

## ‘Juan’ advice to those who ‘Juana’ succeed in the dairy business: Perseverance + teamwork should do the trick

By Mary Antonette Andarza



**“Dedication and patience are key to starting a dairy business. Carabao production is not ‘easy money’. We worked hard to get to where we are now.”**

**Dionisio Capillo**  
Carapreneur

*“Waay guid ko nakapaminsar nga untatan ang pagsagod sang karabaw bisan ano kabudlay kag kalawig sang hulaton mo antis ikaw makaginansiya. Du karon nga may walo dun kami ka karabaw kag nabatyagan na namon ang masulhay nga pangabuhi. Kung akon madumduman, mayad lang nga nagpadayon kami bisan budlay lab-uton ang amon mga handom [I never had thoughts about giving up on taking care of our carabaos despite all the difficulties and the long wait until we earn an income. Now that we have eight carabaos in our care, we are starting to reap the fruits of our labor. Looking back, I am glad we didn’t give up when everything was hard and our dream seemed unreachable],” Dionisio Capillo averred.*

Interviews are not new for Dionisio and Wilma Capillo. This humble couple has played a model role to fellow farmers because of their undeniable commitment in making their dairy carabao venture an evident success. Their secret is no secret: teamwork.

Outside their dairy enterprise, Dionisio works as a bank collector. But before his official work hour even begins in the day, his daily grind starts in the farm at dawn. His routine includes feeding, bathing, and milking the carabaos with his son Joel, 26.

What was most challenging at first to the couple was when they had to cut and carry grasses to feed the carabaos. But with the help of DA-PCC at West Visayas State University’s (DA-PCC at WVSU) training on feeds and feeding management, the Capillos have acquired skills on silage production

and growing their own feed resource.

As they progressed in the venture, both Dionisio and Wilma agree that taking care of the carabaos should not be burdensome given the right technologies and training.

The joy that the couple feel about this venture is also because of the fact that each has their respective roles in the business. While Dionisio takes care of the production aspect, Wilma takes on the crucial responsibility of diligent data recording and monitoring. The daily status on milk production and animal health are monitored. Treatments that are administered to the animals such as A.I., pregnancy diagnosis, uterine flushing, and California Mastitis Test are also consistently kept in the records.

She also tracks the calving date, the

## Once hard-luck in love, OFW finds good luck in newfound happiness

By Leinefe Libres-Aton



**An overseas worker for nine years, Elisa Florenosos, 46, of Poblacion, San Miguel, Bohol finds her true love in dairying.**

Elisa's challenging journey as a woman in love was ill-fated as she experienced not only one but three failed relationships. One of which brought her to Korea only to be left alone all feeling betrayed.

While trying to move on, she brought herself to a tough grind to survive in a foreign land. Working from one company to another was not just for her own survival but to be able to send money to her family back home in the Philippines. To her, tending to her family's needs was her priority while mending her broken heart only came second. She even took the extra hard work to invest for her family to have a livestock and rice production business and a good amount for lending.

In 2009, she had to come home to attend to her mother's funeral. While

still grieving for the loss of her mother, Elisa went through a long series of unfortunate events.

Then in 2012, Elisa didn't know that her life was about to go a fateful turnaround. A dairy technician convinced her to attend a seminar on the national carabao development program. In high hopes that this could be the enterprise that will bring her luck, Elisa gave it a try and immediately, she got interested about the topic.

Her journey in the dairy business started with one native carabao, owned by her father, that was initially being taken care of by her brother. She recalled that her first milking session gave her half a liter a day translated to a monthly sales of Php1,500. She shares this income with her brother for tending the animal. In their second month of milking, their income increased to Php2,500. This sale steadily increased in the succeeding months up to an

**"A person who strives hard will succeed. Look at me, I am a woman but I can succeed."**

**Elisa Florenosos**  
Carapreneur

earning of Php5,000 every month.

She was already getting enthusiastic about this newfound venture but it seemed the series of life's challenges is far from ending. Her brother got hospitalized for acute ulcer. Bills needed to be settled so she had to sell their milking carabao. However, her sacrifice to save her brother's life has gone futile as he still died.

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start of milking, and the body condition of the milking cows.

"I ensure that our milking area is clean before we start milking. The volume of milk that we produce daily is recorded for us to know how much milk we are producing each day, how much we will earn, and when our milking cows are expected to dry off," Wilma explained in Hiligaynon.

With eight carabaos, Wilma shared they developed a knack for identifying which one is which among the carabos in their herd.

"We assign unique names to each of our carabaos for us to easily identify them. One is named 'Valentina' because she was born on Valentine's day and another is named after our daughter Joy because every earning from that carabao are for Joy's school expenses," she added.

The Capillos engaged in carapreneurship in 2010. The couple shared they went through highs and lows in the business but they see it as their saving grace when it comes to financing their children's education.

"Our dairy business has helped us finance our children's education. We are proud to say that we were able to send them to school without incurring any debts. The carabaos were enough to sustain us. That's what I tell my children--that they should not be ashamed of our source of livelihood. Wherever you are now, our carabaos have a significant part in your success," Wilma shared.

Wilma said they were, in fact, able to finance the renovation of their house which they later on dubbed as "Katas ng Gatas ng Kalabaw."

With the help of their son, Jun Kwollen, who currently works as a seafarer, the renovation of their house and improvement of their farm slowly became a dream come true. When asked about their future plans, Dionisio plans to expand their dairy business given an ideal area.

His advice to those who plan to start a dairy business such as theirs: "Dedication and patience are key to starting a dairy business. Carabao production is not 'easy money'. We worked hard to get to where we are now."

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Upon learning of Elisa's story and dedication to improve her livelihood despite tending just one carabao, the DA-PCC at Ubay Stock Farm (DA-PCC at USF) awarded her with one Murrah buffalo in 2013. She also tends animals in her neighborhood under a "paiwi" scheme for additional income. She even went as far as replacing her cattle with a carabao to add to the number of her milking carabaos.

To date, Elisa has two milking carabaos, which give her an average income of P8,0000 per month, and three calves. With this money, she is able to sustain her family's daily needs, and finance for her house repair and home improvement

Elisa's testimony of perseverance lends meaning to her life's purpose as she positively influences her community. She is often asked to share her story in a crowd of farmers during gatherings. She was at first hesitant because of her speech impairment but she knew that her life's story could bless others and encourage them to charge on even when painfully challenged.

With her talks, she was, in fact, able to inspire five more farmers in their town to engage in dairying.

As a woman, Elisa believes that her weakness is also her strength and that being a male or a female has nothing to do with success.

Elisa is now happily settled with dairying. Together with her current partner, they aim to increase their milking animals to at least five, and improve their animal shed and milking parlor with the money that they are earning from the business.

As the DA-PCC at USF's recognized #OneDArfulJuana for 2020 for her resilience despite everything that she's been through, Elisa proves that a pure heart can never be truly shattered. It will only continue to grow even stronger until it has found to beat again for its ultimate purpose.