

Agro Climatic Zonal (ACZ) Conferences for Strategic Planning & Development of Agriculture & Allied Sectors under the chairmanship of Agriculture Commissioner through virtual mode (4th September, 2020)

Six days virtual programme organised by DAC, New Delhi on Agro Climatic Zonal (ACZ) Conferences for Strategic Planning & Development of Agriculture & Allied Sectors under the chairmanship of Agriculture Commissioner through virtual mode on 4th September, 2020 September, 2020. In this virtual programme DAC&FW/ State Officials - Smt. Namita Priyadarshie, Joint Secretary (Drought Management); Director: DMD Jaipur and DWD Ghaziabad; States: Secretary/Prin. Secretary (Agri.)/ or His Nominee, Govts. of Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, UTs of Chandigarh & NCT of Delhi also involved. From ICAR/ SAUs/ Organizations, DDG (NRM), ADG (Ext.), all ATARI Directors; Director - NBSS-LUP, Nagpur, CRIDA, Hyderabad; Vice- Chancellor of MPUA&T, Udaipur & SKRAU, Bikaner, PAU, Ludhiana, CCSHAU, Hisar took part.

On 4th of September, 2020, Director ICAR-ATARI, Kanpur Dr. Atar Singh presented strategic planning & development of agriculture & allied Sectors in respect of the Zone Upper Gangetic Plains Region, Middle Gangetic Plain Region, Lower Gangetic Plain Region (Uttar Pradesh).

Following points were covered in the presentation -

- ❖ Characteristics of upper gangateic plains
- ❖ Agril. Scenario of the zone
- ❖ Structure & performance of agriculture
- ❖ Distribution of districts across productivity classes and regions
- ❖ Distribution of districts in different regions according to agricultural productivity
- ❖ Crop preferences according to importance in different regions
- ❖ Productivity regions based on composite yield index
- ❖ Major problems affecting the productivity of agriculture
- ❖ Developmental and researchable issues
- ❖ Future road map
- ❖ Strategic planning

Looking into the agricultural scenario of Uttar Pradesh, he has focussed on **major problems affecting the productivity of agriculture** by keeping following points -

(a) Identified few research priorities

- Management of Sodic soils;
- Farm mechanization;
- Development of salt tolerant varieties of rice ;
- Development of heat tolerant varieties of wheat

(b) Potential Areas for Agro-processing

- **Sugar:** Remove all controls on levy, movement and stocking of sugar and molasses. Also, encourage scale economies and infrastructure costs.
- **Rice milling:** Remove all controls like levy, movement, and stocking by private trade.

- **Potato:** Vertical development is needed for processing. It calls for special R&D and cold storage facilities.
- **Fruits and vegetables:** It calls for better transportation and cold storage facilities. The need is to tie up with major distribution centres.
- **Milk products:** Strengthen linkages with 'Mother Dairy' and 'Parag'.

(c) Livestock Products Processing

- The state is home to numerous undernourished and unproductive animals.
- In the livestock sector, the state contributes about one-sixth of the total production in the country.
- However, livestock processing in the state is yet to develop.
- The state of UP contributes towards the major exporter of Buffalo meat followed by Goat and sheep meat although; it has no place in the export of poultry meat or pork.

He has rises following **developmental and researchable issues** –

- Sustaining biodiversity
- Sustaining genetic diversity
- Integrated water resource management
- Crop Diversification
- Enhancing per acre productivity
- Provision of MSP for potato and other produce
- Promotion of potato processing and other vegetables and fruits industry in the area
- Capacity building on post-harvest management
- Development of Farmer Producers' Organization/organizing the smallholder potato producers into groups
- Promotion of processing industry for medicinal and aromatic plants and oilseeds
- Promotion of organic farming
- Green House farming
- Promotion of Floriculture in the UGP
- Introduction of newer commercial crops/ exotic vegetables and fruits
- Promotion of commercial livestock farming, post-harvest processing and value addition in UGP
- Proper storage facilities for farm produce
- Packaging and transport
- Export of commodities

Following two important points such as future road map and strategic planning were also covered at the end of his presentation.

Future Road Map

- Farmers end seed production.
- Subsidies given to the farmers on the feeds/ fertilizer, pesticides/ machinery and implements be withdrawn, since these subsidies in one way provide benefit to the companies rather than the farmers. Instead of all of these subsidies, land based subsidies as per the size of the holding be introduced, which would provide direct benefits to the farmers.
- Wages of of labour decided as per the agro-climatic zones.
- Giving subsidy to farmers on various agricultural inputs, the procurement prices be hiked for the agricultural commodities for giving direct benefits to the farmers.

- The licensing procedure for setting up processing plants and for procurement of units be simplified.
- Easy availability of low interest loans for the women agro-processing sector.
- The farm yard manure can be subsidized
- Press mud in sugarcane processing be made available to the farmers at appropriate rates.
- MNREGA to be integrated with Agriculture to reduce labour problems
- There is no certified livestock breed company just like in agriculture. There is a need to promote such companies so that farmers have ease in procurement of good quality, certified animals for developing livestock farms.
- The low productivity of livestock Animal health cards in the line of soil health cards can be made to ensure the health status of livestock.

Strategic planning

- Water conservation measures to be enhanced and electricity availability to be ensured in the daytime for the agricultural operations.
- Costly agricultural implements like “Laser land leveller” to be given on subsidy to enhance the crop productivity.
- Assured marketing for enhancing crop diversification (fruits, medicinal plants, floriculture etc.) thereby enhancing the farmers income Need to adopt suitable and effective marketing strategy
- Sufficient quality seed availability for the farmers.
- Adoption of control strategy for wild life to reduce crop damage. Census for such wildlife population may be initiated.
- Soil health management through balanced nutrition of soil and soil health card
- Promotion of processing of agriculture produce.
- Quality assurance of bio fertilizers and their availability.

