

Directorate of Agriculture Development and Farmers' Welfare

Vikas Bhavan, Thiruvananthapuram – 695033

e-mail: cru.agridir@kerala.gov.in, Phone: 0471-2304481

No:ADFW/9411/2023-TM1

Date:04-09-2023

CIRCULAR

Sub:- Annual Plan 2023-24 - Scheme "Market Development" Components like Agmarknet & Market Intelligence", Karshakamitras", Establishment of New Ecoshops and Kerala Agro Branded Shops, Strengthening of Agricultural Whole sale Markets, Transportation subsidy for farmes - AWMs & DPC, - working instructions- issued.

Ref:- 1) G.O.(Rt)No.602/2023/AGRI Dated, 21-06-2023 of the Agriculture (WTO Cell) Department.

2). Circular No. ADFW/8448/2023-TM1 dated 13.08.2023 of this office

As per the ref.1 of this circular, the Government sanctioned a scheme for the financial year 2023-24 viz., Market Development under the Head of Account 2435-01-800-99 (P) with a total outlay of Rs. 1290.00 lakh. The objective of the programme is to address the issues related to price fluctuation, lack of efficient marketing system and post-harvest losses. Strengthening of existing market infrastructure, coordinating the functioning of markets at various levels in collection, transportation, storage and processing, strengthening of market intelligence and adoption of innovative technologies in agricultural marketing are the major focus areas.

The following instructions are issued with immediate effect for the implementation of the scheme components and compliance at all levels.

1. Strengthening of Agricultural Wholesale Markets

(a). The Agricultural Wholesale Markets of the State, are engaged in procurement of agriculture commodities, produced by the farmers of the State, and marketing it also through e-Nam - the electronic trading portal of the Govt. of India, directly to private traders and to HortiCorp. Six Agricultural Wholesale Markets (Urban & Rural) have been established in Kerala, by the State Government. These markets are functioning as per market rules framed by Govt. of Kerala.

(b) In order to sustain the activities of the six Wholesale markets of the Agriculture Development and Farmers' Welfare Department, so as to attract more farmers and augment the trade, the following components are approved to be undertaken utilizing the funds are sanctioned for market development;

- Establishment of primary processing facilities,
- Maintenance of the available cold storage facility,
- Upgradation of assaying units for effective e- marketing,

- Maintenance of market / auction halls, and
- Other inevitable repairs of market facilities viz; roads, fences, compound walls, drains, etc. within the market.

(c). The Secretaries of the Wholesale markets are directed to identify and finalize the works to be undertaken immediately in each market on priority basis and suitable proposal with detailed estimate shall be placed before the Principal Agricultural Officers for onward transmission to the undersigned for approval.

(d). On receipt of the detailed proposal as mentioned above the concerned PAOs shall evaluate the proposal by forming a Technical committee under his / her chairmanship, the ADA (M) as the Convenor, Assistant Executive Engineer (Agri), DDA (H), DDA (YP) and DDA (C) as technical members. The proposal shall be forwarded to the undersigned within a week positively with the remarks of the committee.

(e). In the case of District Procurement Centres, the ADA (M) shall prepare the proposal.

(f). Purchase of vehicles are not allowed under this component.

(g). An amount of Rs.90.00 lakh for AWMs and Rs.2.00 lakh for DPC is sanctioned for the purpose during year 2023-24.

(h). The fund shall be released based on the sanctioned proposal.

2. 'AGMRKNET' and Market Intelligence:

(a). Agricultural Marketing Information Network (AGMARKNET) was launched in March 2000 by the Union Ministry of Agriculture. The Directorate of Marketing and Inspection (DMI), under the Ministry, links around 7000 agricultural wholesale markets in India with the State Agricultural Marketing Boards and Directorates for effective information exchange. This e-governance portal AGMARKNET, implemented by National Informatics Centre (NIC), facilitates generation and transmission of prices, commodity arrival information from agricultural produce markets, and web-based dissemination to producers, consumers, traders, and policymakers transparently and quickly.

