



Sweet Promises ...

BY **ARLAN M. SANTOS**, NTFP-TF

What's the fuss? NATRIPAL (United Tribes of Palawan, a people's organization) is running out of wild honey stock. Some consumers were rushing to buy wild honey as if in a drugstore. The reasons, according to Dr. Sonny Vioria of the Center for International Trade and Exposition Mission (CITEM) who is one of the leading buyers of the product are: first, due to the SARS-scare (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), which at present has no known cure; second, many are more health conscious nowadays; and, lastly people are shifting to alternative and natural medicines to boost the immune system.

Boosting quality, health, and the environment

Honey, universally believed to have efficacious properties particularly in respiratory ailments, is formulated by the genius of hard-working bees. Most commercial honey products commonly found in the grocery stores are cultured from apiaries. Wild honey sold by NATRIPAL, in contrast, is naturally organic and is collected by the indigenous honey gatherers straight from its natural habitat - the lush forest! The floral diversities where the wild bees gather nectar are absolutely free from pollution, pesticides, and synthetic fertilizer.

Wild honey is naturally rich in pollens, live enzymes, vitamins and trace minerals. To retain these qualities and all the nutrients the bees put in, NATRIPAL makes sure that wild honey is not adulterated. The organization has devised a campaign for the systematic harvesting and collection of honey among its honey gatherer members. This was aided by a comics-manual through the technical assistance of Non-Timber Forest Products -Task Force.

In NATRIPAL's processing lab, wild honey is never heated. Processing entails only dehumidification to eliminate excess water and straining with a sterilized cloth to remove impurities.

NATRIPAL is also committed to sustainable harvesting practices, striving to minimize ecological impacts. As part of their campaign, honey gatherers are trained and informed of optimal harvesting techniques to ensure the abundance of bees and its honey.

Amazing sales

From January to July of this year, there was a total sales of PhP91,331.50 (160 gallons), an over 500% jump compared to last year's total sales of PHP 17,065! Main buyers were Dr. Vioria (75 gallons), Palawan Center for Appropriate

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▼ A page from NATRIPAL's comics-manual



PHOTOS COURTESY OF "HONEY HUNTERS OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS" BY RIVERBANK STUDIOS AND KEYSTONE FOUNDATION, INDIA

Not By Timber Alone (NBTA) is a semi-annual newsletter of the **Philippine Non-Timber Forest Products – Task Force (NTFP-TF)**, a collaborative network of NGOs and Peoples Organizations (POs) working with local communities on developing their NTFP-based livelihoods. The Task Force works on NTFP development in the context of sustainable forest management and community empowerment. The Task Force is hosted by the Upland Marketing Foundation, Inc. (UMFI).

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Rural Technology or PCART (57 gallons), NTFP-TF (22 gallons), and the rest from visitors from Manila.

According to Loreta Alsa, NATRIPAL's staff in-charge on honey, this year's supply of honey is ironically meager compared to last year's. The extreme and prolonged heat condition last summer was the culprit as this hindered the flowering of the trees, the ultimate source of bee nectar.

NATRIPAL has demonstrated that wild honey is a promising commodity. But its ultimate success relies on the synergies of ecology, livelihood and quality. *npta*

honey tips. Try it *and* Believe it!

⌘ **For skin rashes, burns and abrasions.** Apply a small amount of honey lightly over the affected area. Cover with a dressing or a dusting of cornstarch to reduce any stickiness.

⌘ **The ultimate moisturizer.** Smooth a small amount of honey lightly over the skin. Easily remove with splashes of cold water or comfortable warm water. Leaves skin baby soft.

⌘ **As a bath and antibacterial soap.** Wash with honey straight from the jar and enjoy sparkling clean skin. Facial blemishes and acne caused by cosmetics or allergies will clear up quickly using a nightly treatment of honey.

⌘ **For hair and scalp treatment.** Apply honey (with or without olive oil) to dry or damp hair about one half hour before washing — you'll be amazed at your "crowning glory."

⌘ **For dental care and mouth sores.** Cleans teeth, mouth and dentures and stops bleeding gums. Canker sores, blisters and mouth ulcers respond to application of unstrained raw honey.

⌘ **An astounding natural preservative.** Unprocessed honey found in ancient tombs was determined to be edible and was even used to preserve bodies. Keeps foods fresh and moist longer and retards spoilage.

