

Minutes of the meeting held under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (NHM) on 23.8.2011 to review NHM scheme in West Bengal

Preliminary

A meeting was held on 23.8.2011 under the Chairmanship of Shri Sanjeev Chopra, Joint Secretary & Mission Director (NHM) to review the implementation of National Horticulture Mission (NHM) programme in the State of West Bengal. The meeting was attended by Dr. Gorakh Singh, Horticulture Commissioner, Shri Shailendra Kumar, Director (NHM), Dr. B.S. Negi, Deputy Commissioner (NHM) and the Chief Consultants of NHM from DAC. Dr. Piyush Pramanik, Director of Horticulture & Mission Director (SHM) West Bengal was present from the State.

Opening Remarks

At the outset, JS (NHM) stressed the need for the SHM to have a proper vision and road map for the development of horticulture in the State. SHM should project the contribution of horticulture in agriculture GDP of the State for pooling more resources for development of horticulture in the State. To achieve the desired results, State should have sufficient staff strength. Moreover, a cluster approach should be adopted for ensuring backward and forward linkages and convergence should be ensured with the programmes viz. RKVY, MNREGA, APEDA, MoFPI, etc. He suggested that the efforts needed to be made to develop farmer groups in the identified clusters. He stressed the need to accredit the existing nurseries in the State through NHB so that sourcing of planting material could be done only from such accredited nurseries.

Horticulture Commissioner made a thorough review with regard to the availability and supply of quality planting material of the of the focus crops identified for development in West Bengal, viz. mango, litchi, citrus, banana, pineapple, and floriculture. Review was also made regarding the progress under PHM and marketing component.

The Horticulture Commissioner stressed the need for providing high priority to supply of good quality planting material for which a thorough exercise will have to be taken by the Mission Director of SHM West Bengal to ascertain the requirement and availability of planting material for meeting the target for area expansion during 2011-12. The planting material should be sourced from reputed nurseries in the Government Sector. If sufficient planting material was not available, the area expansion programme should be reduced accordingly. He also stressed the need for promoting proper canopy management of fruit crops for deriving high yields.

State Presentation

Dr. P.K Pramanik, Director, SHM made a detailed presentation about the implementation of NHM programme in the State. He mentioned that during 2011-12, an area of 1350 ha was proposed to be covered under area expansion of mango. About 60% (810ha) was proposed under Amrapalli with high density planting (5m x 5m), which would require about 3.24 lakh numbers of mango grafts. The planting material was being made available by the Horticulture Corporation of West Bengal.

Plants for mother block was provided by BCKVV, Nadia. Another 540 ha was brought under traditional varieties of mango (Fazli, Lakhan Bhog, Himsagar) for which planting material to the tune of 54,000 were required. The same was being made available by the Horticulture Cooperation of West Bengal. About 300 ha of Litchi were proposed to be covered under area expansion during 2011-12 with crop spacing of 8m x 8m. About 490 ha of guava were proposed to be covered during 2011-12 by adopting crop spacing of 5m x 5m.

Planting Material and Area Expansion

Horticulture Commissioner suggested for procurement of planting material from NRC Litchi and research station, Plandu, Ranchi to establish mother block of Litchi and from NRC Citrus, Nagpur for Citrus. He suggested taking rejuvenation programme seriously and providing all support which will increase upto 3-4 times yield per unit area. The SHM should discourage air layering method of plant propagation for guava and promote Wedge Grafting. Training and awareness programmes needed to be taken up in the major guava belts. In this connection, Chairman suggested to translate the publication on Canopy Management in Bengali and release it at the time of seminar at Malda. He also suggested to provide block wise and crop (variety) wise cluster details and linkage for value addition and marketing.

Regarding availability of quality planting material with Horticulture Corporation, it was suggested that Dr. R.C.Upadhyay, Chief Consultant, NHM would visit West Bengal next week to evaluate the nurseries and their mother block and availability of planting material and provide a first hand report about the standard, strength and resourcefulness of these nurseries

There was no dearth of funds in MNREGA and 30% of its funds were available for horticulture programme. The matter may be taken up with the concerned authorities for further funding of area expansion programmes.

