



## VSU TERMINAL REPORT FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

### A. Bibliographic Data

#### 1. Research Title:

“Agritourism Farms as Conduit for Good Agricultural Practices in Eastern Visayas, Philippines”

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### 3. Implementing Agency

- a. University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPBLB)
- b. Visayas State University (VSU)

### 4. Collaborating Agency

- a. University of New England (UNE)
- b. Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)
- c. ViSCA Foundation for Agricultural and Rural Development, Inc.(ViFARD)
- d. University of the Philippines Los Baños Foundation Inc. (UPLBFI)

### 5. Project Duration

- a. Date indicated in proposal: November 11, 2021 – October 31, 2022
- b. Actual date: January 01, 2022 – December 31, 2022

### 6. Project Location

In order to achieve the project objectives, the researchers were able to identify six (6) Agritourism Farms in Region 4A as the benchmarking sites; and Five (5) Agritourism Farms in Region 8 as the main project sites. These farms include the following:

<b>a. Benchmarking Sites</b>	
<b>Name of Farm</b>	<b>Address</b>
Gourmet Farms, Inc.	Emilio Aguinaldo Highway, Silang 1403 Tagaytay City, Region 4A, Philippines
Ato Belen's Farm	Brgy. San Juan, San Pablo City, Laguna, Region 4A, Philippines
Urminita's Farm	Sitio Galile, Pantay, Brgy. San Jose, Antipolo City, Region 4A, Philippines
E.V. Sanchez Agri Farms	Sitio Tanauan, Brgy. Palaypalay, Jala-jala, Rizal, Region 4A, Philippines
Flor and Daisy's Agricultural Farm	Brgy. Mamala II, Sariaya, Quezon, Region 4A, Philippines
Agap Farmers' Association	Brgy. Pangil, Majayjay, Laguna, Region 4A, Philippines
<b>b. Project Sites</b>	
<b>Name of Farm</b>	<b>Address</b>
Canaan Hill Farms	Brgy. Uson, Caibiran, Biliran, Region 8, Philippines

Villaconzoilo Farm	Brgy. Villaconzoilo, Jaro Leyte, Region 8, Philippines
Verol Eco Farm	Villa Caneja, 6560 Naval, Biliran, Region 8, Philippines
Softea Garden	Eastern Nautical Hwy, Naval, Biliran, Region 8, Philippines
La Caridad Farm	Brgy. Buac Gamay, Sogod, Southern Leyte, Region 8, Philippines

## 7. Project Funding

Funding Source	Amount
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)	Php3,389,800.00

## 8. Total Approved Budget

Funding Source	Amount
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)	Php3,389,800.00

## 9. Total Amount Released

Funding Source	Amount
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)	Php3,389,800.00

## 10. Project Outputs:

1. International Posters and Paper Presentation
2. GAP Posters Layout and Design
3. Social Media Content
4. Local Policies

## B. Technical Description

### 1. Preliminaries

Title Page  
Table of Contents  
List of Tables, Figures, etc.  
Abstract

### 2. Text

#### Introduction

#### A. Background of the Project

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) is an important policy mechanism adopted by the Philippines to promote sustainable farm practices. It responds to four main critical sustainability areas, which are (1) food safety, (2) quality produce, (3) environmental management, and (4) workers' health, safety, and welfare (Palizada, ud). With the growing internationalization of the agricultural market, GAP certification can facilitate the easier movement of Philippine products within the ASEAN region. In addition, GAP certification is designed to provide rational advice in the implementation of optimal management practices that will help minimize the risk of microbiological contamination of fruits and vegetables.

However, even with its potential benefits, the adoption of GAP in the country remains a challenge (Banzon, Mojica, and Cielo, 2013).

A potential conduit of GAP certification in the country is through the agritourism industry. In developing countries, agritourism development is essential for poverty alleviation and rural development yet the pace of agritourism's growth in developing countries remains delayed (Bhatta and Ohe, 2020). Montefrio and Sin (2019) explained that the concept of agritourism has been in the country for more than 20 years. In 2018, a national policy to strengthen the development of the Philippine agritourism was enacted. The Republic Act 10816 or the Farm Tourism Act of 2016 establishes the mandate of different government entities in the promotion and development of agritourism in the different regions in the country. As defined, farm tourism is "the practice of attracting visitors and tourists to farm areas for production, educational and recreational purposes" (Yamagishi, Gantalao, and Ocampo, 2020). It also highlights the different institutional support, which can be provided to the registered agritourism farms through relevant government agencies. Among its provisions are the different requirements for the accreditation of agritourism farms. In Section E of the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of RA 10816, it states that farm tourism camps or agritourism farms should be GAP certified at the bare minimum. In addition, the potential of the agritourism industry to serve as a platform for the promotion of GAP certification in the country is based on the organizational capacity of the agritourism farms to respond to the requirements of GAP certification (e.g. facilities needed).

Although agritourism has been recognized as an important component of agribusiness in the Philippines, Yamagishi, Gantalao, and Ocampo (2020) explains that the current scholarly works are still limited to better appreciate and comprehend its complex nature. Among these important facets is the adoption of GAP in its operations. Tugade (2020) further explains that agritourism as with other tourism enterprises is "highly contextual". It means that different agritourism sites are subject to different dynamics and complexities due to the influence of various environmental factors such as those emanating from the state and market. In this project, the focus will be in the context of the agritourism industry in Eastern Visayas, Philippines. The main livelihood in the region is agriculture with at least 45 percent of the total land area mainly utilized for this sector (DA Region 8, ud). However, even with this scale of agricultural operations, there are currently no GAP certified farms within the region, even the 5 existing agritourism farms.