Source: <http://www.reallyrawhoney.com>



Trip na Trip ang TRIP!

(A TRIP TO REMEMBER)

BY MARIA THERESA P. BRUNIA, BIND
AND OMAI, MANGYAN MISSION

The two-day fun-filled exposure trip, organized by the NTFP-TF, was successfully concluded in the month of July. The trip gave rattan, nito and buri workers the opportunity to observe firsthand the production process of established handicraft manufacturing and exporting companies. It provided them with fresh ideas and insights on how to improve production capacity and product quality. Because of its broad experience in the handicraft industry, the province of Quezon was the choice pick.

Participants were craft workers from the Broad Initiatives for Negros Development Inc. (BIND), SANAMA, and Mangyan Mission. The trip was spearheaded by Met Sta. Maria, product development and marketing consultant, in coordination with Nola Andaya of NTFP-TF. Eric Oliveros of the DTI Regional Office accompanied the group to different handicraft production centers in the municipalities of Lucban and Tayabas, Quezon.

The participants were very pleased with the exposure trip. Notwithstanding the long journey, they enjoyed every bit of the experience. Different groups were visited; the craft workers were generous with their information and knowledge. Due to time constraints, much sharing of ideas, learnings and raising of amusing questions was held inside the vehicle when moving from one site to another.

Let us take a look at their views of the recently concluded exposure trip:

OMAI (Mangyan Mission): "With creativity and diligence, you can make something out of any type of material."

YUMAY (Mangyan Mission): "I am happy because I acquired many ideas

from the products I saw. For example, a mold is used for buri products to ensure uniform sizes. This is an idea that I will teach my group when I get home."

MALING (Mangyan Mission): "This is my first time in Manila and I am happy. I am glad because I learned a lot from this exposure trip. I learned how to combine buri and thread. I found out about a new type of dye for buri. The only dye I used to know of is Venus. I also learned how to create a folder out of buri with cardboard, and how to store raw materials."

RENE MAMBO (Mangyan Mission): "I am happy because I have been to Tayabas, Quezon and Lucena City. I got the idea of using black vines which can be made into baskets with a different design. When I return to the mountains I will share this with our fellow Mangyans."

ERLINA SODAYE (Mangyan Mission): "I learned a lot from the products shown us. I witnessed how materials are gathered in volume before production to speed up the production process. All materials should be pooled together to cut back on the time spent for searching and acquiring them. However there is still a lot to learn about the proper way of storing materials."

PAMPILO (BIND): "My learnings will be helpful to the group in our place. If I work on my own it takes much longer, as compared to having helpers. I also saw how the production process should be systematized. People need to be assigned to different tasks. For example different workers will do the following – getting of materials, cutting, shaving, weaving and cleaning."

ROGELIO (BIND): "Our products

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Surveying Ancestral Domains in Palawan

BY **BOY LORENO**, COMMUNITY ORGANIZER AND GPS HANDLER OF NATRIPAL

The Tagbanuas, in the villages of Simpucan and Napsan, have been waiting seven long years for their forefathers' lands to be surveyed. The survey is a requisite to acquiring a certificate of land ownership which is legal recognition of their ancestral lands. The survey finally started in November 15 2002. But it proved to be a daunting task. As part of the group that undertook the survey, we endured the pangs of hunger, loneliness, and encountered other difficulties during our nine days and nights in the mountains. Animals in the wild were better off – they have shelters they can come home to when dusk falls. We spent the nights wherever our journey took us. There were no cozy sleeping areas, no adequate shelter, and there was little food.

The group that undertook the survey was composed of different agencies, namely AnthroWatch, Philippine Association for Intercultural Exchange (PAFID), Inter-Peoples Exchange (IPEX, Inc.), and Nagkakaisang Mga Tribu ng Palawan (NATRIPAL). Local organizations were likewise represented, among them STBSI from Brgy. Simpucan, SAMAKANA from Sitio Sto. Nino, Brgy. Napsan and SANTALAB from Sitio Labtay, barangay Napsan. Representatives from the three groups served as the guides of the surveyors.

