



GOVERNMENT OF KERALA

Abstract

Agriculture Department -Strengthening Agricultural Extension 2015-16-Social Media integration with Karshika Vivara Sanketham Project for the effective utilization of Information Communication Technology for Agricultural Extension Management in Kerala-Administrative Sanction accorded-Orders issued.

AGRICULTURE (PLANNING A) DEPARTMENT

G.O.(Rt) No.1864/15/AD

Dated, Thiruvananthapuram, 05/11/2015

Read:- 1) G.O(Rt) No. 1625/14/AD Dated 03/09/2014
2) Letter No. TP (2) 13774/2015 Dated 22/07/2015 and 16/09/2015-from Director of Agriculture, Thiruvananthapuram
3) Minutes of the Working Group meeting held on 01/08/2015 and 17/09/2015

ORDER

As per letter read as 2nd paper above, Director of Agriculture had forwarded a proposal for Social Media integration with Karshika Vivara Sanketham Project for the effective utilization of Information Communication Technology for Agricultural Extension Management in Kerala during 2015-16.

The main objectives are:-

To explore the potential opportunities of Social, Digital media, mobile and interactive web service platform and to integrate those platforms for the effective information dissemination and advisory service among the farming community in Kerala by using krishi.info portals a single window system for the convergence of all ICT Media tools like email, mobile phone, fax and social media channels like Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Whatsapp, SMS, MMS facility being developed as a part of Karshika Vivara Sanketham Project.

1. To promote Kerala based Social media groups for strengthening cyber extension and to enhance production, productivity and profitability of farming in Kerala by using krishi.info portal of "Karshika Vivara Sanketham" as a center point and integrating this to all other applications, web portals and social media channels. This will increase the reach of extension activities of the department through maximum networking at different tiers like State, District, Block and Krishi Bhavars.
2. Positive and proactive engagement with Social media for dissemination of modern scientific agricultural innovations to farmers and to bring maximum registered farmers to social media. In case of farmers who are not proficient in modern digital technologies and Social Media, Lead farmer from the group will be given incentive

to spread new technology to such farmers and interact with social and digital media platforms.

3. To attract, encourage and motivate NRIs, Ex-service men, youngsters, women and professionals to farming in Kerala and also self-help groups like Kudumbasree
4. To disseminate scheme information, support from agricultural department and assistance to group members for the development of agricultural sector in Kerala.
5. To encourage and motivate Social Media participants to provide agricultural support services to farmers by providing cash prizes to best social and digital media groups and apps
6. To provide Training and connect farmers to authentic sources of information regarding availability of quality inputs through social media participation to encourage more people to adopt scientific farming in Kerala.
7. To form a Digital Sena of experts consisting of "KarshikaVivaraSanketham" experts, Agricultural Department officials, Techno savvy Master Farmers , Experts , Agricultural Graduates and Postgraduates Students to Authentic information Farmer engagement
8. To bring all the Agriculture based online groups under the umbrella of the Web Portal "Krishi.info" and mobile apps for farmers and department officials being developed for "KarshikaVivaraSanketham".
9. To encourage agricultural department officials to participate in social media by providing cash prizes.
10. To train agricultural Department officials in using social and digital media for enhancing the effectiveness of extension and dissemination of information and discuss about trending topics in the field of Agriculture.
11. To develop a social and digital media policy for Agricultural Department in compliance with the guidelines of Government of India.
12. To get real time response and feedback of schemes from farmers for effectively planning, implementation and monitoring of schemes resulting in seamless farmer experience.
13. To identify and popularize farmer level effective innovations and good agricultural practices.
14. To continuously improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery of Agricultural Department with farmer focus by constantly engaging with farmers, consumers, agricultural experts, input dealers, students and all stakeholders of Agricultural Development in Kerala and to solve issues and complaints related to service delivery by integrating with "KarshikaVivaraSanketham" web portal, mobile apps and other portals and applications developed for Agriculture Department by IITMK, NIC and KAU.
15. To help farmers to adopt the best agricultural technologies available by constant interaction with NRI farmers and international experts in this field and promote

crowd sourcing more funding and technology from all over the world to local farming community and groups with the participation of field level officers.

16. The proposed convergence platform will function to promote the organic agricultural policy of the state by supporting Good Agricultural Practices, Organic Farming, Safe to Eat produces, Ecological Engineering and Urban Agriculture.
17. To link existing e-governance tools like farmer registration and Direct Benefit Transfer data to the krishi.info portal to provide a single window system to get all information at a single point.

