



SAGITTARIUS MINES, INC.

MEDIA RELEASE

12 April 2010

Tampakan upland farmers attend school

Upland farmers in Tampakan town, South Cotabato, got a chance to learn new farming techniques as various groups pooled resources and came up with a pilot farmers field school (FFS) in barangay Tablu, a mountain community in that town.

The aim of the program is to help improve the farming practices of tribal farmers in Tampakan and will allow participants to experience the different stages of vegetable farming - from land preparation to harvesting their yield.

Sagittarius Mines Inc. (SMI), Department of Agriculture (DA), Tablu local government, DA-Central Mindanao Integrated Agricultural Research Center (CEMIARC) and the Office of the Municipal Agriculture, thought it wise to cooperate and make the school a reality.

The first session in the farmer school focuses on integrated pest management, mainly for vegetables. "We hope to help farmers grow healthy crops, preserve the biodiversity, manage their farm properly and become experts in their field," remarked Minda Busarang, Municipal Coordinator of the Integrated Pest Management in Tampakan.

We will also teach them how to safeguard their insect population and avoid human health risks, Busarang added.

She said they expect that in 16 weeks, participants will be able to identify the different types of insects within their farm, separate the beneficial insects from the destructive ones, determine when to spray, and to how to properly monitor their farms, she added.

The farmers' school will utilize different methods of teaching including lectures, hands-on-activities, examinations, small and large group discussions and field trips. Participants are also encouraged to share their learnings, Busarang said.

Sessions are held early each Friday, often in the morning when insects abound.

Around 30 farmer-participants from Sitio Datal Biao of barangay Danlag and Sitios Sbanggari, Datal Mangisi, Crossing Mangisin, and Tucaymal of barangay Tablu were divided into groups of six according to their region, and use different insect repellants including Herba Buena, Lemon Grass, Marigold and Lemon Basil.

Maayo ni nga programa. Makatabang gyud og dako sa amo nga mga mag-uuma. Makatabang pud ni para sa amung future ug sa among mga anak (This is a good program, and a huge help to us farmers. This will really help to build our future and our childrens future), commented Barnie Dialang, a banana and corn farmer of 16 years.

Head office: Yakal St. corner Talisay St., Pob. Tampakan, South Cotabato 9507 Philippines Tel +63 83 227-1043 Fax +63 83 227-1040

General Santos office: JPM Building, Bula Lagao Road Gen. Santos City 9500 Philippines Tel +63 83 554-8414 Fax +63 83 552-8405

Metro Manila office: 12/F LKG Tower, 6801 Ayala Avenue, Makati City 1227 Philippines Tel +63 2 856-3021 to 25 Fax +63 2 856-3032



SAGITTARIUS MINES, INC.

The Farmer Field School started in 2003 under the banner of Kasaganahan ng Sakahan at Kalikasan (KASAKALIKASAN), a national program during the administration of former President Fidel V. Ramos.

For further details please contact.

Mr. John Arnaldo
Communications Manager
Sagittarius Mines, Inc.
T: +63 (285) 63023