Prior to the actual survey, representatives from these organizations along with the community organizers (COs) of NATRIPAL were trained for three days on the use of the Geographical Positioning System. The GPS is a "tool for measuring land area." The training was conducted by PAFID and AnthroWatch. NATRIPAL, despite owning a GPS unit,

had yet to maximize its use owing to lack of skill and experience. Both the training and the actual experience during the survey of ancestral domains in Simpucan and Napsan served as an intensive learning ground on the use of GPS for NATRIPAL. During the training, survey guidelines of NGOs were discussed with the assistance of some lawyers. Other important aspects of a survey taken up were the distance between perimeter corners and the boundary agreement between adjacent ancestral domains. NCIP attended the training but was unable to participate in the actual survey.

To facilitate the activity, the group was divided into two. A GPS expert either from PAFID or AnthroWatch was assigned to each group. The COs were assigned with different tasks – to take photos, to document, and to provide a "story" of each area of every corner. The account is an additional proof to the authenticity of the Tagbanuas' claim to their ancestral domain.

Before proceeding, the two groups studied the three-dimensional map and discussed their routes. They agreed on what the monuments would look like and at what spots in the mountain they would most probably meet. Methods like these help speed up the process.

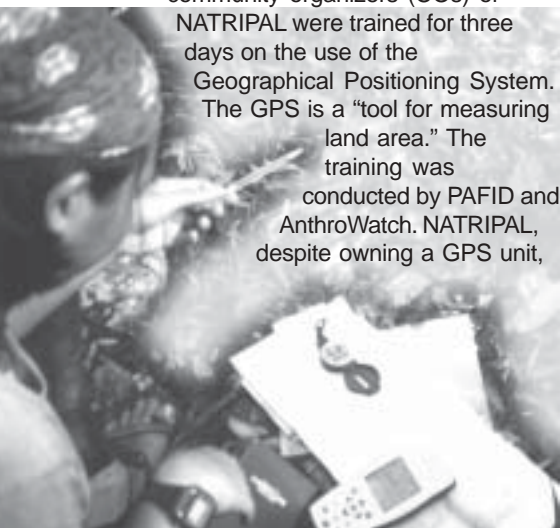
The two groups then went their separate ways, to corner spots as told by the local elders in their testimonies. In every corner we set up a monument made out of concrete formed on top of the stones. We made marks such as ADM-N1...ADM-N24. ADM stands for "Ancestral Domain Monument" and the letter N means north. The number in each mark points from 1 to 24 are the corner stations. The other group went through the same process except that they worked from the south direction and thus their monuments were marked with ADM-S. The boundary located in the upper parts was adjacent to Irawan's Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claim (CADC). The

Tagbanuas of Irawan were granted a CADC last 1997. Earlier in the process, the two communities agreed on communal territorial limits so as to avoid future conflicts. The lower boundary meanwhile covered a portion of ancestral waters except that of Sitio Labtay.

My group members were especially meticulous in documenting the name and story behind every corner, cliff, river, sacred spots and other areas we passed through. While ideally a picture should be taken for every area, we did not take photos in sacred areas. These areas should be revered and taking photos is forbidden according to our respected elders in the community.

The two groups finally met on November 25, 2003. Notwithstanding the weary faces, we felt glad upon seeing the others. We each had our own story and experience to share. In the same evening, both groups assessed the needs and determined that things needed to be changed or enhanced for subsequent surveys. Everyone returned to their respective communities after the meeting.

The COs of NATRIPAL are very happy knowing that we are now capable of handling the GPS. In fact towards the end of the survey we already knew what buttons to push and need not be supervised. Last February we, the indigenous CO of NATRIPAL together with the local community, surveyed the remaining boundaries of Sto. Nino, Napsan. It was a joy to finally see the map issued on May 2003. The work we did proved right! Despite the headaches over figuring how to manipulate the GPS unit, our first solo attempt to conduct a survey was a success. NATRIPAL still has over 60 member organizations awaiting surveys of their areas. We will surely take advantage of our newfound new skills, knowledge and experience. This is a big leap towards the official recognition of the ancestral domains of the indigenous Palaweno. *nbta*



LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCES IN NORTHERN LUZON

The Challenge of Conserving Bukidnon's Last Frontier

BY MYRON Y. TORTOLA, MUNICIPAL KAGAWAD, IMPASUGONG, BUKIDNON

Four decades and three years ago, Impasugong was still behind compared to other municipalities in Bukidnon. Its vast natural resources, however, spread along Mt. Kitanglad from the south and Mt. Kimangkil from the north to make it one of the richest municipalities in the province of Bukidnon. The town is blessed in abundance with wildlife both from its virgin rainforests and clear waters from its rivers, lakes and springs. The two great watersheds of Pulangi and Tagoloan support the Cotabato provinces and Macajalar bay in Misamis Oriental respectively. In the broader area of its landscape, the municipality is also endowed with vast plains and ranges. About 82.68% is considered forest land and 17.32% is alienable and disposable land.

