

**Press Release
Department of Labor and Employment
Bureau of Working Conditions
29 May 2018**

DOLE SOWING SEEDS OF OSH FOR OUR FARMERS

As the season for harvest is almost over, the Fertilizer and Pesticides Authority (FPA) and the DOLE partnered for increasing Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Awareness for our country's farmers. This comes at the most opportune time before the planting season starts.

The FPA in its 41st year of uninterrupted service to the country recently made an outreach program to Brgy. Plaridel, Lipa City Batangas on 28 May 2018. True to this year's theme FPA@41 Kaagapay ng Magsasaka Tungo sa Maunlad na Kinabukasan, the organization organized a program that benefitted the estimated 500 farmers and their family not only with goods but more importantly on OSH awareness.

The DOLE-Bureau of Working Conditions thru Dr. Marco Antonio S. Valeros rendered a lecture on the Importance of OSH Awareness to Farmers. According to the International Labor Organization, agriculture is one of the most dangerous industries globally. Potential causes of death or injury included the range of heavy machinery used in agriculture, inhaled dust and mold, suffocation, and toxic herbicides and pesticides.

"OSH is inclusive and knows no boundaries" was his first statement that sets the tone for discussion. Dr. Valeros emphasized the primordial role of the two agencies in ensuring a safe and healthful working environment for the farmers.

Latest employment data estimated that close to 40% of the country's workforce are into agriculture. The organization contributes to 20% of the country's Gross domestic product (GDP). However, it is a known fact that the industry also has the greatest share in workplace injuries and illnesses.

Some of the hazards that were identified are pesticides and fertilizers, tractors, farm animals, fire, heat exhaustion, nematodes as well as rats and snakes. Knowing these hazards is nothing if there is no preventive efforts on the part of the farmers. Thus, Dr. Valeros highlighted the different levels of control measures.

The DOLE looks forward to continue its partnership with FPA, not just in training but more so in policy and program implementation. Despite the challenges of times brought about by the many changes in the world of work in agriculture, the DOLE is looking forward in its active partnership with FPA in addressing this challenging task of – preventing injury, ill health, and death to those at work and for those affected by work. It is hoped that this partnership will yield a bountiful harvest of safe and healthy workforce in agriculture industry.

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