(b). The AGMARKNET website (<https://www.agmarknet.nic.in>) is a G2C e-governance portal that caters to the needs of various stakeholders such as farmers, industry, policymakers and academic institutions by providing agricultural marketing related information from a single window. The portal has helped to reach farmers who do not have sufficient resources to get adequate market information. It facilitates web-based information flow, of the daily arrivals and prices of commodities in the agricultural produce markets spread across the country.

(c). The data transmitted from all the markets are available on the AGMARKNET portal in 8 regional languages and English. It displays Commodity-wise, Variety-wise daily prices and arrivals information from all wholesale markets. Various types of reports can be

3/2023

viewed including trend reports for prices and arrivals for important commodities. Currently, about 1,800 markets are connected and work is in progress for another 700 markets. The AGMARKNET portal now has a database of about 300 commodities and 2,000 varieties.

(d). Regular updating of the real-time market information is to be carried out from the part of the State Government as a part of this AGMARKNET programme. At present 92 net nodes are functioning in the Department of which 85 are functioning in the districts at various places, 6 in wholesale markets of the State and one in the Directorate for collection and uploading data. The minimum price, maximum price, mode price and quantity arrived shall be collected and uploaded in the Agmarknet portal in a regular basis.

(e). For uploading the data at district level, the PAOs shall engage unemployed youth at a wage rate of Rs. 3500 per month.

(f). Data collection from EEC markets are to be done by the respective market staff without fail. Node linked with Chalai market of Thiruvananthapuram district shall be managed by the Statistical Assistant in the Marketing section of the Directorate.

(g). The data uploading shall be done with care and no lapse in this regard is allowed. If any requirement for computer peripherals, connectivity and such other conditions arise, they can also be met from the financial provision admissible under this scheme component in circumstances where such requirements can not be met from any other sources.

(h). An amount of Rs. 40.00 lakh is sanctioned for this scheme component of which Rs. 35.70 lakh is for the wages and Rs. 4.30 lakh is for the operational support as mentioned in instruction 2 (g) of this circular. The district wise allocation of funds for the financial year 2023-24 is as follows. The amount would be allotted based on the present Budgetary Ceiling of the Government. Care shall be taken at all levels that the expenditure shall be in accordance with the release of funds.

Sl. No.	PAO/ HQ/ AWM	Assistance for Data Collection		Connectivity / operational charges (Rs. lakh)	Total Amount (Rs. lakh)
		No of Net Nodes	Amount (Rs. lakh)		
1	Thiruvananthapuram	7	2.94	0.21	3.15
2	Kollam	6	2.52	0.18	2.70
3	Alappuzha	8	3.36	0.24	3.60
4	Pathanamthitta	5	2.10	0.15	2.25
5	Kottayam	8	3.36	0.24	3.60
6	Idukki	6	2.52	0.18	2.70
7	Ernakulam	6	2.52	0.18	2.70
8	Thrissur	7	2.94	0.21	3.15
9	Palakkad	6	2.52	0.18	2.70

10	Malappuram	6	2.52	0.18	2.70
11	Kozhikkode	6	2.52	0.18	2.70
12	Wayanad	3	1.26	0.09	1.35
13	Kannur	7	2.94	0.21	3.15
14	Kasargode	4	1.68	0.12	1.8
15	HQ (Directorate)	1	0.00	1.75	1.75
16	AWMs	6	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total		35.70	4.30	40.00

(i). The PAOs shall instruct all the Assistant Directors of Agriculture (M) at their HQ to monitor and verify the data uploaded by the net nodes under them. The Agricultural Officers / Assistant Director of Agriculture / Secretary AWM in charge of the respective Net Node shall assure that the data is uploaded with correctness and following the periodicity.

3. Operational Support to State Agricultural Prices Board (SAPB).

(a). The State Agricultural Prices Board (SAPB) was constituted as per G.O. (MS) 29/1994/AD dated: 04.02.1994. The Board is functioning as an autonomous body and recommends Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for major crops. Government vide G.O. (MS)No.298/1994/AD, dated 26.08.1994 have also sanctioned requisite supporting staff for the effective functioning of the Board. The Secretary of the Board (Additional Director of Agriculture) is the DDO of this institution.