The population of Impasugong is approximately 31,000 people, 65% of which belong to the Higaonon tribe. Agriculture is the primary source of livelihood for most of the population from traditional to commercial crops. The municipality has experienced a rapid pace of agricultural intensification. Forestlands have been sacrificed and converted into farm lands. Denudation has resulted in increasing loss of biodiversity, soil erosion, and water quality degradation. Logging companies, corporate farming, and massive migration also contribute to the rapid decline of the municipalities natural resources.

The challenge for conservation

Today the municipality is faced with a challenge...a challenge to balance the preservation and protection of the environment while ensuring the viability of

local autonomy in accelerating economic development and upgrading the quality of life of its people. Despite appropriate laws that have already been enacted, timber poaching still exists and the rarest of naturally growing species are endangered. Chemical residues from plantations also poison the rivers and streams.

These trends pose a constant threat to the already fragile environment of the municipality. There is, therefore, a need to develop a sustainable long term environmental policy framework for Impasugong. Such a framework shall provide policy and procedural guidelines in ensuring a holistic and workable system of managing the environment of the municipality.

The Local Government Unit (LGU) is critical in the formulation and implementation of the said environmental policy framework. The decentralization and devolution to the local government

makes the LGU a key actor in natural resource governance. But the LGU's capacity to manage is limited if not exercised in collaboration with the private sector and the communities residing in the various *barangays* or villages of the municipality.

Exchange visit to Northern Luzon

In March 2003, the Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO), Non-timber Forest Product – Exchange Programme for Southeast Asia (NTFP-EP) and Environmental Science for Social Change (ESSC) organized an exposure visit entitled "*Decentralizing Natural Resource Management: collaborative initiatives between local governments and local communities.*" I had the opportunity to join other Mindanao and Indonesian government and NGO representatives to visit LGUs in Northern Luzon that are considered models in their efforts to work



◀ Local government officials from Mindanao and Indonesia eagerly ask questions as they learn from the success story of the Barobbob Watershed

▶ Provincial government personnel identify the lots that have been awarded with Agroforestry Land Management Agreements (ALMAs)



with other sectors on resource management concerns. My interest was also to see how LGUs are dealing both with economic concerns and ecological protection. From this visit, we realized that the challenges faced by other LGUs are most similar to those in Impasugong.

In Imugan, a barrio of Sta. Fe, Nueva Vizcaya, the government granted the *Iklahan*, the mountain dwelling people, the right to manage their resources through a communal lease agreement. This was the first agreement of its kind. It gave the impetus to the government for recognition of the vital role and active participation of the local community in the preservation and conservation of natural resources. As observed, the place is utilized economically. Agricultural production exists as well as commerce.

Another place visited was the Barobbob watershed (429 has) in Nueva Vizcaya. The government granted the cooperative an Agroforestry Land Management Agreement (ALMA) to develop the area, to protect the area from squatters, and to conserve the watershed. Credit facilities were also granted by government and micro-economic activity appears to be productive and functioning. The nearby Lower Magat Reservation (24,251 has) is learning from the Barobbob experience, and a new level of awareness has been raised among the people to develop the relatively barren area after receiving ALMAs.

But as some problems of balancing economic and environmental concerns were addressed, others remained unanswered or other questions were

raised. In Imugan, though the community is well organized and managing their enterprises, decisions appear to be very centralized which raises questions on leadership in the future. The Barobbob watershed as in the larger Lower Magat Watershed, tenurial rights were secured but as admitted by the LGU, more work was needed in terms of rehabilitation and programs on self-reliance and savings generation. The LGU may also look into subdividing Lower Magat into smaller

... the challenge is to balance the preservation and protection of the environment while ensuring the viability of local autonomy ...

subdivisions to prevent the growth of large landlords.

The last place visited was the town of Besao in the Mountain Province. This was a remote municipality with both mossy and pine forest. The water resources are especially fully utilized for their rice terraces. Unfortunately, water is becoming scarce. Maybe the good integration of the traditional Kankanaey leadership structure with the existing political structure of the barangay and municipality can work to sort out these problems.