## **B. GAP Research in the Philippines**

This project was proposed to complement the existing ACIAR-GAP project (HORT/2016/188). This existing ACIAR-GAP project seeks to develop a staged GAP protocol to supply consumers with safe vegetables as well as develop and evaluate enabling technologies and their capacity to deliver a GAP protocol in selected vegetable value chains in the Philippines. The current ACIAR-GAP project is teaching staged-GAP protocols to small vegetable farmers to slowly adopt site-specific GAP production practices and later get GAP certification. Introducing and teaching how to produce GAP-products/commodities to selected farmers is one of the major objectives of the above-mentioned project since some of the institutional markets in the neighboring region are requiring GAP certified products.

Moreover, this GAP certification-related research is in alignment with current Harmonized National Research and Development Agenda of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) under National Integrated Basic Research Agenda (NIBRA) 2017-2022 for Food and Nutrition Security – SAPAT Program (Saganang Pagkain Para sa Lahat). In addition, the Department of Agriculture through Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) and Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards (BAFS) is offering free certification costs for every farm applying for GAP certification. Thus, this project was proposed to mainly understand what are the prevailing challenges of some of the Department of Tourism (DOT)-accredited agritourism farms and why they don't have GAP certification wherein it is seen that they have the capacity in terms of the requirements of GAP compliance such as facilities and marketing edges. Also, being an agritourism farm serves as a venue for any government-organized farm related training (DA-ATI) which is the best platform to influence other farmers.

## Review of Literature

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) as defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) are a “collection of principles to apply for on-farm production and post-production processes, resulting in safe and healthy food and non-food agricultural products, while taking into account economic, social and environmental sustainability.” The production of safe food is essential for protecting consumers from the hazards of foodborne illnesses and is important both in the domestic food business as well as for increasing competitiveness in export markets.

At the lesser extent, an individual farmer's outlook in life may serve as a driving force to undergoing product certification. As the certification process is not only costly but also tedious, the farmer must have a long-term orientation and the tenacity to go through the entire course. The management culture defines the vision and mission of a company and serves as its guiding force in every endeavor. A forward-looking culture and management openness to change make it easier for a company to innovate in order to better tap opportunities in the environment (Banzon, et al. 2013).

There are numerous constraints to GAP adoption but the major ones can be summarized into four categories, namely: (1) knowledge constraints, (2) cost constraints, (3) process constraints, and (4) reward/incentive constraints. Adoption is slow because there is lack of awareness of GAP among the various stakeholders. In addition, the associated costs of compliance and certification are relatively high for both corporate and small farms. Certification may also require farmers to acquire new skills and competencies, not only to adopt new standards in their production and processing operations, but also to manage and plan their activities. Lastly, there is no price premium for products of GAP certified farms.

According to The National Agricultural Law Center, Agritourism presents a unique opportunity to combine aspects of the tourism and agriculture industries to provide a number of financial, educational, and social benefits to tourists, producers, and communities. Agritourism gives producers an opportunity to generate additional income and an avenue for direct marketing to consumers. It enhances the tourism industry by increasing the volume of visitors to an area and the length of their stay. Agritourism also provides communities with the

potential to increase their local tax bases and new employment opportunities. Additionally, agritourism provides educational opportunities to the public, helps to preserve agricultural lands, and allows states to develop business enterprises. While agritourism may create new potential revenue streams, it also presents new legal issues for farmers and landowners.

The potential contribution of tourism to the well-being of rural communities in developing countries involves the development of economic linkages [3]. Fomenting the creation of linkages between tourism and agriculture has recently received considerable attention as a strategy for rural and agricultural development in stagnating rural areas. As tourism and agriculture transform, there will be growing interest among governments, the private sectors, academics, donor agencies and nonprofit organizations to better understand the relationship between these two sectors, to encourage interaction and to become involved in fostering these linkages [2].

## Methodology

An overview of the project research process is shown in Fig. 1. The first phase of the project was the benchmarking through desk research and actual visits in model agritourism farms. After the data in this phase was processed and analysed, a set of parameters were established, it was used to evaluate the different agritourism farms in the Eastern Visayas Region in terms of their potential for GAP certification. The results of the multiple case studies were communicated through a policy consultative workshop together with local stakeholders. The process was mainly grounded on participatory approach.

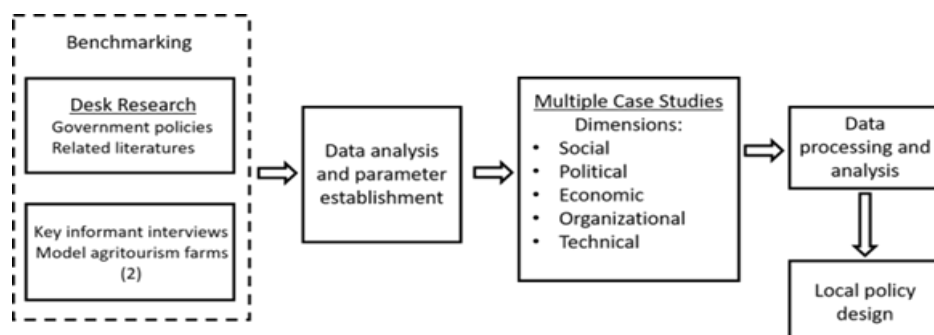


Figure 1. Schematic diagram of the research process of the project.

## Results and Discussion

### A. Benchmarking Sites

**Agap Farmers' Association** of Pangil in Laguna is an organized group assisted by ASHI (Ahon Sa Hirap, Inc.) and JGF (Jollibee Group Foundation). Located in Sitio Halang, Baranagay Sulib, Pangil, Laguna, the association was formed in 2016 for the spring onion cluster. Currently, they have 17 active members who are planting spring onions. Nine (9) of these members are now GAP certified. The farmers had their first GAP certification in 2020 and are now in the process of renewing their 2nd cycle of GAP certification. These farmers are small farm holders who are tilling under a leasehold arrangement. They are planting spring onions and palay alternately. Palay were planted from January to May while spring onions were sowed from June to December. This association



is supplying their GAP certified commodities to Jollibee Food Group, CorpWalmart (Laguna area), Yellowcab and Max's Restaurants.