(b). The roles and responsibilities of the State Agricultural Prices Board have been widened due to the new opportunities in the state's agricultural sector. The Board has initiated steps to streamline its activities in order to carry out various functions assigned to the Board with more studies, reports, cost estimates etc., to support various policy decisions of the Government.

(c). An amount of Rs. 100.00 lakh is sanctioned for SAPB. The amount shall be transferred to SAPB with suitable MOUs in this regard.

4. Operational support to WTO cell

(a). An amount of Rs. 5.00 lakh is sanctioned for WTO cell of the Secretariate for conducting seminars, capacity building programmes, publicity, infrastructure services and other related expenses.

(b). The amount shall be released to WTO Cell by suitable proceedings.

53/2023

5. Providing transportation subsidy for farmers

(a). From 2010 onwards, public auction of farmers' produce is carried out on in the Agricultural Wholesale Markets and the District Procurement Centres. Auction is conducted on fixed days which varied from market to market. Base Price of commodities for auction is determined based on the relative market price prevailing in the open markets on the auction day. Market fee is paid by farmers at the rate of 0.5% of the total value of the commodity traded through auction.

(b). To motivate and support the farmers to bring their produce to the wholesale markets for auction, transport subsidy shall be provided to them at the following rates based on the distance from the farmers' field to the auction centre in three rates as below;

Up to 25 km	-	Rs.1.50 per kg
26 - 50 km	-	Rs.2.00 per kg
above 50 km	-	Rs.2.50 per kg.

(c). An amount of Rs.50.00 lakhs is sanctioned for payment of transport subsidy to the Agricultural Wholesale Markets and to the District Procurement Centres during 2023-24. The amount would be released as per the requirement of the wholesale markets.

3.6 Support to farmers, Krishikoottams, FPOs, FIGs etc for on-boarding their products in the leading e-commerce online sale platforms under the brand name - KERALAGRO

Separate instructions were issued as per ref. 2 of this circular.

6. Establishment of 'KERALAGRO' branded shops.

(a). The Department has established numerous retail eco-shops and Farmer Retail Outlets for the trading of safe-to-eat products. But branding is vital for today's retailers. When each and every organization is contesting for recognition, it is challenging to compel the audience without a strong brand image. Thus, the State Government initiated steps to instil the brand – KERALGRO for the products traded from the Departmental institutions.

(b). It is sanctioned under this scheme for the establishment of 'KERALAGRO' branded shops all over Kerala at the rate of at least one in each district. An amount of Rs. 10.00 lakh per branded shop is sanctioned for this purpose.

(c). The branded shops can be opened by suitable FPOs, Krishikoottams, Farmer Organisations, NGOs and Primary Agricultural Co-Operative Societies. They shall submit a detailed project in this regard and the concerned PAOs shall evaluate it regarding the feasibility and availability of qualified products. The Keralagro branded products from Departmental Farms shall be brought in to these stores for sale. The Additional Director of Agriculture (Farms) and Additional Director (Marketing) shall immediately submit a

I/125163/2023

proposal to the undersigned regarding the price of such products and the admissible profit margin for the sellers. Apart from these products the qualified products of farmers, farmer groups, Krishikoottams, FPOs, FPCs etc., shall also be sourced and brought to sale on these shops.

(d). The KERALAGRO branded shops are primarily intended for the promotion of brand and it shall be arranged in a very professional attractive manner and the shop shall be compact. An amount of Rs. 0.50 lakh from the sanctioned amount of 10.00 lakh / shop can be used for this purpose.

(e). A total amount of Rs. 140.00 lakh is sanctioned for meeting the expenditure in this regard under this scheme component.

7. Establishment of new Ecoshops:

(a). For the purpose of implementation of the scheme, ecoshops are defined as the retail shops operated by FPOs, farmer collectives, FIGs like Krishikoottams, federated clusters, farmer clusters, resident's associations, PACs etc., dealing with sale of locally produced agricultural produces, inputs required for the production process, logistic support for the aggregation of produces etc.

