

# **Policy for Agriculture and Rural Development**

## **Recommendations**

IFFCO Foundation organized a Brainstorming Session on “**Policy for Agriculture and Rural Development**” in New Delhi on 26.4.2014. Eminent Experts and Agriculture Scientists participated in the Session. After a great deal of deliberations, the following recommendations were immersed.

### **Science and Technology**

1. Strengthen Agricultural research and technology development
2. Introduction of new science and technology including biotechnology in agriculture sector

### **Small and Marginal Farmers**

3. Improving small farm productivity must be the most important single development strategy
4. Launch special programmes for small and marginal farmers

### **Fertilizer Sector and Soil Rejuvenation**

5. Announce a policy to encourage indigenous fertilizer production through fiscal and financial incentives and policy support and preferential treatment in allocation of raw material
6. Rationalize and target fertilizer subsidy to achieve balanced use of fertilizers
7. Soil testing and advisories for nutrient application as per soil test values is the most important part of soil management
8. Latest technologies like remote sensing and GIS should be used to generate soil nutrient content data region wise. Soil nutrient mapping for entire area of the country and Geo-reference to generate site-specific fertilizer recommendation should be developed
9. Supply of different fertilizers to a cluster of villages should be based on soil test values of that cluster. Promote region based and crop based customized fertilizer use based on soil test values

10. For improving soil health, Integrated Plant Nutrient System (IPNS) should be promoted on a large scale; legumes in cropping systems and incorporation of their residue, development of technologies for composting, crop residue-in-situ composting and use of bio-fertilizers should be a part of IPNS as a whole
11. IFFCO Model of Soil Rejuvenation and Sustainable Agriculture should be adopted by other fertilizer industries and should be spread from length to breadth of the country

### **Mechanization**

12. Lucrative schemes need to be launched to encourage mechanization in agriculture sector

### **Seed Sector**

13. Ensure quality seeds at affordable prices to small and marginal farmers

### **Water Sector**

14. Irrigation and electricity availability for agriculture require immediate attention
15. Programme like Integrated Watershed may be expanded in rainfed areas

### **Livestock and Fisheries**

16. Slowdown in livestock sector where huge unexploited potential exists should be arrested and small farm estates for livestock, poultry and aquaculture should be created
17. Integrated crop-livestock-fish farming systems should be promoted
18. Introduce Integrated Coastal Zone Management and scientific fish rearing, harvesting and processing, including introducing Mother Ships and develop suitable dynamic policies and governance, particularly for the management of Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) extending to nearly 2 million sq km of sea surface, which amounts to two-thirds of the land surface available to India
19. Establish Training and Capacity Building Fish Centres for comprehensive training of the capture/culture-consumption chain, quality, hygienic handling and biosecurity to enable fisher families to take up additional income earning activities

## **Risk Management**

20. A major scheme to cover the comprehensively risk of the farms and agricultural needs to be introduced urgently
21. Innovative products for livestock insurance should be accessible to small holders and land less labourers

## **Climate Change**

22. Research on genetic improvement, promotion of resource conservation technology and diversification would help the small holders to adapt and cope up the effect of Climate Change

## **Human Resource Development**

23. Vocation training centres should be established by SAUs and ICAR Institutes
24. Diploma courses in farming systems should be institutionalized by SAUs particularly for extension, cooperatives and Panchayat Raj Personnels
25. Need based Certificate Courses on IPM, INM, Seed Production and distribution etc. should be introduced in all the SAUs

## **Social Reform**

26. A major programme has to be introduced for women in agriculture and their empowerment
27. Reform Institutions like Agriculture Produce Markets created in agriculture and allied sector to protect the interest of farmers

## **Farmers Organization**

28. Introduce major fiscal and financial incentive to promote the Farmer Producer Organizations like cooperatives, SHGs and Farmer's Producer Companies

## **Skill Development**

29. Launch a major programme for skilling of farmers who would like to exit from farming

## **Market and Infrastructure**

30. A major policy reforms both relating to legal framework as well as major investment in marketing, infrastructure like market, warehousing, storage, coldstorage, cold chains etc. is required
31. Augment the physical and economic connectivity of farm to market and post-harvest operations
32. Incentives for export of Agriculture commodities

## **Food Processing and value addition**

33. Augment the scale of agriculture processing to ensure remunerative prices to the producers, employment generation and prosperity

## **Extension**

34. Knowledge-based and market led diversification and extension should be promoted by institutionalizing Gyan Chaupal Movement and developing every village a knowledge centre

## **Rural Development**

35. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has to be modified with thrust on works on permanent assets which create employment. Skill development of the rural people including small and marginal farmers should become a major part of programme so that capacity is built for wage and self employment with higher wages and in vocations of their choice
36. The programme like Aajeevika will have to be modified to cover weakness of market facility
37. Rural housing, drinking water sanitation and power supply should be taken up with both quantitative and qualitative basis
38. Introduce a food cum fortification approach for eliminating iron, iodine, zinc and Vitamin A deficiencies and accord priority to overcoming chronic and hidden hunger in pregnant women and in children in the 0-2 age group
39. Pay particular attention to safe drinking water, primary health care and nutrition education

## **Governance**

40. The process for launching new schemes has to be simplified and delays curtailed
41. One of the most important steps to be taken by Govt. should be to perform what has been promised within a stipulated time frame
42. The change for improving governance and fight against corruption has to start from the top
43. More efforts will be needed to bring on board State Govts on legal reforms and encouragement to the private sector FDI in Agriculture sector and other policy measures like treating the whole country as one market for free flow of agriculture commodities