**Ato Belen's Farm** is a diversified farm located in Barangay San Juan, San Pablo City, Laguna. Started as a small fruit tree plant nursery in 1987, the farm is now planted to a variety of vegetable crops and is being developed for livestock production and beekeeping. Its GAP certified crops were salad greens, tomatoes and chilis which are sold in local cafés and hotels and to direct consumers. They started their GAP certification in 2016, but currently did not push through its renewal since their customers are not requiring their products to be GAP certified. Once there is demand for GAP certified products, they are more than willing to renew.



**EV Sanchez Agri Farm** is known as the “Home of Naturally-Grown Dragon Fruits”. It is a 3.5-hectare farmland located in Sitio Tanauan, Barangay Palaypalay, Jalajala, Rizal. It has a bed and breakfast, a pavilion, grazing area and a wine cellar for their dragon fruit and cashew wines. The farm is planted with naturally grown crops, primarily fruit trees, like dragon fruit, banana, guyabano, cashew and calamansi. Its GAP certified crops were dragon fruits, tomatoes and celery. These GAP certified crops are being sold to regular consumers while their processed products are being sold in All Day

Supermarket, Best Value Factory Food Outlet, Bulawan Restaurant and other well-known restaurants in Rizal province. After its GAP certification in 2015, the farm was accredited as Agriculture Training Institute (ATI) Learning site and a Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) Farm School. But since the pandemic, the use of the farm for learning was prohibited by the owner for health safety. Its GAP certification was also not renewed since its expiry last February 2021.



**Flor and Daisy's Agricultural Farm** is a 5.0-hectare property predominantly planted with cacao and coffee trees in Barangay Mamala 2, Sariaya, Quezon. The owner started farming in 2012 after attending some agricultural training in their municipality. This leads to the formation of Mamala 2 Farmers Association which connected them to various support programs of the government for farmers. Since then, the farm was diversified with vegetable production utilizing both GAP and organic practices. They always bags the prize for the annual Barangay Gulayan Contest of the LGU.

The farm started its first cycle of GAP certification in 2018 and currently on their second cycle of GAP certification. Their GAP certified commodities include banana, bitter gourd, chili, coffee, cucumber, cassava, papaya, pole sitao, sponge gourd, rice and tomato. The products are being sold in Sentrong Pamilihang Bayan in Sariaya, Quezon with no premium pricing for GAP certified products. Despite this, the farm owner will still continue the GAP certification of their crops for he finds it essential in farm operations.





**Gourmet Farms** is located at Emilio Aguinaldo Highway, Silang, Cavite. Established in 1985 as an organic farm by the Tatler Asia Tastemaker and Father of farm to table movement in the Philippines, Ernest Escaler. The farm produces organically grown salad vegetables and culinary herbs. It started its first cycle of GAP certification in 2018 and currently on their second cycle which started in 2021. Their GAP certified and organic products were sold at their restaurants, in supermarkets like SnR, Robinson's, Rustan's, Unimart and some institutional buyers specifically, St. Luke's Hospital and the City of Dreams. Gourmet Farms shares its knowledge and expertise in farm operations with farmers and indigenous communities from all over the country. It also offers tour groups to observe their facilities and have an experiential learning in doing the basic land preparation, planting, plant care and harvesting of products in the farm.



**Urminita's farm** is currently a local government unit (LGU) supported farm in Sitio Galile Pantay, Barangay San Jose, Antipolo City, Rizal. It is one of the "Community Garden/Pantry " in the City of Antipolo under a three-year memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the barangay. Since its GAP certification, the LGU fostered Urminita's farm as an actual demonstration farm

of GAP certification process and practices. Later on, it was accredited as an Agriculture Training Institute (ATI) Learning site by the Department of Agriculture (DA).

This 2.2-hectare farm is owned by an active farmer leader who is the president of the organization of farmers in Antipolo City and one of the board members of Samahan ng Maggugulay in Rizal Province. He is also the former chairman of Antipolo Vegetable Council and a conferred farm scientist by the Department of Science and Technology-PCAARRD. He started cultivating the farm in 2007, from being a rice paddy to vegetable farm. And now, as a “Community Garden/Pantry”, their farm is a source of safe and nutritious food, providing employment and learning opportunities to barangay residents. Barangay leaders are conducting continuous training on vegetable production at Urminita’s farm directed to women and youth sectors in the area.



Respondents from the benchmarking study mentioned that the GAP certification process is provided free by the government and is open to all farm owners operating within the region. It is supported and guided by the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI). The mandated requirements and process are simple but the compliance experiences of respondents differ. This benchmarking study reveals that rigidity of GAP certification process and approval time depends on the type of crop, the timing of application and the readiness of farm and required documents during inspection. In the case of AGAP Farmers Association of Pangil their first GAP certification for spring onions took 6 months to one year. They are fully supported by a microfinance NGO Ahon Sa Hirap, Inc. and Jollibee Food Group Corporation (JGFC), from training to farm establishment, record keeping and farm inspection requirements until approval. Urminita’s farm, on the other

hand, took two years to comply with all the requirements needed for GAP certification. All support needed to prepare the farm for GAP certification were acquired from various government agencies. Support includes improvement of farm facilities like bathroom, sorting area and stock room, fees of necessary tests (water, soil test, etc) and tarpaulins. The EV Sanchez Agri Farm experienced the shortest application process. It took them two months to acquire their GAP certification. Their application was smooth and fast because even before applying for GAP certification, the farm already possesses the qualifications and requirements of being a GAP certified. Farm surroundings are clean, they had complete facilities, trees and crops are properly labelled and they employ organic practices. These affected the speedy GAP certification process of their farm.