Insights for Impasugong

Overall, the land management agreement (ALMA) was one of my greatest learnings from the exchange visit. The ALMA is a

concrete example of how granting tenure to local people provides an incentive for them to conserve forest resources. In Bgy. Hagna in Impasugong, the Higaonon community is applying for a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT). The recognition of the ownership of these people over their lands is accompanied by a responsibility in protecting the resources within the domain. The role of the LGU would be to support both the ecological and economic projects of the Higaonon within the domain.

Our environmental policy framework appears to be moving in the direction of that of Nueva Vizcaya and Besao where participation from local stakeholders is the key to effective management. The multi-sectoral Task Force – *Cumadon* (indigenous) was established by the local government to integrate the watershed plan, *barangay* development plan and ancestral domain management plan in Hagna. TF Cumadon works to harmonize the various strategy documents.

This experience in Northern Luzon has paved the way for a more in depth study on the municipality of Impasugong. It has also validated our own strategies. However with the present challenge Impasugong is facing, considering its rich diverse ecosystem, further experiences must also be explored. It is now up to the leaders, NGOs, POs and all sectors of society to have one unified mechanism to preserve and conserve the remaining resource base of the municipality without hampering the already booming economy of the place.

nbtta



◀ Faisal from Java asks about the tenurial instruments that have been given to the residents of the Lower Magat Watershed.

▶ Sylvia Micalat of ESSC gives a brief orientation on the ancestral domain of the Kankanaey of Besao, Mountain Province



The Tale of the “Not-So-Bitter” Gourd

BY MARIA CRISTINA S. GUERRERO, NTFP-TF

“Nakakabili na kami ng pangangailangan sa bahay.”
 (“We are able to purchase our needs for the home.”)

That was Armando Rios’ answer when I asked him what benefits he derived from their association’s herbal gardens venture in the small village of Bagong bayan,¹ Roxas, Palawan.

Sure enough, when Manong Mando as he is affectionately called, brought us to his humble abode, he showed us the new door and dining set that he had made with the

proceeds from growing and selling *ampalaya*. *Ampalaya* (*Momordica charantia*) more commonly known as the “bitter gourd,” is sold commercially for its medicinal use in regulating blood sugar. From his earnings from his half hectare *ampalaya* garden, he has also been able to purchase a generator, a prized asset in a small village 185 kilometers from the capital city and one that is not targeted for electrification in the near future.

Manong Mando is the president of the *Samahan ng Magsasaka sa Bagong bayan* (SMB), the local village farmer association. From a handful of farmers, the associations is now 50 farmer members strong with each farmer planting ¼- ½ hectares. Before the herbal medicine project, farmers in Bagong bayan were just working on their rice fields. For one hectare of rice paddy, they would earn PHP18,000 for a harvest of 60 cavans of *palay* (unshelled rice grain) per hectare. From herbal plants, farmers were earning PHP

¹ Bagong bayan is a village of 174 families living on the fringe of the northern Palawan mountain range.



25,000-33,000 per ½ ha per cropping in addition to original earnings from *palay*. Manong Mando was currently on his second cropping when we went to visit him. He said his first cropping yielded 220 kilos of dried *ampalaya* at a sale price of PHP 300/ kilo. His total proceeds from the sale were PHP 66,000 with earnings of almost 50% over costs!

The herbal gardens of Bagong bayan was an idea shared by the Palawan Center for Appropriate Rural Technology (PCART), an NGO that has been an SMB partner in rural development since 1997. PCART had suggested the venture last year as an additional source of income for the farmers of Bagong bayan and as an alternative to destructive or heavily extractive forest-based livelihoods or chemical intensive agro-industries. The herbal medicine ventures are all natural and farmer members “investigate” each other through group monitoring mechanisms to ensure the absence of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers in their products.

PCART has helped establish a village drier with SMB. Manong Mando and

Bob Dioso, PCART, herbal project coordinator, showed me the simple village drying facility. PCART had loaned the association funds to build the facility. According to projections, the loan will be paid over five years through incremental deductions from sales of farmer members. The drying facility is a 72 sq m building built on land donated by the association members. The drying process is simple enough. Members deliver

ampalaya leaves and stems to the facility where they are washed and spoiled/damaged portions are removed. They are then dried in layers inside an oven (almost like how pizzas are cooked!). They are dried by batches so as to distinguish a farmer’s delivery from the next. The dried leaves and stems are then placed in plastic bags, labeled and stored, ready for pickup.

