

CIRCULAR

Sub:- Annual Plan 2018-19 Agro Service Centre and Service Delivery –
Strengthening of Existing Agro Service Centres – Administrative
sanction accorded – Working instructions issued- reg.

Ref:- 1. G.O (Rt) No: 1555/AD dtd TVM 25.08.14
2.G.O (Rt)No. 818/2017 /AGRI Dt. Thiruvananthapuram 24/8/2017
3.G.O (Rt)No.39/ SPD 2017 / Dt. Thiruvananthapuram 6/7/2017
4 .Order No: TP(2) 7465/18 Dt. 28/04/2018 of Director of Agriculture

As per the reference cited 2. above, administrative sanction has been accorded for the scheme “Agro Service Centres and Service Delivery” during 2017-18 .

As per reference cited 4 th continuous Administrative Sanction has been accorded for the scheme “**Agro Service Centres and Service Delivery**” with a provision of totalRs. 2471.705 lakhs under the H/A 2401-00-113-83 and 4401-00-113-98 plan; for the year 2018- 19. One of the component of the scheme is **Strengthening of existing Agroservice centres**for which an amount of **Rs. 475 .00 lakhs** lakhs is set apart under Ha/c 2401-00-113-83.

An amount of Rs. 200 lakhs is provided for Training, biopharmacy, three wheelers, nursery, operational support etc. and Rs. 275 lakhs is provided for the purchase of need based machineries a local level.

Agroservice Centres, established during 12th Five Year Plan period have been catering to the needs of the farmer to a great extent. At **present 79 such centres are functioning in Kerala under the Department of Agriculture.**

Initially, they have been supplied with different kinds of agricultural machinery and provided with trained manpower. These centres are working under the guidance of the Management Committee and High Power committee constituted with Department officials and People’s representatives. Many of these single-window service delivery centres have further been strengthened during successive years for achieving the targeted goals of mechanization, ATMA-based extension, ensuring availability of inputs, credit support, weather-based services, soil testing facilitation and other technical services, by providing additional financial support. It is proposed to strengthen other existing agroservice centres also in a similar way during the current financial year so as to equip them for effective service delivery.

Objectives

1. To make available all kinds of machinery as per local requirement to farmers.
2. To make available all kinds of inputs, soil testing facilitation, weather-related information to farmers.
3. To upgrade agro service centres as a centres of training and learning to farmers.
4. To ensure social security of members of agroservice centres.
5. To provide transport facility for machineries.
6. To broaden the service area of agroservice centres.

Programme

1. Purchase of need-based machines at the local level. (Rs.275 .00 lakhs)

A set of machinery needed for agricultural operations have been supplied to Agro Service Centres (ASC) in the initial year. But these are only in limited numbers, which will not meet the requirements ; once these centres start catering to a wider section of farming community. Hence equipments further needed for each block will be assessed and supplied.

Assistance upto a maximum amount of Rs. 20 lakhs will be provided to the Agro Service Centres for purchase of machinery.

Machines required for Agricultural activities will be purchased under this component. Blocks/Area having more area of Paddy cultivation will be given preference in allotting the funds for purchase of machineries like combine harvesters, transplanters, straw balers etc. The machienes can be purchased from **KAMCO, KAICO and RAIDCO** as per G.O cited as refrence 3 or from other institutions observing store purchase rules .

ADAs of Agroservice centres in discussion with high power committee will assess the requirement of Agricultural machieneries and send request to PD ATMA. PD ATMA issue purchase sanction to AExe Agri. AExe(Agri) purchase the machienery as per the Government orders /observing store purchase rules and issue the machienery to ADA/ASC. The hire charge can be fixed as per existing rules by the High Power Committee concerned. An amount of Rs.275.00 lakhs is sanctioned for the purchase of need based machineries for Agro Service Centres.

2. **Training, Biopharmacy, Three wheelers, nurseries, soil testing facilitation, operational support etc (Rs. 200.00 lakhs)**

a. **Training**

Manpower appointed at the existing Agro Service Centres require refresher training every year to equip them to handle the functioning of the centre smoothly. Topics like handling, repair and maintenance of machinery, fertilizer schedule for various crops, soil sampling, diagnosis and suggesting remedies for pest and disease problems, safe handling of plant-protection chemicals, plant propagation and nursery techniques, efficient service delivery to farmers etc. may be included. Such refresher trainings shall be conducted by ADAs at the block level.

One /two of the technicians (working group) will be selected and training shall be given and driving licence shall be obtained for driving the vehicle where 3 /4 wheelers are purchased.