In terms of benefits from being GAP certified, respondents shared they were able to gain a number of benefits, both at the personal and farm levels. At a personal level, most respondents were able to acquire added human capital (refers to the knowledge, skills, and ability to work) and social capital (refers to the networks, groups, and institutional support). Like in the case of AGAP Farmers Association, they were linked to Jollibee Foundation Group (which provided them with training, financial grant and market linkage) and DA regional office which granted them farm equipment and implements. Urminita's farm likewise, acquired a grant from DA Lipa City for the improvement of its farm facilities (comfort room, sorting area and stock room) and get continuous support from LGUs in terms of training and alliance building through forming and membership to various organizations. Notable support to Urminita's farm by its LGU is the marketing effort and awareness campaign for its GAP certified products. The Antipolo LGU endorsed them to big establishments in the City and allocated space for GAP products in their weekend market, where tarpaulins containing information on GAP certified products benefits are displayed. With this, they were able to get premium prices and had an increasing number of consumers patronizing GAP products. Moreover, EV Sanchez farm received shallow tube wells and solar panels from DA and was chosen by ATI to attend ASEAN GAP seminar in Bangkok, Thailand. Aside from training/seminars and free seeds, other forms of support reported by other respondents is the provision of billboards and tarpaulins. Other benefits mentioned is the confidence they have in consuming, sharing to family members and selling to general public quality and safe commodities produced, given the food safety standards ascertained in following GAP production process.

At the farm level, respondents shared that since there is a reduction in the use of chemicals, as prescribed in GAP, their production cost decreased significantly as compared when using conventional practices. Having a clean and organized farm that is practically safe for all, especially to farm workers, is another benefit cited by farm owners. The benefit of becoming an accredited learning site and becoming known to foreign visitors was also declared as benefits.

Although there are some benefits from GAP certification as perceived by the owners of GAP certified farms, GAP certification in the region is still faced



with a number of challenges. Some of the challenges are: 1) the availability of fund needed to finance the prescribed farm improvements, tests and farm maintenance costs; 2) Rigors of record keeping; 3) Complex process flow of certification; 4) absence or accessibility of markets for GAP certified products; and 5) low awareness on GAP certified products and its benefits, resulting to absence of premium pricing.

## B. Case Study Sites

**Canaan Hill Farms** at Uson, Brgy. Caibiran, Biliran was established in 2012. The 5ha land was planted with organic fruit trees, vegetables, and a variety of herbs. The farm also raised animals mainly for their family consumption and animal encounter purposes, such as Native pigs and chickens. The farm has been recognized for its excellent farm operations and has received awards including the UGMAD Award in 2015 as an Outstanding Farmer-Entrepreneur, Outstanding Organic Farming 2018, and was highlighted by DOT and ATI as a model farm for Agritourism and Learning Site for Farming. Mr. Jeffrey shared their plan for the coming months and years to engage in Organic Ice Cream production, Yellow Tea / Green Tea, and Farmacy (Organic Pharmacy) inside the farm. The farm also had its plan to venture into Cactus Farming as part of their farm development plan.

It was ATI who introduced the GAP approach to Mr. Jeffrey but Canaan chose not to apply for the program and stick to their current operation of being an Organic Farm. The respondent also confirmed that the Department of Agriculture in the province has been promoting Organic Farming Practices and not the GAP. In addition, Canaan did not see the advantage of being a GAP certified farm in terms of their market. There were no designed programs, price advantage, markets for GAP certified produce and most importantly the farm had clearly emphasized that they would not use chemicals and pesticides in their farm operation.



**Verol Eco Farm**, owned and managed by a former seafarer Mr. Eugenio G. Obispo, was located at Brgy. Villa Caneja, Naval, Biliran, Region VIII, Philippines. The owner followed his passion in Agriculture and acquired



the 5 ha farmland in 2015. In that same year, Mr. Eugenio started attending Trainings related to farming and agriculture, spent time on watching different farm practices on YouTube, and has started cultivating the land. In 2018, Verol Eco Farm formally opened its operation to Public. To date, the farm is accredited learning site by ATI and Agri-tourism farm by DOT.

Majority of the operating Income of Verol Eco Farm was acquired from its best seller “Unlimited Food Package” that has been offered during weekends inside the farm. Most of its produce was marketed only to farm guests except the Lettuce that were marketed to neighbouring retailers. The farm also started putting labels on its farm produce, particularly the Lettuce. Mr Eguenio shared that the farm has been practicing GAP but became less interested in processing the certification as he could not see the advantage yet of being a GAP certified farm. In addition, there were no identified markets for GAP certified products, and the Government has less intervention in terms of giving rewards and assistance for GAP programs. As suggested by him, GAP could be better adopted in the Region if there are clear programs, financial and marketing assistance, and benefits to be offered for GAP certified farms



**Softea Garden** was strategically located at Brgy. Bato, Biliran, Biliran, Region VIII Philippines. A 2ha garden was owned and managed by Ms. Sofia Fuentes Trani. Softea was an accredited institution by TESDA and CHED that offers NCII programs to students. Softea was also an accredited Agritourism site by DOT but the majority of its income was acquired from being a learning site and farm school. In addition, crops such as Amapalaya, Lettuce, Tomato, and Eggplant were cultivated for Teaching and Demo purposes.

Mrs. Fe Sombise, the farm school administrator shared its plan for GAP certification if funds for construction of the required facilities would become available. Added to her statement, that in order for GAP to be really adopted in the region, the government should help the farms in the construction of the required facilities. Although Softea has been practicing organic farming, the institution has expressed its willingness to adopt GAP practices and open for

opportunity to become an avenue for information dissemination for GAP programs



**La Caridad Farm** in Sogod Southern Leyte is a family-led enterprise that was established in 2011. The farm was planted with vegetables, herbs and flowering plants. Different species of animals such as goats, rabbits, etc. are likewise raised inside the farm mainly for animal encounter purposes. The farm-to-table approach has helped the owners reach its milestone in the agritourism industry. Most of the farm produce is being served in the farm's restaurant.

To sustain its operation, the farm owners continued linking with different lending institutions and was able to build its good credit standing. This implies that over the years, the farm's income was able to cover its operational expenses. Aside from the farm's strong internal management, La Caridad also maintained its good relationship with the LGU and agricultural agencies, such as the ATI which made it easy to ask for support from the government.