(b). The Agricultural Officers / Agricultural Field Officers shall establish such shops in potential areas with suitable marketing strategies. They shall facilitate the interested agencies to establish such shops with adequate production as well as collection plan as per the local demands. They shall give wide publicity for the programme and interested agencies shall be selected based on the extent of farmers who can associate with them.

(c). A local level monitoring agency shall be set up by the field level officers for the smooth functioning of the 'ecoshops'. The AO / AFO shall be the chairperson of the committee. The AA / AAO in charge of the ward shall be the convener. The representative of the establishing agency, two farmer representatives of the locality as nominated by the AO/ AFO and the staff running the 'ecoshops' shall be the members. This committee shall meet at least once in a month to finalise the actions needed for the smooth running of the same.

(d). During 2023-24, 5 new ecoshops shall be established in the State and will be provided with Rs.2.00 lakh (Rupees two lakh only) as financial assistance for establishing each ecoshop. The amount shall be utilized for establishing infrastructure, logistic support for procurement of produces, working capital, etc. A portion of the fund may also be used as revolving fund for procurement activities of the ecoshops, so that the cost of the produces could be given to the farmers without delay. Rs.10.00 lakh is sanctioned for giving assistance to 5 new ecoshops.

3/2023

(e). It is strictly instructed that all farmer-markets of the districts shall be supported by the Assistant Directors (Marketing). They shall act as the technical officers for developing and managing these farmer markets. The ADA (M) shall verify the functioning of all the markets, ecoshops etc working in the district and give proper guidance for the smooth functioning of the same in co-operation with the concerned Block level Assistant Directors of Agriculture.

(f). Ecoshops shall be duly monitored by the Deputy Director of Agriculture (NWDPR) and the concerned PAOs shall ensure that the DDA (NWDPR) and ADA (M) are monitoring the functioning of all types markets supported and facilitated by the Department. The eco-shops would be allotted based on the requirement of the Districts.

8. Engaging Karshaka mitras in potential areas

(a). 'Karshaka Mitras' are regarded as farmers' friends who facilitate in collecting the information regarding availability of farm produces, procurement, marketing, etc. They will act as a link between the farmers, eco-shops/rural markets, DPC, e-trading team, Department and the end user in the chain.

(b). Karshaka mitras are to be engaged in potential krishibhavans, with the objective of efficient marketing of agricultural produce which involve households and homesteads in rural and urban areas, etc.. The activities of, the Karshakamitras shall be coordinated by the Assistant Director of Agriculture (Marketing) and Deputy Project Director (ATMA).

(c). Data on the expected quantity of fruits and vegetable available in near future shall be collected by the Karshakamitras, apart from collecting the details of the field problems like pest & diseases in his/ her tablet/ mobile phone and forward details to the pest scouts/ officials concerned. It targeted that, one Karshaka mitra shall contact 200-300 farmers in a month and transacts an average of 2000-4000 kg of farm produces per month, with an average monthly value of @ Rs.50,000/ - Rs.60,000/-.

(d). Farmer representatives designated as Karshakamitra shall be selected at district level. They should have working knowledge of agriculture, computer knowledge as well as self- initiative and pro activeness. He/ she shall be either a registered farmer (included under Karshaka registration) or a farmer's kin who has keen interest in the field and willing to take it up as a "self-employment " opportunity. Karshaka mitras should possess an android based phone for operating "Karshika Vivara Sanketham Oru Viral Thumpil" and other such portals / applications which are necessary for market data collection, sharing and uploading.

(e). Selected Karshaka mitras shall be engaged in marketing activities for 1 year (one year only) or up to 31st March 2024, whichever is earlier. The Assistant Directors of Agriculture (Marketing) of the districts will monitor, evaluate and report to the Principal

I/125163/2023

Agricultural Officers, the activities of each Karshaka mitras of the respective Districts in a quarterly manner.