Suitable training programme for the secretary/ facilitator may also be arranged District ATMA in association with RATTC/FTC. Training to facilitator can be given at district level ; with the support of Training centres at the District / AExe (Agri)/ ARS, Mannuthy. Maximum amount that can be utilised for the training will be **Rs 15,000** per Agro service centres.

b. **Biopharmacy**

Inputs, whether chemical or organic, is a crucial factor in agricultural production. Availability of good quality material, at the required time and with technical support regarding their usage, is lacking to some extent at present. The problem is more evident in the case of new-generation pesticides. If these concerns are taken care of at a single point through Agro Service Centres, it will be a great boon to the farming community and will go a long way in improving scientific farming activities. For achieving this, necessary Certificate of registration ('Licence') may be issued to Agro Service Centres in favour of Secretary/Facilitator in their official capacity, for retail stocking and selling of fertilizers, organic manures and pesticides, especially organic and bio pesticides, provided they apply for the same following the standard procedures.

The stocking point shall be attached to Agro Service Centre. The items to be stocked should be assessed based on local suitability and requirements, which may be done by the Management Committee. Preference should be given to organic products which will help in promoting Organic farming activities. An amount of Rs.1.00 lakh is proposed per Agro Service Centre for purchase of inputs, weighing balance, registers and other accessories.

b. Purchase of Three Wheelers

Facility for transporting implements and machinery from Agro Service Centre to the farmers' field, from there to the next field and finally back to the Centre is an important factor in timely delivery of service to farmers. Vehicles have been provided to some of the existing centres at present. However, others are forced to hire vehicles which causes undue delay and also payment of hire charges at exorbitant rates. This causes reduced demand from farmers on one side and financial loss to the Centre on the other side. Heavy machinery such as Power tiller, Rotavator, Trailer and long equipments like Brush Cutter need separate vehicle for transportation.

Hence each Agro Service Centre needs a three wheeler / 4 wheeler capable of transporting heavy and bigger-sized equipments. **A maximum amount of Rs.3.00 lakhs per Agro Service Centre will be provided for this purpose to those centres which have not received this support earlier.**

Facilitators will be responsible for maintenance of log book and proper use and maintenance of vehicle. One of the technicians (working group) will be selected, training given & driving licence obtained for driving the vehicle. Recurring expenses like fuel, insurance, maintenance etc will be met from the income of ASC.

c. Establishment of Nurseries

Good quality planting materials holds foremost importance in crop production. Government agencies in the agricultural sector are unable to meet the farmers demand for this component at present. Hence private parties exploit this situation by supplying inferior quality materials, that too at higher prices. If supply of good quality planting materials as per local requirements can be ensured at the planting season by Agro Service Centres, it will help tremendously in improving agricultural production.

Nursery will be started in a suitable location close to the Agro Service Centre. The selection of the area will be done by the Management Committee. The area if needed, may be leased for a minimum period of 5 years. Plant propagation may be done only if the nursery area is owned by the Department as otherwise raising of root stocks in leased land cannot be maintained. Otherwise the nursery may function as a stocking point of seeds and planting materials produced at the Department farms and by KAU and other research stations which will be sold through this outlet.

Selected members of the Agro Service Centre can be given separate training in plant propagation and nursery management techniques. The price will be fixed by the High Power committee by including a margin of profit to the Centre. This will help the farmers to meet their planting material requirements at the local level. Technical advice regarding sowing/planting and their upkeep can also be provided through such centres.

Under Vegetable Development Programme, grow bags with seeds/seedlings is distributed to farmers at subsidized rates. These are supplied by Government/Private agencies at present. This work can be entrusted to Agro Service Centres as per the target allotted to the KrishiBhavans of the block area. The members can prepare such growbags and distribute them to the farmers as per price fixed by High power Committee. This will be a good source of income to the centre. **For purchase of planting materials and creating required facilities like irrigation, setting up of a green house etc. an amount of Rs.2.00 lakhs per Agro Service Centre is sanctioned , as per the requirement .**

d. Soil testing facilitation

Soil testing is gaining importance among farmers due to high cost of inputs, deficiency symptoms noticed in crops due to soil nutrient imbalance, priority given to organic cultivation methods etc. As of now, Department of Agriculture has one district soil testing lab (DSTL) in each district and nine mobile soil testing labs in the State. The samples collected at krishi bhavan level is brought to DSTL, analysed and report given to the party directly or through the concerned Krishi Bhavans. This procedure of sample collection and distribution of results can be done at agroservice centre level. Farmers of the nearby locality can bring samples to agroservice centres which will send them to lab on a weekly basis. Samples collected at the krishi bhavan level can also be pooled at the centre. Results can be sent to the lab which can be distributed to the concerned farmers. This will help in more interaction between farmers and the centre and will help in speedy analysis and issue of test results. Technical details like recommended fertilizer dosage in the result sheet can be explained directly to farmers.