ATI has been providing support through training and seminars, La Caridad Farm; however, was not aware of the Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) program. Nevertheless, with continuous communication between the project team, the farm owners have acquired relevant information about GAP and have expressed their willingness to engage into GAP certification. Their perceived benefits include higher market advantage and food safety.



**Villaconzoilo Farm** started its operation in 2009. It is located up in the mountains near the famous Alto Peak, the highest peak in Eastern Visayas, Philippines. The farm is now gaining popularity among Leyte province's tourist destinations. What used to be a forest protected area is now being grown with pesticide-free vegetables. Undergoing this transformation was not an easy task especially with organizing the farmers that now manage the farm - the Leyte Compact Farming Agriculture Cooperative of Barangay Villa Conzoilo in Jaro, Leyte.

The owner recognized the support from the government and different NGOs for their success especially in their early age of operations. In spite of having no certification as certified organic for their produce, the farm has been practicing organic way of farming. They were also offering TESDA courses related to agriculture and became the assessment center that would assess the TESDA students in the province before gaining the certificates. Aside from their income in vegetable and animal production, restaurant, and agritourism; this contributed a big percentage to the farm gross income.

The farm administrator responded that they were receiving support by ATI including the training for Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). However, the farm perceived no benefits for GAP while considering the efforts, time, and capital on the certification process. The lack of economic advantage, satisfactory on the current practice, and record keeping also contributes to the challenges by the respondents to seek for GAP certification. Nevertheless, the farm administrator and farm owner still express its willingness to adapt with GAP.





### **C. Local and Regional Policies**

The final component of the project is the implementation of a consultative workshop that will provide an avenue to the local agricultural stakeholders - non-government agencies (NGAs), LGUs, and farmers, on the next courses of actions based on project results.

The discussions during the consultative meeting resulted in the following next courses of action:

#### **Local Support**

The Local Government Unit of Baybay, represented by Honorable Jose L. Bacusmo, committed their full support to the GAP adoption and sustainability program. Hon. Bacusmo requested Mr. Adam Goldwater, project leader of the ACIAR-funded GAP project, to present the concept on the Scalable GAP.

This will allow LGU to strategically position their support programs and local policies to respond to the needs of the local agricultural stakeholders in adopting GAP.

#### ***Creation of Regional Advisory Committee***

The participants agreed to augment the existing Policy Consultative Committee (PCC) for GAP. The expanded list of committee members were proposed to include the Heads and Representatives from the Department of Agriculture Region 8, DA-Regulatory Division, ATI, Fertilizer and Pesticides Authority (FPA), Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), Region VIII SUCs, Department of Tourism (DOT), Sangguniang Panglungsod, and from LGUs. The main roles of PCC include but are not limited to providing policy advisory and strategic decisions for GAP adoption and sustainability in the region.

#### ***Creation of Technical Working Group***

Aside from the creation of PCC, the participants likewise agreed to create a Technical Working Group (TWG). The TWG will be directly involved on the project implementations related to the promotion and strengthening of GAP in



the Eastern Visayas Region. The proposed TWG members include the Heads and Representatives from the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service Division (AMAD) of DA-RTC8, High Value Crops Development Programs (HVCDP) of DA-RTC8, City Agriculture Office (CAO), City Agricultural and Fishery Council (CAFC), Local Government Units (LGUs) and representative from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

The initial projects and programs of PCC and TWG are proposed to be piloted in the City of Baybay, Leyte. It will then be followed by other cities and municipalities within the region once the pilot case is considered as a success.

### **Development of Sustainable Production Through Clustering Approach**

One of the identified constraints for the adoption of GAP in the region is the lack of market niche. The participants agreed that this problem could be solved by linking GAP certified farms with institutional buyers. The participants agreed to engage in a clustering approach of vegetable production wherein GAP certified farms will be grouped and regulated to plant certain vegetables within the agreed planting calendar. This is to properly manage the supply and demand of GAP certified produce within the region and to effectively respond to the market requirements of the different large institutional buyers.

### **Information, Education and Communication (IEC)**

Lack of awareness among consumers, producers, agencies and institutional buyers on GAP is among the identified problems that need to be addressed to encourage GAP adoption in the region. To achieve this, the participants agreed to work together to implement various IEC activities to promote GAP at different levels and scales. The details of these IEC activities are provided in Table 1. Also, the project was able to develop different posters targeting different audience namely: for farmers, AEWs, Students and consumers (Appendices).

Table 1. Proposed IEC Activities.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Group/Agency to Initiate</b>	<b>Detailed Action</b>
Posters and IEC materials for Institutional Buyers, Producers and Consumers	Project Team and AT	Poster and short video making contest will be made. Best output will be reproduced and will be used as the official materials for this campaign
Online Marketing	CAO and LGU Baybay	A GAP products online marketing will be made through the Official Pages of LGU such as Baybay City Updates

		facebook page.  As suggested by Hon. Bacusmo, the working group can engage into paid facebook marketing wherein target audience profiling can be easily done. This also promotes higher audience reach as compared to organic online marketing.
Radio Advertising	CAO and ATI	Existing activities that need to be sustained and improved.
Market Day	CAO and LGU	Existing program that need to be sustained and improved

### Simplify Record Keeping Forms

The participants, especially the farmers, highlighted daily record keeping as one of the challenges in adopting and sustaining GAP certification. Thus, it was proposed to further simplify daily record keeping of the farmers. This includes the review and further simplification of the current record keeping templates, which are issued to the farmers. In addition, a proposal to create a mobile app was also made by the participants. The mobile app aims to aid farmers and regulating agencies in record keeping and farm monitoring. The design will be a collaboration between BPI and computer science experts from either [or both] VSU or UPLB or external institution.