(f). Service of the Karshaka mitras may be continued / extended for a further period of one more year based on their performance and availability of funds to meet their remuneration / incentive for the second year subject to approval of the undersigned. If the tenure / service of the Karshaka mitras need to be extended beyond one year or after 31st March 2024, the Principal Agricultural Officers of the district shall formally request the Director of Agriculture, one month prior to the cessation of the tenure of the Karshaka mitras, along with a detailed report on the performance and achievements of the Karshaka mitras.

(g) A total 109 nos of Karshakamitras, will be engaged in selected districts to assist the market activities during 2023-24. (109 persons x 11 months x Rs.5000 = Rs.59.95 lakh). Karshaka mitras shall be provided with remuneration / incentive @ 5000.00 only per month by the Principal Agricultural Officers of the districts. Procurement-based incentive is also admissible to them which is limited to 5% of the cost of fresh produce & 3% of the cost of processed products procured and supplied to various outlets, will be paid by the collection centers / outlets.

(h). An amount of Rs.59.95 lakh sanctioned to meet the remuneration of Karshaka mitras for all districts. An amount of Rs.0.05 lakh is sanctioned for meeting the operational expenses. The district wise target will be intimated in due course. The list of the districts would be intimated later.

9. Financial provisions of the scheme and management

(a). The details of the financial provisions with the components are provided in the following Table.

Sl. No.	Name of the components / sub components	Rate per unit (If any)	No. of units	Amount (Rs. lakh)
01	Strengthening of agricultural wholesale markets – 1. Infrastructural development & maintenance	Rs. 15.00 lakh / EEC market	6	90.00
	2. Infrastructural development & maintenance of District Procurment Centre including operational expenses	Rs. 2.00 lakh / unit	1	2.00
02	Agmarknet & Market Intelligence – 1. Assistance to data collection	Rs. 3500 / month	85	35.70
	2. Operational support for IT infrastructure			4.30
	State Agricultural Prices Board - Operational expenses covering salary and office			

16/3/2023

03	expenses, studies, report preparation, printing and stationary and other contingent charges			100.00
04	WTO Cell operational expenses - conducting seminars, capacity building programmes, publicity, infrastructure services etc.			5.00
05	Providing transportation subsidy for the farmers - to transport agricultural commodities to Wholesale market & DPC	Up to 25 km - Rs.1.50 / kg, 26 - 50 km - Rs.2.00 / kg, above 50 km- Rs.2.50 / kg.		50.00
06	Support to farmers, Krishikoottams, FPOs, FIGs etc for on-boarding their products in the leading e-commerce online sale platforms under the brand name - KERALAGRO			40.00
07	Establishment of KERALAGRO branded shops	Rs. 10.00 lakh / unit	14	140.00
08	Establishment of new eco-shops	Rs. 2.00 lakh / unit	5	10.00
09	1.Engaging Karshaka Mithras in potential Krishibhavans (11 months)	Rs. 5000 / person / month	109	59.95
	2. Operational expense of the HQ			0.05
	Que Bills at Treasury			3.19314
	Total			540.19314

(b). To meet the Que-Bills in the treasury an amount of Rs. 3.19314 is already sanctioned. The amount of administrative sanction obtained is Rs. 537.00 lakh excluding the amount for meeting the Que Bills.

(c). The scheme shall be monitored by the Additional Director of Agriculture (Marketing) at State level. The PAOs and PD (ATMA) are to monitor the scheme at the District level jointly.

(d). Store purchase rules are to be followed wherever necessary.

(e). Registration in the AIMS portal is mandatory for all beneficiaries.

(f). Do not park funds at any levels.

(g). The scheme shall be implemented as per the release of funds.

I/125163/2023

ANJU K S IAS
Director of Agriculture

- 1) All Additional Directors of Agriculture & SAE
- 2) All Principal Agricultural Officers & Project Directors, ATMA
- 3) All Secretaries of AWMs

Copy to: 1) Senior Finance Officer

- 2) All Technical Sections of the Directorate
- 3) Finance, Accounts and Audit Sections
- 4) TA to Director
- 5) Stock file / Spare

Signed by

Louis Mathew

Date: 05-09-2023 09:28:42