Social media usage in Agriculture: The four key areas of value are:

- Networking (Farmer-Farmer)

Networking (Farmer-Farmer) via social media can reduce social isolation for farmers and enable farmers & agribusinesses to meet and network with other farmers, agribusinesses and consumers domestically and globally. The tremendous power of these emerging technologies enable interaction directly with people of influence and provide farmers with a wealth of knowledge and ideas from a range of authentic sources.

- Technical Knowledge, Extension & Marketing (Farmer-Agricultural Department-Scientists)

New technology based social media platforms are emerging as fundamental game changer in the agricultural extension landscape of Kerala. More than 750 million people around the globe are on social networking sites. In social media tremendous amount of attention from millions of people and it can be used as an effective tool for spreading modern scientific agricultural practices. Agricultural Department has to partner with all the stakeholders to further support this sector in strategically helping farming and Agri business with how to best use social media for transforming Kerala's Agricultural Sector. This Social web helps in connecting with customers, hearing their stories, their ideas, farming methods -reopening the dialogue with customers.

- Engagement (Farmer-Agri. Business-Industry - Consumer)

Consumers aren't just learning about food production at local farmers' markets; many are using social media to educate themselves and start family farming and kitchen gardens and terrace gardens. Today, most farmers use the Internet through cell phones, smart phones, and perhaps even electronic tablets or notebooks. But when it comes to social media, many traditional farmers still lag behind. That may mean they are missing great opportunities to interact with and educate the public, not to mention promote their farms and their products. This project is also intended to bring traditional farmers to social media through their friends/relatives who are using digital media.

- Crisis communication (Department-Farmers)

In times of emergency this social media network can be effectively used to communicate critical information to farmers.

Potential Social Digital Media Platforms used by the Farming Community In Kerala

i. FACEBOOK

Facebook is enjoying the first position among the social media platform. There are several Facebook groups actively working on the domain of Agriculture. Their groups have made significant impact on the information sharing and knowledge dissemination. Some of the krishibhavadans have become the very active on the usage of Facebook and it has created a high impact among the farming community.

ii. YouTube : A social media video sharing platform

YouTube is a video-sharing portal where users can upload and view videos. The users do not need an account to view videos, only to post your own. The value of using YouTube is that viewers with no knowledge of Agriculture can find the videos and be directed back to relevant websites. As part of KISSAN Kerala Project, IIITM-K has designed and launched a dedicated YouTube video channel in Agriculture. (www.youtube.com/kissankerala). This channel has been launched as part of research collaboration between IIITM-K and Google India. Google has extended their technical help in launching this branded agricultural video channel for Kerala. The relevant videos produced under KissanKrishideepam are categorized and being uploaded into the online video channel. Presently more than 300 videos are made available and hosted on the channel and the project aims to make it a dedicated channel with more video contents. The telecasted contents of the krishideepam were made available through this channel. It provides a video on demand service for the farmers.

iii. Mobile based Agri-advisory services(m-KisaanMobile Service Delivery Platform)

Mobile or smart phones are becoming an essential device for all types of users irrespective of the age group. The customized and location specific, local language enabled content enables farmers to avert losses, improve yields and increase information relating to various agricultural practices.

iv. Mobile App – the dynamic mobile based services

Mobile Apps are set of software applications, which have been developed exclusively for mobile users. Mobile Apps are the potential strategic direction for the implementation of mobile based services.

v. Digital Media

Today the influence of digital media and Internet has crossed all the barriers of rural-urban biases and is becoming the most powerful tool in decision making and information sharing in all the sectors including farming. The Main digital media are Visual Media, KissanKrishideepam, Audio Podcast, Service Interactive portals and web based services, Blog, Twitter, LinkedIn, Whatsapp, Farm Radio Services and Pinterest.

Major Recommendations and Action Points:-

To conceptualize and launch a centralized social media platform (Facebook, Twitter Blog, LinkedIn, Whatsapp for Department of Agriculture through krishi.info portal to network and seed the contents from other social media platform. The centralized platform provides information and services which are more appealing and credible to the farming community and will help all those interested to access such information and services. The portal will act as a one stop point for all the needs of the farmer and the social media interactions alike. More over such a centralized platform help to filter, supplement and manage the content according to the policies of the Department of Agriculture and Government.