No expenditure is envisaged for this component.

f. Operational support

Operational support will be given for the **first year** for the existing Agro Service Centres for hiring skilled labour or appointing staff to the Centre, for meeting hiring charges etc.

The payment for Office Secretary @ Rs.12000/- p.m., can be considered limited to the first year only to hand hold the unit to become self-sustaining to meet this payment component from their own income. Also the working group members of newly established centres shall be paid a fixed monthly stipend of Rs.1000/- apart from the remuneration earned through business activities of the centre. This will avoid drop-outs among the members. **15-25 number of working group members are selected in agroservice centres established in 2017-18.** The workers may also be paid a yearly **uniform allowance of Rs.1000/-** similar to those paid to mechanics and drivers of the Department. An amount of **Rs.50.00 lakhs** set apart for this purpose.

Details of Operational support

sl. no.	Item	Amount(in lakhs)
1	Payment to facilitator @ Rs. 12000/month for 12 months	1.44
2	Stipend to working group member 1000/month for 25 members for 12 months	3.00
3	Uniform allowance Rs. 1000//year for members	2.5
	Total	6.99

e. Additional Support to Model Agro Service Centres

The Agro Service Centres which perform their activities ideally by benefitting the farming community and create a model for others will be provided additional support for creating additional infrastructure including building, machinery and manpower based on their requirement. Selection of the model centre will be through a selection process ; based on the funds recived by the centre from various Government agencies , quantum of work attended by the centre , quantum of the works outside the scheme works of department of Agriculture and Local self Governments ; extend of fallow land (wet land and garden land) brought under cultivation , stability of working group members and facilitator etc. An amount of **Rs.25.00 lakhs** is set

apart for this purpose.

An abstract of the programme is furnished below.

Sl. No.	Components	Amount (Rs. in lakhs)
1	Purchase of need-based machinery at local level	275.00
2	Training, Biopharmacy, Three wheelers, nursery, soil testing facilitation, operational support etc.	200.00
	Total	475 .00

An amount of **Rs.475 .00 lakhs** is set apart for this purpose.

Implementation

At the district level, the scheme will be implemented by Project Director, ATMA in coordination with the Assistant Executive Engineer (Agri) under the overall supervision of Principal Agricultural Officer.

Assistant Directors in blocks having Agro service centres will assess the requirement of Training, Biopharmacy, Three wheelers, nursery, operational support etc. of each ASC and submit detailed request to PD ATMA. The centrewise request will be scrutinised by **Deputy PD ATMA and DDA (E&T)** at district level under the guidance of PD, ATMA; According to the Performance appraisal of all existing agroservice centres; previous records, funds issued and utilised by the ASC during previous years, Project Director (ATMA) will submit Agroservice centrewise detailed requirement of funds for Strengthening of Existing Agro Service Centre to Additional Director of Agriculture (Extension) before **30/6/2018**.

Monitoring

Monitoring of the scheme at state level will be done by Additional Director of Agriculture (Extension). At the district level, the scheme will be monitored by Project Director, ATMA in coordination with the Assistant Executive Engineer (Agri) under the overall supervision of Principal Agricultural Officer. The scheme will be implemented by **Deputy PD ATMA and DDA (E&T)** at district level under the guidance of PD, ATMA. Monthly review and inspection of ASC will be conducted and report submitted to higher authorities as follows.

Agricultural Officer – monthly
ADA - bimonthly
PD ATMA - quarterly


**Sd/
Director of Agriculture**

To:

All Principal Agricultural Officers,
All Project Directors , ATMA.
All Assistant directors of Agriculture.
All Agricultural Officers, Krishibhavans .

copy to

CA to the Director of Agriculture
CA to all Additional Director of Agriculture
CA to State Agricultural Engineer
CA to Joint Director of Agriculture (AR & T) at Headquarters/Senior Finance Officer
TP Section – for allotment of funds to district as per Annexure
Deputy Director of Agriculture, IT Cell – to publish in the website
TV/Fin Section/TG Sectio, Stock File/Spare


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