These are then taken to PCART’s herbal processing plant in the outskirts of Puerto Princesa City where they are further dried, milled, powdered, weighed, and packed. PCART receives 200-300 kilos of herbal products from eight associations/facilities across the province. They are producing 1.5-1.9 tons of herbal medicines in powdered form which are sold to companies in Manila making medicine tablets, capsules or as tea. Apart from helping farmers earn more, PCART also sees

² Currently 80% of all of BIOFARM’s business is derived from the sales of *ampalaya*.

³ Leaves and fruits of *ampalaya* are proven by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) to be rich in Vitamins A, B, C, iron, calcium, and phosphorus.

this as an income generating project that could help towards reducing their dependency on international donor agencies. PCART has since established a business concern, BIOFARM, to manage the herbal medicine enterprise. Recently, BIOFARM was chosen by the Center for Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI –Netherlands) along with four other Philippine companies to prepare them and their products for entrance in the European market.

The herbal medicine industry is not one absent of problems, however. Dioso and Laurence Padilla, director of PCART, have admitted that the delay in the release of Philippine medical proof of the effectiveness of *ampalaya* has affected their growth in sales.² The Department of Health is beleaguered by lack of funds to complete the tests supporting the commonly accepted claims that *ampalaya* helps the body in removing excess sugar.³ Such medical tests have been conducted in Thailand and other countries thus it is only a matter of time till these official tests are released in the Philippines and the industry and sales can reflect growth once again. Last year PCART delivered more than four tons of combined herbal medicines but they had orders of more than eight tons reflecting the existing and growing demand for these products.

PCART, BioFarm, Manong Mando and the SMB farmers are continuing to encourage farmers to plant *ampalaya*, *lagundi* (*Vitex Negundo*) and other herbal plants. They have experienced first hand the benefits that can be drawn from herbal medicine gardens both economically (additional income) and environmentally (no introduction of chemicals is necessary, no forests are converted).

The supposedly “bitter gourd” has given the farmers of Bagong bayan “sweet” inspiration in their new livelihood source and business venture. When I asked the mild-mannered, yet visibly determined, Manong Mando what the next association project would be, he proudly shared, “Now we are going to build an ICE PLANT!” *nhta*

Support Philippine Fair Trade Support *Quality that Cares*

BY RENE GUARIN, UPLAND MARKETING FOUNDATION INC. (UMFI)

The true measure of quality is quality that goes beyond the product. It is quality that reflects more than just the value of the product; it carries the values of a people. It is quality that concerns itself not just with the consumers but also with the producers, the community and our environment. It is what we in Fair Trade would like to call as Quality that Cares.

Fair trade quality is quality that cares for the consumers. It provides products that do not only delight and satisfy, but also products that take interest in the well-being of the consumers. This means that products are not just of high craftsmanship, intricate designs or great tastes and exotic flavors but also that the materials and ingredients used do not put the users in any harm. Fair Trade promotes products that use natural ingredients or products that are organic. This may include rice grown without the use of chemicals and pesticides or fruit preserves picked fresh from the forests and processed without the use of synthetic additives. Fair trade believes that products must always be safe for use and be healthy to eat because it believes in quality that cares for the consumers.

Fair trade quality is quality that cares for the producers. Fair Trade quality ensures that products are produced in a fair working environment. It is a workplace that neither puts the workers at risk nor endangers the lives of those engaged in production. It is an environment that justly compensates the workers, providing not only fair wages but also benefits, and that allows for both personal and professional growth of its workforce. It is a place that provides equal opportunities and does not tolerate child labor. Fair Trade Quality ensures that

workers get an equitable share of the economic benefits from the products they make because fair trade believes in quality that cares for the producers.

Fair Trade Quality is Quality that cares for the community. Fair Trade quality creates products that support community development. These are items made by enterprises that are located in poor communities and whose income directly

contributes to community development. These are enterprises that provide financial support to community schools, subsidize basic health services, or simply serve as the only source of employment in the area.

Fair Trade Quality supports community-based enterprises because it stands for quality that cares for the community.

Fair Trade Quality is Quality that cares for the environment. It embraces products made by technology that neither pollutes nor endangers the environment. It supports enterprises that protect and conserve the natural resources. It harbors businesses that hold nature and its riches as its true capital and thus pursues concrete steps to protect and conserve these. This may be processing centers that help protect and conserve endangered species or simply, businesses that takes the issue of recycling seriously. Fair Trade Quality emanates from enterprises that operate in harmony with its environment because Fair Trade Quality believes in quality that cares for the environment.