To promote and encourage the farming community to use various online services created by Department of Agriculture. Due to the high rate of literacy and access to internet and mobile penetration, more and more people are using web services for fetching information and services at their own privacy and convenience. The mobile apps has opened infinite opportunities to reach people, send messages, interact with them and provide services in simple, customized and effective way. The availability of agricultural technology and services in such a platform will surely motivate a large group of farmers to use such online services. In case of farmers who are not proficient in modern digital technologies and social media, Lead farmer from the group is given incentive to spread new technology to such farmers and interact with social and digital media platform.

To encourage the officers for the production and distribution of location specific, Agro ecological zone specific Digital Media contents and share the same among the farmers using mobile applications being developed by NIC for kisan.gov.in and other portals and apps developed for Agriculture Department. Due to the digital format revolution and availability of good quality digital cameras even in mobile phones, most of the agricultural field problems are already addressed and documented somewhere in the state.

To establish the extensive usage of mobile platform (m-kisaan) service by the officers upto the Block level. The existing system of m-kisaan message gateway can be integrated to the proposed portal for providing text based services to registered farmers using mobiles and popularize use by department officials up to block Level. To establish a team of officers to monitor and manage the social media interaction in the Department in a centralized way with "Karshika Vivara Sanketham". This will help to moderate the discussions in social media in a meaningful way which conforms to the technical needs and interest of the farming community. Such a team of officials are necessary to properly manage and channelize the enormous data generated by these interactions. This is also necessary to answer the questions and provide service solutions to the farming community without much delay. To mobilize and develop panchayath wise farmer database for the promotion of social media platforms with kisan.gov.in farmer registration portal and its Android applications being developed by NIC.

An exclusive social media policy document for Department may be developed. To provide guidelines for the development of content and use of social media for the dissemination of technologies, messages and provide services. A detailed social media policy document to be prepared by conducting a state Level seminar with all stakeholders and experts. District level officers/PD ATMA may create district level facebook pages/blogs. These pages/ blogs can be linked to the proposed portal. The district can use this page/blog for a variety of activities.

Necessary capacity building program for the usage of social media platforms may be conducted through SAMETI, NIC, ATMA call center, RATTC and IITM-K. Conducting state level / District level workshop for department staff to create awareness, develop skills for Development use and maintenance of social media tools for effective service delivery and information dissemination and man power development. This is also necessary for knowledge up gradation to adapt to the changes in technologies.

A reward system for the field level officers may be instituted, for managing the effective usage of social media system in their Krishibhavans. By providing and reimbursing funds for using data plans/ connectivity to encourage and motivate the Department officials and Lead farmers/ Group Admins to effectively use the social media and promote their creativity in a better way for the development of Agricultural sector in Kerala, awards for Best Social Media Groups/ Apps promoting Agriculture in Kerala, awards for best Department Officials using Social and Digital Media for Agricultural Extension.

An effective monitoring mechanism for social media usage with the help of "KarshikaVivaraSanketham" experts and Department officials. This monitoring will help to see that the portal and its social media links are working as expected and to initiate corrective measures in case of non-conformities from the official policy of the Department of Agriculture, Kerala.

Action Items /Deliverables

Sl. No	Action	Agency Responsible
1	Creation and management of centralized Facebook profile/page, Twitter, LinkedIn, an official blog and Whatsapp for Department of Agriculture with filtered content administration facility integrated to krishi.info portal	Directorate of Agriculture, IT Division, "KarshikaVivaraSanketham"
2	Integration and network building of Facebook pages of State/District/Block and Krishibhavan with krishi.info portal Integration and network building of Agriculture related Social and Digital Media groups with convergence facility to centralized portal of "KarshikaVivaraSanketham"	Directorate of Agriculture, IT Division, "KarshikaVivaraSanketham"
3	Use of krishi.info portal and re-design of Department website with necessary integration of Social media and VFPC Vipanies, KarshikaKarmasena and Agro Service Centres for supply of inputs, labour and farm machinery	Directorate of Agriculture, IT Division, "KarshikaVivaraSanketham"
4	Development of Social media enabled Integrated Mobile App for Department of Agriculture	IITM-K under Kissan Kerala Project
5	Creation of Digital Media Contents - Short videos, full	ATMA Call centre,

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	length videos, subject specific videos, audio materials and integration with Social media platforms like YouTube and Facebook of the Department	KAU, NIC IIITM-K will continue to develop under Kissan Kerala Project
6	"KarshikaVivaraSanketham" management and advisory services	SFAC
7	Management of state level Mobile based information delivery through m-kisaan platform – PUSH and PULL and voice based services (Voice clippings can be recorded at IIITM-K)	DOA IT Division SFAC
8	Capacity building and technical skill development program for managing social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Blog, LinkedIn, Whatsapp etc	SAMETI, RATTC, FTC, NEILIT
9	Integration and cross linking / seeding of other portal based services and web based services with krishi.info portal and Department website.	SFAC "KarshikaVivaraSanketham"
10	Formation of State level monitoring team	"KarshikaVivaraSanketham", IT Division, NIC, KAU, IIITMK