### Regional GAP Summit

A regional GAP summit was also proposed during the consultative meeting. The summit aims to serve as an avenue for the discussion of important issues and concerns along with the actions necessary for the promotion of GAP in the Eastern Visayas Region. This summit could provide a platform to create and strengthen linkages among important actors within the local agricultural sector in the region (e.g., producers, consumers, government agencies, institutional buyers).

### Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

The team was able to interview and visit a total of eleven (11) Agritourism Farms; six (6) farms in Region 4A and five (5) in Eastern Visayas. These farms provided different perspectives towards the adoption of PhilGAP. Majority of

them agreed that PhilGAP is a good program of DA for the overall agricultural development. However, there were identified barriers that could explain why some farms particularly in Region 8 had not yet adopted the said practice. Most prevalent concerns were the lack of awareness, less established market opportunities, lack of government support, lack of incentives for the farm operators, and the long and tedious process of the GAP certification.

In the process of interviewing farm owners and government agencies and having a stakeholder's meeting, the importance and the future in GAP were communicated. With this, stakeholders had a better understanding and appreciation of the practice and promotion of GAP and sustainable farming. Through the promotion of GAP and addressing concerns in its certification process, it is envisioned that a simplified certification process and an enabling environment would encourage more farms to practice GAP. Overall, this could lead to farmers having better farm management systems and market opportunities as well as making consumers become informed decision-makers who would more likely prefer GAP products over conventional produce in Region 8. This chain reaction could happen as a result of the project thereby promoting sustainable agriculture in the years to come not only in Region 8 and in Region 4a but as well as in other regions in the country. Research about the field can add to the body of knowledge surrounding sustainability. Through the exchange of ideas in different parts of the world, it is possible to expedite actions to achieve sustainable development goals.

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## Appendices

### Benchmarking Main Guide Questions

#### On business operations

1. Paano po nagsimula ang inyong farm? (Ano po ang kwento dito?)  
(How did you start in your farm business? What is the story behind it?)
2. Gaano na po kalaki ang inyong operations (i.e., in terms of production and market)?  
How large is your operations in terms if production and market?
3. Ano pong mga “management practices” ang inyong ginagawa dito sa inyong farm?  
Kamusta at gaano kadala po ang inyong ginagawa monitoring ng mga practices na ito (halimbawa: paglalagay ng pesticides, fertilizers)  
What management practices do you apply in your farm? How was it and how frequent do you monitor the conduct of these practices?\*
4. Kayo po ba ay kasalukuyang learning site? Kung oo, kamusta po ang dami ng mga taong bumibisita sa inyo para matuto? Kung hindi, kayo po ba ay may plano na maging isang learning site?  
(Are you currently operating as a learning site? If yes, can you discuss about the number of people visiting your farm to learn about agricultural practices? If no, do you have a plan to be an accredited learning site?)

\*For number 3, among the concerns of the key informants during the benchmarking is monitoring and recording. You can rephrase this question to better capture this concern.

#### On GAP certification

1. Pamilyar po ba kayo sa GAP Certification? Kung oo, kanino niyo po ito nalaman o natutunan?  
(Are your familiar with GAP Certification? If yes, where did you learn about it?)
2. [Kung pamilyar sa GAP/ Kung hindi pamilyar, ipaliwanag ang GAP Certification] Sa tingin niyo po, meron po bang “market” para sa mga GAP certified products? May nakikita po ba kayo na potential para dito sa inyong negosyo? Sa tingin niyo po ba ay mas lalawak ang inyong market kung kayo ay maging GAP certified?  
(Do you think GAP certified products have a market niche? Do you see its potential benefits to your business? Do you think your market will grow once you became GAP certified?)
3. Base po sa inyong pagkakaalam tungkol sa GAP/ Base sa paliwanag tungkol sa GAP, ano po sa tingin niyo ang madali po na makaka-comply ang inyong farm at san po kaya ang magiging challenge niyo padgating dito?  
(Based on your understanding about GAP or on the explanation about it, what do you think will be easiest to comply among the requirements and those that could pose a challenge?)

4. Kamusta po ang suporta sa inyo ng gobyerno pagdating sa pamamahala ng inyong agritourism farm?  
(How is the support of the government in relation to the overall operations of your agritourism farm?)

Other instructions:

1. probe the answers of the key informants for all the questions.
2. For site observation, please use the current list of requirements for a farm to be GAP certified (e.g., presence of CR etc.) Check where the farm is already compliant and where the farm needs improvement. Please list down all the possible concerns of the farm in relation to GAP certification. Enumerate also their "best practices".
3. Don't forget to take photos for documentation.



Appendix table 1. Impact pathway and theory of change of the project

Objectives	Outputs	Outcome	Impact
Understand the prevailing institutional arrangements at the national and local levels in relation to GAP certification and Agritourism accreditation in the Philippines and in the study areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation report</li> <li>• Photos</li> <li>• Transcripts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness on the existing institutional arrangements and roles of different government agencies on GAP certification process</li> </ul>	<p><u>Farm level:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better farm management system</li> <li>• Safe farming system for the farm workers</li> <li>• Promotion of practices that are safe for the environment</li> </ul> <p><u>Market:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased preference for GAP products</li> <li>• Higher access to GAP certified produce</li> </ul> <p><u>Policy:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More simplified certification process</li> <li>• More cohesive inter-agency collaboration</li> <li>• Higher level of public-private partnership in the promotion of GAP at the local and national levels</li> </ul>
Establish criteria and requirements for GAP certification of agritourism farms through benchmarking of model farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of expanded criteria in assessing farms for GAP certification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved criteria in assessing farms, which goes beyond technical requirements</li> </ul>	
Generate the profile of the selected agritourism farms in the Eastern Visayas Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation report</li> <li>• Photos</li> <li>• Transcripts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased understanding on the potentials and challenges of agritourism farms in the region in relation to GAP certification</li> </ul>	
Assess the different agritourism farms in the Eastern Visayas Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation report</li> <li>• Photos</li> <li>• Transcripts</li> </ul>		
Formulate a local policy design in support of GAP certification of agritourism farms and non-agritourism farms in Eastern Visayas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IEC materials based on the needs of different stakeholders</li> <li>• Consultative meeting with stakeholders</li> <li>• On-going discussion on local ordinance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness of different stakeholders on the different policy options to support GAP certification</li> </ul>	

	in support of GAP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder communication</li> </ul>		
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**UPLB, VSU collab for agritourism research**

