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DepEd Laguna Educators Gear Up For Sustainability With Urban Farming Training

DepEd Laguna educators gear up for sustainability with urban farming training

📅 Sunday, December 7, 2025 👤 SEARCA



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LOS BAÑOS, Philippines — Thirty teaching and non-teaching personnel from the Department of Education in Laguna (DepEd Laguna) have completed a transformative in-country training focused on urban farming for sustainable cultivation, biodiversity conservation, education, and food security. The two-day event, held on 29-30 October 2025 at the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate

Study and Research in Agriculture (**SEARCA**) and the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), equipped participants with practical skills and ecological knowledge for greener communities.

The initiative, titled “In-Country Training on Urban Farming for Sustainable Cultivation to Support Biodiversity Conservation, Education, and Food Security in the Philippines,” aimed to empower educators to implement hands-on and environmentally sound urban farming systems within schools and communities.

“This training is designed to empower educators, the frontliners in shaping mindsets, with updated tools and knowledge to implement ecologically sound urban farming systems that serve as living laboratories for sustainability,” said Dr. Mercedita Sombilla, SEARCA Center Director.



Dr. Jose Camacho Jr., Chancellor of the University of the Philippines Los Baños, emphasized that the participation of DepEd Laguna personnel demonstrates a collective commitment to making schools greener, communities healthier, and learners more empowered.

Dr. Elis Rosdiawati, Deputy Director for Administration of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Center for Tropical Biology (SEAMEO BIOTROP), highlighted the transformative role of educators, expressing hope that the training will inspire students to appreciate agriculture and biodiversity as an integral part of daily life.

Mr. John Arnold Siena, Deputy Director for Programme and Development of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Secretariat (SEAMEO SEAMES), underscored the significance of strategic collaboration among SEAMEO specialist institutions in promoting regional sustainability.

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Representing Dr. Editha Atendido, Schools Division Superintendent of DepEd Laguna, Assistant Schools Division Superintendent Mr. Jaypee Lopo affirmed DepEd Laguna's commitment to replicating and sharing the training's learnings with other schools, aspiring to turn local actions into global solutions.

The training featured two core modules: hydroponics cultivation and urban agroforestry systems. Day 1 included an introduction to urban agriculture by Dr. Doni Yusri of SEAMEO BIOTROP and a session on the benefits of hydroponics for biodiversity conservation, led by Dr. Eureka Teresa Ocampo of the University of the Philippines Los Baños. Participants engaged in hands-on project planning and visited the university's state-of-the-art smart greenhouses, where automated irrigation and data-driven crop monitoring are being integrated into research and production.

Day 2 delved into urban agroforestry, with Forester Cary Maynard Olivar leading a forest therapy session at the UPLB Makiling Botanic Gardens and a visit to the Learning Laboratory for Agroforestry. Dr. Lorena Sabino and team discussed strategies for integrating trees and crops and presented models for school-based edible landscapes.

As a culmination, participants developed and presented school-based action plans to implement **urban farming** in their respective institutions. The 30 educators represented 10 public elementary and secondary schools, as well as the DepEd Laguna division committee.

The training was co-organized by SEAMEO Regional Center for Tropical Biology (BIOTROP), Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA), and the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB).

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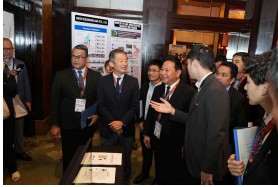
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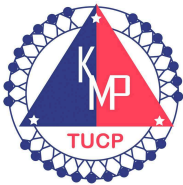
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