The KarshikaVivaraSanketham- Project of the Department of Agriculture is envisaged to develop a single window system for the convergence of ICT media tools such as phone calls, mobile phones, e-mail, fax and social media like Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, LinkedIn, Pinterest, WhatsApp, SMS, MMS etc. Under this project an amount of rupees five crores is set apart for application software, infrastructure development, operational and other expenses.

Knowledge management system is implemented in a crowd sourced content generation platform. So that it can be updated by any person who has the knowledge. This way people can run the platform. The ultimate aim of the project is to develop a "One stop information Hub" for the integration of ICT tools for providing information and services to the farming community. To achieve this, following development components are proposed:-

- Development of Applications to receive / fetch data from social media and integration, creating Blog, FAQ etc. and related software.
- Hardware including server, computers and accessories for the use of social and digital media and ICT tools.
- Human Resource to manage social media profile and monitor activation in FB, and responding to farmers' queries inclusive of Management of KarshikaVivaraSanketham.
- Utilizing service of Expert panel for providing proper and most suitable answer for the queries received through social/digital and other traditional media including various referral stations.
- Infrastructure development for KarshikaVivaraSanketham for optimum use of modern digital technologies and suitable ambience for increased efficiency and effectiveness.

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- Operational expenses such as Internet charges, Phones, Networking, maintenance of equipment etc
 - Training and Publicity expenses for KarshikaVivaraSanketham for enhancing the knowledge, skill and attitude of all stakeholders.

Applications development proposed under "KarshikaVivaraSanketham"

- Call Centre Knowledge Management System and CRM Software
- Integrated Agriculture Portal krishi.info
- Android Mobile App for Official Use
- Android Mobile App for Farmers in Malayalam

Applications being developed by Other Agencies

- Farmer Registration Android app by NIC
- Farm Extension Manager by KVK Malappuram of KAU
- Mobile Apps of IITMK.

Financial Outlay

I. Development of an Agriculture Web Portal (*krishi.info*) for the convergence of various social media including Facebook:

Operational Expenses earmarked for Integration with KarshikaVivaraSanketham (Agricultural Information Hub)	
Development of Applications to receive / fetch data from social media and integration, creating Blog, FAQ etc. and related softwares	
Hardware including server, computers and accessories	
Human Resource to manage social media profile and monitor activation in FB, and responding to farmers' queries inclusive of Management of KarshikaVivaraSanketham	
Utilizing service of Expert panel for providing proper and most suitable answer for the queries received through social/digital and other traditional media including various referral stations.	
Infrastructure for KarshikaVivaraSanketham	
Operational expenses such as Internet charges, phones, maintenance of equipment etc	
Training and Publicity expenses for KarshikaVivaraSanketham	
Total Amount	

(As per Government Order 1st cited sanction has been accorded for an amount of Rs.5 Crore to the SFAC and included in the project "KarshikaVivaraSanketham-Oru Viral Thumpil")

II. Incentives to best Social Media in Agriculture in Kerala including Agriculture related Mobile Apps.

SL.No	Prize	Amount
1	1 st Prize	₹25,000/-
2	2 nd Prize	₹15,000/-
3	3 rd Prize	₹10,000/-
Total		₹50,000/-

(Prize money can be only used for promoting agricultural activities and extension: Conducting seminars, providing inputs, publishing e-zines and promoting group and marketing of products etc)

III. Incentives for offices of Agriculture Department for using social media for extension.

SL.No	Prize	Amount (Rs)
1	1 st Prize	₹25,000/-
2	2 nd Prize	₹15,000/-
3	3 rd Prize	₹10,000/-
Total		₹50,000/-

