hectares of idle land for the endeavor.

On the other hand, Caloocan City Mayor Oscar Malapitan has allocated 1.5 hectares of land for the project.

The Buhay sa Gulay project in Manila had its first harvest of fresh vegetables since crops were planted in the first week of December.

Among those harvested were mustard (mustasa), snow cabbage (pechay), Chinese kangkong and spinach.

Before the month ends, expected to be harvested are squash and bottle gourd (upo).

The DAR chief said the "harvest festival" was a result of the national government, the local government, the church, the private sector and the community coming together and uniting for a cause.

"I am happy because this shows that the church and the government can work together to help the people," Castriciones said.

The Buhay sa Gulay project aims to promote urban farming, reduce poverty and eradicate hunger, particularly in marginalized urban barangays in the National Capital Region as the

Covid-19 pandemic shut down opportunities and livelihood.

Castriciones said the knowledge on urban farming given to the parishioners of St. John Bosco Parish may also become an alternative livelihood opportunity for them to earn. Fr. Gaudencio Carandang of St. John Bosco Parish said the present “farm” used to be a football field that was left unused when community quarantines were imposed in Metro Manila.

As the parish was giving assistance to neighboring communities, he said a parishioner suggested that they start planting on the lot.

Carandang asked Castriciones, who immediately sent a team of farmer-scientists to train their parishioners.

Aside from the fresh vegetables to which they can benefit, he said this could also be a source of income.

“A percentage of the earnings from this will go to the parish to help sustain our program and the rest will be divided among those who planted the crops. At the same time, this is a good source of fresh and inexpensive vegetable for the community,” the parish priest said. Don Bosco Parish caters to about 80,000 individuals in the adjacent 17 barangays.