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## Consultative Meeting and Planning Workshop

JDF-GAP Agritourism Project  
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3



**Vision:**  
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## **Agritourism Farms as Conduit of the Adoption of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) in Eastern Visayas, Philippines**

Results of the Consultative Meeting  
October 12, 2022

### **Project Team Members:**

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Mr. Ludivico B. Rabia - Researchers Assistant

### **Participants:**

Hon. Jose L. Bacusmo - Councilor, Baybay LGU  
Ms. Mora C. Abarquez - City Agriculturist, Baybay  
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Mr. Adam Goldwater - Project Manager, AHR  
Ms. Concepcion B. Miro - Agricultural Training Institute Region 8  
Ms. Marilyn Ritaga - Food Safety DA-RF08  
Mr. Jessie P. Abenosa - Farmer, Monterico Farm  
Mr. Romeo Mazo - Farmer, Mazo Farm (GAP Certified Farm)  
Mr. Albert P. Rosillo - Farmer, Basti's Farm

The discussions during the consultative meeting resulted in the following next courses of action:

## Posters develop for public use

### For Farmers



**What is GAP?**

Safe vegetables can be produced using **Good Agricultural Practice (GAP)** protocols. These are methods used to certify produce that is safe to eat and has been prepared to meet customer requirements. Being GAP-certified means the fruits and vegetables supplied by the qualified farmers are guaranteed clean, free from microbial or chemical residue, and safe.



**Ano ang GAP?**

Ang mga ligtas na gulay ay maaaring gawin gamit ang mga protocol ng **Good Agricultural Practice (GAP)**. Ang pagiging sertipikado ng GAP ay nangangahulugan na ang mga prutas at gulay na ibimbay ng mga kwalipikadong mag-uuma ay giganantiyahan na malinis, walang microbial o chemical residue, at ligtas kainin.



**Unsa ang GAP?**

Ang luwas nga mga utanon mahimong maprodukta gamit ang **Good Agricultural Practice (GAP)** protocols. Ang pagka-sertipikado sa GAP nagpasabot nga ang mga prutas ug utanon nga gisulapay sa mga kwalipikadong mag-uuma giganantiyahan nga limpyo, wala'y microbial o kemikal nga residue, ug luwas kan-on.

**Who can apply for GAP?**

**Requirements to be submitted:**

1. Accomplished application form
2. Organizational Profile
3. Farm map or area map
4. Field operation procedures
5. Certificate of Training on GAP
6. Certificate of Registration
7. Procedure for accreditation (if applicable)
8. Procedure for Outgrowership scheme (if applicable)

**Who can apply for GAP?**

- Individual farmers
- Partnership/joint venture
- Cooperatives
- Corporations
- Demonstration farms
- Associations/organizations

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**Sino ang maaaring mag-apply para sa GAP?**

**Mga kinakailangan na isumite:**

1. Application form
2. Profile ng organisasyon
3. Mapa ng lugar o sakahan
4. Mga pamamaraan ng operasyon field
5. Certificate of Training ng GAP
6. Certificate of Registration
7. Procedure for accreditation (kung naaangkop)
8. Procedure for Outgrowership scheme (kung naaangkop)

**Sino ang maaaring mag-apply para sa GAP?**

- Mga indibidwal na mag-uuma
- Partnership/joint venture
- Kooperatiba
- Korporasyon
- Demonstration farms
- Asosasyon/Organisasyon

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**Kinsay maka-apply sa GAP?**

**Mga kinahanglanong isumiter:**

1. Application form
2. Profile sa organisasyon
3. Mapa sa lugar o umahan
4. Mga pamaagi sa operasyon sa kapatagan
5. Certificate of Training sa GAP
6. Certificate of Registration
7. Procedure for accreditation (kung mahimong)
8. Procedure for Outgrowership scheme (kung mahimong)

**Kinsay maka-apply sa GAP?**

- Mga mag-uuma
- Partnership/joint venture
- Kooperatiba
- Korporasyon
- Demonstration farms
- Mga asosasyon/organisasyon

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### For AEWs



**What is GAP?**

Safe vegetables can be produced using **Good Agricultural Practice (GAP)** protocols. These are methods used to certify produce that is safe to eat and has been prepared to meet customer requirements.



**Ano ang GAP?**

Ang mga ligtas na gulay ay maaaring gawin gamit ang mga protocol ng **Good Agricultural Practice (GAP)**. Ito ay mga paraan na ginagamit upang patunayan ang mga ani ay ligtas kainin at inihanda upang magbigay ang mga kinakailangan ng customer.



**Unsa ang GAP?**

Ang luwas nga mga utanon mahimong maprodukta gamit ang **Good Agricultural Practice (GAP)** protocols. Kini ang mga pamaagi nga gamit sa pag-certify sa mga produkto nga luwas kan-on ug giandam aron matubag ang mga kinahanglanon sa kustomer.

**8 Steps to Achieve PhilGAP Certification:**

1. Preliminary Assessment
2. Farmers Education and Awareness-Building on PhilGAP
3. Groundworking to Result in Farmers' Commitment-Setting
4. Pre-Assessment of Farms by LGU
5. Submission of Application Form and Annexes
6. Pre-inspection of Farms by Regulatory Division
7. Inspection of Farms by Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) Deputed PhilGAP Inspectors
8. Introduction of Internal Control System (ICS) as Strategy for Sustainability

**Benefits of GAP**

Being GAP-certified means the fruits and vegetables supplied by the qualified farmers are guaranteed clean, free from microbial or chemical residue, and safe.

