

AGRICULTURAL MARKETING

The Secretary (DAC) in her opening remarks deliberated upon various issues related to enhancing the productivity, proper input management, etc. and linking the farmers with markets for better price realization of their produce. She said that Ministry has taken a new initiative on development of terminal markets to provide State of the Art facilities at one place by linking these markets in hub and spoke model so as to facilitate farmers for competitive marketing. At present, the infrastructural facilities available in the wholesale markets are poor and do not meet the requirements of changed emerging global markets. The EFC has been cleared and a note is being prepared for approval of the Cabinet. She desired that States should roll out the scheme as it requires ventures capital support. The State should facilitate private/cooperative sectors to set up such markets. The State/UTs may also come out with investment proposals in Agri-business projects under SFAC Venture Capital Scheme for the benefit of farmers and other entrepreneurs at strategic locations in their State. .

While deliberating upon the progress of reforms carried out by the States on the lines of Model Act circulated by the Ministry, she said that more than 18 states have amended their APMC Acts but except Andhra Pradesh no other state has framed the Rules. She desired that necessary Rules/Bylaws may be framed early with proper provisions so as to facilitate private sector for making investments in development of required marketing infrastructure.

Dr. Mangla Rai, DG, ICAR said that unless increase in profitability is assured to the farmers, it is difficult to enhance the productivity. It is, therefore, necessary that forward and backward linkages may be made with the farmers by linking village Panchayats by way of distribution of high yield seeds, processing, value addition, etc. so that farmers are inclined to manage the crop with assured technology and input for enhancing the productivity and their net returns.

The Joint Secretary (Marketing) made a detailed presentation on development of terminal markets which would provide better State of the Art marketing facilities in the country. He emphasized that weak market infrastructure lead to post harvest losses accounting to 25-30 per cent in perishable products. The concept of terminal market will play a catalytic role in transformation of Indian agriculture through professionally managed market infrastructure with hub and spoke format and protect avoidable losses. The Government is proposing to set up such markets at important centers in the country for which support from States/UTs are required to facilitate private sector for entering into such ventures including State Governments themselves.

The market information is necessary for educating the farmers in taking proper marketing decisions. The Ministry has launched Agmarknet portal linking important markets in the country. It was desired that states /UTs may ensure the dissemination of market data regularly at Agmarknet and up keep the market nodes to strengthen the system for the benefit of farmers and other stake holders.

The Ministry has launched a Central Sector Scheme for Development/ Strengthening of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure, Grading and Standardization which is reform linked. So far 18 States/ UTs have been notified for implementation of the scheme where amendments to APMC Act have been carried out by the States/UTs. The Operational Guidelines of the Scheme has been modified . The States /UTs can now send their state proposals for strengthening and modernization of existing agricultural Markets, wholesale, rural periodic or in tribal areas. The State Agricultural Marketing Boards/ Committee or other state agencies will be free to decide as to the quantum of loan or invest their own funds in lieu of loan as per their requirement. All the States are requested to get the projects prepared and modernize their markets.
