

Agribusiness Master Class Training Series II
24-28 February 2020/ Quest Hotel Clark, Pampanga

Opening Remarks

To our partners and resource speakers - ACIAR Philippines Country Manager Ms. Mai Alagcan, CSIRO Research Group Leader Dr. Lilly Lim-Camacho, Foodlink Advocacy Co-operative General Manager Mr. Anton Simon Palo, CSIRO International Development Researcher Ms. Michaela Cosijn, Australian National University Research Fellow Dr. Steven Crimp, University of Queensland Fellow Dr. Gomathy Palaniappan, and to our 30 carefully chosen participants from various government agencies (Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and PCAARRD), state universities and colleges (SUCs) (University of the Philippines (UP) Mindanao, UP Los Baños, Visayas State University (VSU), University of Southeastern Philippines (USEP), and Central Luzon State University (CLSU), and private organizations (Aboitiz Foundation, Rooted Seed Stories Corp., Farmwatch Solutions Inc., Foodlink Advocacy Co-operative, Grow Asia, Apostol Techno-Demo Learning Farm, Inc., San Felipe Cooperative), a pleasant morning to all of you!

Welcome to the second leg of the Agribusiness Master Class, or should I say welcome back! Its good to know that all of you are here once again joining us at this Master Class. This, to me, probably means that we are serving you right, or, at least, each of you are gaining something- a thing or two- from this class. Well, we hope that whatever it is that you're gaining/learning is substantial either to your work or business or personal advocacy or, even, to the national welfare.

We are just really proud of this initiative - a series of classes that aims to develop the participants' knowledge and skills needed to influence the agribusiness value chain development in the country. AMC targets to embed value chain thinking in designing and planning for projects and programs in the respective sectors of the participants.

While we are trying to embed the value chain thinking in you through the help our respected mentors, I know for sure that this, somehow, means differently to each of us.

At PCAARRD, the reason why we are pushing for this initiative is that we envision that through AMC, value chain approach will be widely-promoted and utilized in understanding industries and generating R&D areas to be able to help industries in more realistic and grounded way.

Let me share a bit of testimony and emphasize how important agribusiness and value chain thinking in achieving our vision of sustained dynamic leadership in science and technology (S&T) innovation in agriculture, aquatic, and natural resources (AANR) sectors, and in fulfilling our mission at PCAARRD.

Some of you may already know, we have this so called Industry Strategic S&T Plans (ISPs). This is the blueprint that operationalizes PCAARRD's S&T vision for the AANR sector, which is a product of various multi-sectoral consultations with the researchers, private sector, and other stakeholders.

Our strategic S&T Plans or ISPs contain the status or baseline of an industry. Then, it defines target outcomes for the industry based on a the benchmark. These, together with the target programs and activities, are defined and illustrated in a roadmap.

Currently, we have 14 ISPs on crops (Abaca, Banana, Coconut, Mango, Peanut, Mungbean, Soybean, Rice, Root crops (Sweet potato), Citrus, Durian, Papaya, Pineapple, and Vegetables), 6 on livestock (Swine, Goat (Meat And Dairy), Duck, Native Chicken, Dairy Buffalo, Feed Resources), 7 on forestry (Bamboo, Cacao, Rubber, Industrial Tree Plantation, Climate Change, Watershed, Biodiversity), 6 on inland aquatic resources (Milkfish, Tilapia, Shrimp, Mud Crab, Shellfish (Mussel), Aqua feeds), and 6 on marine resources (Shellfish (Abalone And Oyster), Sardines, Seaweeds, Sea Cucumber, Blue Swimming Crab, Tuna).

The role of agribusiness and value chain thinking heavily lies in providing vital inputs in developing and improving ISPs, and identifying technology and policy gaps along ISPs (not just to ISPs, but to PCAARRD's strategies/agendas and programs, in general).

Through value chain analysis and development, efforts continue in finding the areas for improvement and identifying gaps, and the mix of interventions/ technologies to improve the supply chain of agricultural commodities. These help our other technical divisions identify the possible projects/ programs that can be conducted along the commodity chain to provide competitive advantage for the specific industry.

This is the significance of AMC for us. Now, what is it for you or for your organization?

While some of you may already have definite answers and others don't, I encourage everyone to actively participate, listen, engage, think, question, challenge ideologies, and do not box yourself in as we move from Module 1, which provided key principles and frameworks around value chains, to Module 2, which will delve deeper into how chains work against multiple objectives and drivers.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our partners and resource speakers for making this possible, and for all the invaluable support, efforts and expertise you bring to the AMC table.

With that, I just wish this event success. Again, good morning and a fruitful week ahead!

Dr Ernest Brown

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