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**Walang Hakbang para Makamit ang Sertipikasyon ng PhilGAP:**

1. Paunang pag-uuri
2. Edukasyon at pagbuhat ng kamalayan ng mga mag-uuma sa PhilGAP
3. Paghahanda na magresulta sa pagtatag ng kompromiso ng mga mag-uuma
4. Paunang pag-uuri sa LGU ng mga sakahan
5. Pagsumite ng application form at mga ibang dokumento
6. Paunang inspeksiyon ng Regulatory Division sa mga sakahan
7. Inspeksiyon ng Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) Deputed PhilGAP Inspectors ng mga sakahan
8. Introduksiyon ng Internal Control System (ICS) bilang estratehiya sa pagpapahalaga ng sakahan

**Benepisyo ng GAP**

Ang pagiging sertipikado ng GAP ay nangangahulugan na ang mga prutas at gulay na ibimbay ng mga kwalipikadong mag-uuma ay giganantiyahan na malinis, walang microbial o chemical residue, at ligtas kainin.

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**Walo ka lakang para makab-ot ang PhilGAP Certification:**

1. Paunang ebalwasyon
2. Edukasyon ug pagtukod sa kahibato sa mga mag-uuma sa PhilGAP
3. Pagangandam na magresulta sa pagbuhat og pagtatag sa mag-uuma
4. Ebalwasyon sa LGU sa mga umahan
5. Pagsumite sa Application Form ug ubang dokumento
6. Pre-inspeksiyon sa mga umahan
7. Pag-inspeksiyon sa Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) Deputed PhilGAP Inspectors sa mga umahan
8. Introduksiyon sa Internal Control System (ICS) bilang estratehiya sa maging maunang pag-uuma

**Benepisyo sa GAP**

Ang pagka-sertipikado sa GAP nagpasabot nga ang mga prutas ug utanon nga gisulapay sa mga kwalipikadong mag-uuma giganantiyahan nga limpyo, wala'y microbial o kemikal nga residue, ug luwas kan-on.

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## For Consumers

**SAFE TO EAT**

### Why choose GAP?

nutritious vegetables!

- ✓ safety
- ✓ quality
- ✓ sustainability

GAP-certified products are:

- ✓ free from harmful chemicals and pesticides that may cause on-farm microbial contamination
- ✓ produced from qualified source or farmer that utilizes healthy environmental practices
- ✓ safe to eat or consume

To learn more about GAP, please visit our website or scan the QR code.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXQ087N0wIw>

CONTACT DETAILS

**SAFE TO EAT**

### Bakit GAP ang pipiliin?

masustansyang gulay!

- ✓ kaligtasan
- ✓ kalidad
- ✓ pagpapanatili

Ang mga GAP-certified na mga produkto ay:

- ✓ walang mga nakakapinsalang kemikal at pestisidyo na maaaring magdulot ng kontaminasyon ng mikrobyo sa taniman o sa kanan
- ✓ mula sa kuwalipikadong pinagmulan o magsasaka na gumagamit ng wasto at malusog na pamamaraan at hindi nakakapinsala sa kapaligiran
- ✓ ligtas kainin o ubusin

Para sa karagdagang impormasyon tungkol sa mga GAP-certified na mga produkto, bisitahin ang link o i-scan ang QR code.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXQ087N0wIw>

CONTACT DETAILS

**SAFE TO EAT**

### Nganong GAP man ang pilion?

masustansya nga gulay!

- ✓ kaligtasan
- ✓ kalidad
- ✓ pagkamatatayon

Ang mga GAP-certified nga mga produkto kay:

- ✓ walay makadaot nga kemikal ug pestisidyo nga mahimong hinungdan sa kontaminasyon sa mikrobyo sa umahan
- ✓ giprodus gikan sa kuwalipikadong tinubdan o mga mag-uuma nga nag-gamit og saktong pamaagi nga dili makadaot sa palibot
- ✓ luwas kan-on o pang-konsumsi

Para sa masugay na impormasyon, bisitahin ang link o i-scan ang QR code.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXQ087N0wIw>

CONTACT DETAILS

## For Students

To learn more about GAP-certified products, open the link or scan the QR code.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXQ087N0wIw>

When you see this LOGO attached in the vegetables you buy, it means that they are:

- ✓ free from harmful chemicals and pesticides that may cause on-farm microbial contamination
- ✓ produced from qualified source or farmer that utilizes healthy environmental practices
- ✓ safe to eat or consume

**SAFE TO EAT**

Para sa karagdagang impormasyon tungkol sa mga GAP-certified na mga produkto, bisitahin ang link o i-scan ang QR code.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXQ087N0wIw>

Kapag nakita mo itong LOGO na nakadikit sa mga gulay na binibili mo, ibig sabihin nito ay:

- ✓ walang mga nakakapinsalang kemikal at pestisidyo na maaaring magdulot ng kontaminasyon ng mikrobyo sa taniman o sa kanan
- ✓ mula sa kuwalipikadong pinagmulan o magsasaka na gumagamit ng wasto at malusog na pamamaraan at hindi nakakapinsala sa kapaligiran
- ✓ ligtas kainin o ubusin

**SAFE TO EAT**

Para sa dugang na impormasyon bahin sa mga GAP-certified nga mga produkto, bisitahin ang link o i-scan ang QR code.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXQ087N0wIw>

Kung makita nimo kini nga LOGO nga gilaip sa mga utanon nga imong gipalit, kini nagpasabot nga sila:

- ✓ walay makadaot nga kemikal ug pestisidyo nga mahimong hinungdan sa kontaminasyon sa mikrobyo sa umahan
- ✓ giprodus gikan sa kuwalipikadong tinubdan o mga mag-uuma nga nag-gamit og saktong pamaagi nga dili makadaot sa palibot
- ✓ luwas kan-on o pang-konsumsi

**SAFE TO EAT**