In Celebrating World Fair Trade Day, we invite you to support Philippine Fair Trade because we think that you also believe that the one true quality is the Quality that Cares. *nhta*
Delivered at the World Fair Trade Day Celebration, 16 May 2003, The Manila Peninsula.



► continued from page 2

have better quality because we clean the rattan prior to weaving. We also have three kinds of weaving. First is criss-cross, then weave and the other is threading through.”

The new learnings can be summed up in three things related to production efficiency and product quality. First is the preparation and storage of materials. Second is the utilization and combination of different varieties of materials to create a new product or design. Lastly, there are ways to standardize the quality of a product. These include the use of molds, accurate measurement and the adoption of an assembly line.

On the other hand, it was evident that the products of Quezon have inherent strengths and qualities that puts them ahead of other larger companies’ products. In the field of marketing it is important to be aware of a product’s competitive edge over its competitors’.

For this alone the participants understand the relevance of this exposure trip. Inspired, they are encouraged to improve the quality of their products. Indeed, this trip has become instrumental in improving their creative skills and acquiring new ideas and technology. *nbta*



EDITORIAL BOARD

Maria Cristina S. Guerrero
Arlan M. Santos
Nola Andaya

CONTRIBUTORS:

Maria Theresa Brunia, BIND
Omai, Mangyan Mission
Myron Tortola, Impasugong, Bukidnon
Rene Guarin, UMFJ

CONTACT DETAILS:

Non-Timber Forest Products - Task Force
c/o Upland Marketing Foundation, Inc.
18 Marunong Street, Barangay Central
Diliman, Quezon City 1100, Philippines
TELEPHONE : 02 - 925 4772
TELEFAX : 02 - 434 3593
WEBSITE : <http://www.ntfp.org>

‘03 Gift Ideas

TEXT BY NOLA ANDAYA, NTFP-TF
PHOTOS BY JIMMY DOMINGO

It’s that time of the year again when you have to start hunting for gift ideas, personal and corporate.

If you’re looking for gifts that reflect not just your taste for quality but also your commitment to social responsibility, here are some suggestions to help you get the ho-ho-ho back to the ho-ho-hum of gift-giving.

Corporate Chic

Bring the chic into the corporate scene. And what can be more stylish than office materials in the natural colors of the *Tinalak*, traditional tribal patterns of the *Ramit*, the vibrant colors of the *Hinabol* or the natural elegance of the *buri*.



If function is your thing, this is the choice for you. These functional items, which include notepads, organizers, desk sets will be truly appreciated by the recipient. They come individually or if you’re feeling extravagant, we can put them together in a specially packaged set.

The collection makes use of crafts of indigenous communities, such as the *Mangyans* of Mindoro, *T’bolis* of Lake Sebu, and the *Higaonons* of Bukidnon, developing them into modern functional products. This ensures a steady demand for the crafts, which otherwise have a limited use, giving the communities an alternative source of livelihood and a chance to continue practicing their traditional crafts.

Food for thought

Still stumped for ideas? Why not try food? If you’re not sure what the recipient would like, this is the safest choice.

Nicely packaged organic rice, jams and spreads of exotic fruits, pure wild honey and hibiscus concentrate juice are some of the unconventional food ideas to choose from.

Your family, friends, colleagues will be pleasantly surprised that the selection comes from the rural communities of Negros, the *Kalahan* of Nueva Vizcaya, the *Pala’wan* and the *Mangyan* of Mindoro. It is interesting to note that these products come from deliberate resource management systems designed by these local communities.

Basket Case

So you might already have the perfect gift. But where to put it in?! Remember, the gift is just as good as its packaging. *Buri* bayongs, pandan and traditional textile boxes, *Mangyan* rattan baskets or the traditional tribal basket of the *Pala’wan*, Tingkop, may just give that gift of yours the “oomph” it needs for a lasting good impression and to complete the whole package.

You still have to organize that conference before you get into the holiday spirit? Call us, we might just have the token or conference kit you need. *nbta*

For your conference materials and giveaway requirements, contact Nola Andaya of Non-Timber Forest Products – Task Force, nola_andaya@yahoo.com, Telefax 434-3593, Mobile # 0916-7639833.