Operational Expenses

SL No	Component	Numbers	Amount (Rs)
1	Promoting use of Social Media among Department Officials. Providing Rs 5000/- each for data plan, design, documentation, e-zines etc to 25 offices of Agricultural Department	25	₹1,25,000/-
2	Support to Lead Farmer /Master Farmers of Padasekharasamithi /Kerasamrakshana Samithi /Kurumulakuvikasanasamithi/Vegetable Development Clusters etc proficient in the use of social or digital media for sharing Good Agricultural Practices and Success Stories with other Farmers of the Group and for Krishi Bhavan. Incentive @ Rs 2500/- year for meeting data charges for internet use	1976 (Three Lead Farmer per KrishiBhavan and One for KrishiBhavan)	₹1,07,60,000/-
3	Support to Group Administrator from Social Media Group for sharing Good Agricultural Practices and Success Stories @ Rs 2500/- year for meeting data charges for internet use	50	₹1,25,000/-
4	IT Cell for design and distributing of standard templates for use by department offices and purchase of mobile based wifidatcard for continuous updating and interaction through social media and for other activities for effective interaction in Social and Digital Media.		₹50,000/-
5	Social media promotions to get more target group and publicity		₹7,00,000
Total			₹1,17,60,000/-

V. State Level Seminar and Exhibition on the use of Social Media for Agricultural Development -Rs 5 Lakhs is earmarked for this component.

SL No	Item	Numbers	Amount
1	State Level Seminar and Exhibition on the use of Social Media	1	₹5,00,000/-
Total			₹5,00,000/-

VI. Training for Department Staff across the organization to strengthen customer service innovation and input delivery for agricultural extension to meet challenges and use opportunities and adopt best practices for Agricultural Development.

SL No	Training	Numbers	Amount
1	Two day workshop for Digital Sena of officials @ of AgriDept @ Rs 75,000/- per training	2	₹1,50,000/-
2	District level one day training @ of Rs- 20,000 per training	14	₹2,80,000/-
Total			₹4,30,000/-

Abstract

SL No	Item	Amount
1	Implementation of KarshikaVivaraSanketham (Agricultural Information Hub)- Krishi.info	₹50000000/-
	Incentives to best Social Media in Agriculture in Kerala including Mobile Apps	₹50,000/-
3	Incentives for offices of Agriculture Department for using Social Media for Agricultural Extension	₹50,000/-
4	Operational Expenses	₹1,17,60,000/-
5	State Level Seminar and Exhibition on the use of Social Media for Agricultural Development	₹5,00,000/-

6	Training for Department Staff	₹4,30,000/-
	Grand Total	₹6,27,90,000/-
	Amount already available under the project Karshika Vivara Sanketham Oru Viral Thumbil ((G.O.(Rt(No. 1625/14/AD dtd.03/09/2014	₹ 50000000/-
	Balance Amount required	₹1,27,90,000/-

The Working Group meeting held on 17/09/2015, has approved the project proposal 'Social Media integration with Karshika Vivara Sanketham Project for the effective utilization of Information Communication Technology for Agricultural Extension Management in Kerala's subject to the following conditions:-

- At least 250 registered traditional farmers per panchayath should be bought under this scheme.
- A group/cluster per panchayath should be identified to give support to other progressive farmers on social media.
- As a first step target in 300 Panchayats in which there are A grade cluster/Active Agricultural Officers/Panchayaths having active Facebook Accounts.
- An operational guideline by involving ATMA, IITMK, Director of Agriculture, SAMETI etc should be prepared.

Having examined the proposal forwarded by Director of Agriculture and the recommendation of Working Group meeting held on 01/08/2015 and 17/09/2015, Government are pleased to accord Administrative Sanction for an amount of Rs.127.90 Lakhs (one crore twenty-seven lakhs and ninety thousand only) for the proposal 'Social Media integration with Karshika Vivara Sanketham Project for the effective utilization of Information Communication Technology for Agricultural Extension Management in Kerala' from the head of account 2401-00-109-80(p), subject to the condition specified in the para above.


The Director of Agriculture will draw and disburse the amount.

(By order of the Governor)
M. AYYAPPAN KURUKKAL
ADDITIONAL SECRETARY

To

The Director of Agriculture, Thiruvananthapuram.
The Accountant General (Audit / A&E), Thiruvananthapuram
The Secretary, Kerala Legislative Assembly (With C/L)
The Finance Department
The Planning and Economic Affairs (CPMU) Department
The District Treasury Officer, Thiruvananthapuram.
The Chief (Agri), State Planning Board, Pattom, Thiruvananthapuram
Agriculture (PB) Department (Vide Remark No. 6932/PB2/2015/AD)
S/F, O/C.

Forwarded By Order.


Section Officer.

Copy to :- The Private Secretary to Hon. Minister (Agri)/ The Personal Secretary to Agriculture Production Commissioner/ The Personal Secretary to Secretary (Agri)