

✓ New Agricultural Policy

✚ Introduction - Agricultural Policy

1.1 Arunachal Pradesh is slowly developing its economy with the objective of improving the quality of life of its people. The task ahead are up hill, the resources available are plenty but the ways and means to achieve the objective through gainful utilization of the resources are not well defined.

Technology has been relegated to the back resulting in stagnation of growth. However, the state has gained much over the years, it is now necessary to consolidate the gains in order to make it sustainable and add new dimension during the coming years, so as to increase household income generation.



1.2 Keeping all these factors in mind and the the need for achieving higher economic growth and creating job opportunities for the rural unemployed through Agriculture and allied sector, it is necessary for the state to have a well defined policy. The policy should govern the entire gamut of Agriculture scenario of the state. Towards that goal, the new State Policy on Agriculture has to deal with the multifaceted problems and devise ways & means to redress them.

1.3 The major constraints are low level of productivity, capital inadequacy, lack of infrastructural support, unfavourable terrain, high cost of production along with demand side constraints. The non availability of basic preservation, storage and processing facilities, low value addition and unfavourable price of Agricultural commodities are severely affecting as a whole which directly encourages migration from rural areas to urban centers.

✚ The Policy Objectives

2.1 Top priority to be accorded on increasing farmers income.

The new policy would accord top priority to increasing the incomes of farmer's. This is necessary in view of the topographic disadvantages, communication bottleneck that hinders other income generating activities.



The Policy, therefore, emphasizes all income generating activities like Cash crop, Floriculture, Fruit culture, Fish and Pig rearing, Agro-processing and so on along with all other activities that are considered necessary for the purpose.

2.2 Addressing problems related to Shifting Cultivation

Special emphasis to be given on shifting cultivation, ensuring better land management, introducing improved cultivation in slop land through Agro-forestry, Horticulture and encouraging other household activities. The programme is to be designed in such a way that there would be simultaneous thrust in weaning the Jhum farmers towards better cultivation.

In this regard observations of S.P. Shukla Commission Report on "Transforming the Northeast" (march 1997) pertaining to Jhum Farming is worth noting :

"Hill farming in the Northeast is largely under Jhum though there are some excellent terraces in certain states and expanding patches of wet rice cultivation. Jhum farming is becoming less productive with a shrinking Jhum cycle and has caused erosion and forest regression in certain areas. Not all Jhumias resettlement schemes have worked well; nor can jhuming be ended all at one. The problem needs to be tackled sensitively as Jhum cultivation is also a way of life."

" The ICAR has evolved a three-tier hill farming package combining forestry, Horticulture or tree farming and terraced cultivation as one moves down the hills. Jhum improvement is advocated by others and can be carried further through appropriate R&D. Nagaland has pioneered an excellent method of upgrading Jhum by interposing a strong and increasing component of agro-forestry through assisted tree planting of selected fast growing economic timber, the menu being a producer of meticulous exercise in bio-diversity mapping, documentation and breeding of plant material for Widespread propagation".

2.3 Location specific strategy development.

Efforts would be made to formulate an area specific differentiated strategy taking into account the agronomic, climatic, socio-economic practices as well as the resource worthiness of the farmer. Special emphasis will be made for introducing the newly developed H.Y.V. seeds, improved planting material, adoption of new technology and mechanized farming.

2.4 Convergence of allied activities.

There would be a shift from the commodity approach to system approach in Agriculture. All the land based activities like that of Agriculture, Sericulture, Live Stocks, Fish rearing etc. would be given a new dimension and synergetic functional assignment. The ultimate objective is to create conditions which would help the farming community to maximize incomes. The policy will aim at avoiding duplication of programmes/works by different functionaries, as far a possible. Towards that end, there will be regular monitoring and evaluation of all schemes implemented by Agriculture and allied Departments through appropriate mechanism.

2.5 Technology Transfer.

Importance will be accorded to identify new location specific and economically viable improved species of Agriculture, Horticulture, Livestock and Fish etc. Accordingly motivational aspect of Agriculture Extension would receive due attention. The entire extension system will be revitalized. Innovative and decentralized institutional change will be introduced to make extension system responsible and accountable. Development of human resources through capacity building and skill upgradation of Extension functionaries will receive due attention.

2.6. Supply of Inputs.

Adequate and timely supply of inputs such as seed, fertilizer, pesticides, Agri-tools and implements, credit at reasonable rate to farmers will be provided by the Govt. and other institutions, subject to availability of resources and funds. Greater emphasis will be given to increase the consumption of such inputs for achieving the targeted increase per unit area productivity. As far as possible use of organic manure/compost will be encouraged to avoid ill effects of inorganic fertilizers.

Soil health card, quality testing of inputs like fertilizer, chemicals etc, will be introduced and supply of spurious inputs will be checked.

On farm management of water, increasing the area under irrigation through the use of surface water and sub-surface water will receive added attention.

2.7 Facilitate private investment in Agriculture.

Efforts would be made to create conditions that encourages participation of the private enterprises in the establishment of Agro-based industries. . An incentive package and guideline would be finalized ensuring participation of private sector & financial institutions in the Agricultural sector as a whole NABARD will have to play a major role in channelising investment. To meet local credit needs of farmers, Rural Credit Banks are to be set up.



2.8 Peoples participation :

The new policy would encourage formation of "Self Help Group" , village committees at different levels . The village committee would be vested with the task of maintaining and managing the assets created so far like irrigation channel, terraces market shed etc.

2.9 Research and Technology package:

Location specific Agricultural research, based on identified agro-climatic zone will be accorded foremost importance.

Development of need based technology package for achieving higher productivity would constitute the thrust area of the new policy.

Effort will be made to build a well organized efficient and result oriented agricultural research & Education system for introducing technological changes in the Agricultural sector.

2.10 Marketing infrastructure:

Emphasis will be laid on development of marketing infrastructure and techniques of preservation, storage, and transportation etc. with a view to reduce the post harvest losses and ensuring a better return to the grower . Direct marketing and procurement by a notified State level procurement agency, as and when required with storage facilities of different items will be made available to the production areas. Upgradation and dissemination of market intelligence will receive particular attention. Efforts will be made to strengthen the market infrastructure.

2.11. Agro - processing :

Setting up of Agro - processing units in production areas will be given due priority. To reduce post harvest wastage, effort would be made to add values specially to agricultural and horticultural produce by setting up small processing units. The small farmers Agricultural business consortium (SFAC) will be activated to cater to the need of farmer entrepreneurs. Tea will be brought under Agriculture sector, but for processing it may be under industries Sector.

2.12 Price Support :

Market intervention scheme involving procurement through a notified agency will be implemented for selected Agricultural / Horticultural Crops so that farmers are assured of remunerative prices.

2.13 Use of information Technology:

The database for Agricultural sector will be strengthened to ensure greater reliability of estimates and forecasting which will help in the process of planning and policy making.

2.14 Flood & drought Management :

It Will be the endeavour of the Govt. to devise a mechanism by which the floods and droughts affecting the agricultural production could be tackled. Provisions under national crop insurance scheme would be reviewed facilitating its introduction in the State. Subject to availability of funds. In foot hill areas, water pumping system to be provided to exploit ground water.

Further, contingency agriculture planning would be encouraged along with the use of drought and flood resistant crop variety in the affected areas.

2.15 Cost of implementation of New Agricultural Policy:

The state will have to bear the additional cost of implementation of the New Agricultural policy/Programmes and the annual plan allocation of funds to Agriculture and allied sectors will have to be increased correspondingly.