Post Harvest Management

Chairman suggested for preparing district wise details of cold storages in W.B and their tariff rates etc. Regarding the staff position, Director (NHM) suggested to take up the matter with the State Govt. for providing supporting technical staff for Horticulture Department in the state.

Shri Prabhat Saxena informed about the study report on TMC in West Bengal.

Progress Report

It was also informed that expenditure progress report for the month of March 2011 towards has not been posted on the website and requested Director SHM to update it. SHM was also requested to ensure that the complete state share is deposited immediately and confirm the same to this Department. Director (NHM)

asked to submit authenticated physical and financial progress and also audited account and reconciliation of last year account.

Summary decisions which emerged from the deliberations are as under:

1. SHM will procure planting material from NRC Litchi and research station, Plandu, Ranchi to establish mother block of Litchi and for Citrus from NRC Citrus, Nagpur.
2. Dr RC Upadhyay, Chief Consultant will visit West Bengal to review the availability of different varieties of mango, the source of planting material for mother block methodology being adopted for plant propagation condition of the corporation nurseries from where planting material was bring sourced by SHM, West Bengal. Thereafter, Horticulture Commissioner will also make a visit to the State.
3. A large number of nurseries have been established under NHM in the Public and Private sector in West Bengal. SHM will give priority for sourcing planting material from the Government nurseries. SHM will provide the list of Nurseries to NHB so that it can take up the task of accreditation of Nurseries in the State.
4. SHM will provide a brief write up to about the situation of land allotment of CISH, Lucknow in West Bengal.
5. SHM, West Bengal will arrange to expedite the translation of Technical Bulletin on Canopy Management of Fruit crops developed by Horticulture Commissioner into Bengali from BCKVV or any alternative source and arrange to release it by the end of September,2011. In this context, a seminar on Canopy Management and Rejuvenation of mango orchards could be organized at Malda in the end of September, 2011 which will be addressed by Horticulture Commissioner.
6. SHM, West Bengal will prepare a plan of action for development of PHM by taking into account total production of horticulture produce, available infrastructure and further course of action to bridge the gap.
7. No food processing unit for mango has been set up at the Malda Food Park, although Malda is a major mango producing belt of West Bengal. The matter needs to be taken up with MFPI.
8. The Centre for Perishable Cargo (CPC) established by APEDA at Kolkata airport was not functioning to optimum capacity. Presently about 10% of the capacity was being utilized. Similarly, CPC at Bagdogra airport was yet to be commissioned. The matter needs to be taken up with APEDA.
9. Large areas are being brought under horticulture corps under MNAREGS in West Bengal, as about 30 % of the funds earmarked under this scheme could be used for area expansion activities. In this context, SHM needs to ensure the availability of good quality planting material at the District Level. Moreover, area expansion activity under NHM could be scaled down for providing more focus on infrastructure development for PHM and marketing.
10. SHM will provide feedback regarding PHM as per the questionnaire which was circulated, by the end of August, 2011.

11. SHM will expedite posting monthly physical and financial progress for the months of March, April, May, June and July 2011 on the NHM web site.
12. SHM will furnish the physical and financial progress in accordance with the UC provided for 2010-11. There was a variation in the expenditure figures reported by the SHM as per the utilization certificates and what has been reported on the website. This needs to be reconciled.
13. State needs to provide details of State share released so far during Eleventh Plan.
14. SHM will, further, arrange to get the progress from the districts through the web enabled progress monitoring system of NHM in compliance to the letter written by Secretary (A&C) to the Chief Secretary on 8.8.2011.
15. Beneficiary-wise list of SC/ST and Women Farmers covered under NHM may be provided.
16. Since large areas are being brought under horticulture crops under the NHM, SHM should keep record on the area diversified from agricultural crops to horticulture as well as areas converted from wastelands into horticulture.
17. The SHMs should maintain bench mark data as in 2004-05 about the area, production, productivity and other available important facilities at the District level
18. SHM will identify the clusters preferably in those areas, which have been covered under the Watershed Development Programmes.
19. SHM should also conduct Impact Evaluation Study through independent organization of repute in the State and submit report to DAC.
20. The Annual Report and Success Stories to be documented by the SHM and submitted to DAC.
21. SHM will furnish point wise response on the issues indicated in the Agenda items, to this Department within a Week.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to and from the Chair.

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F. No. 33-62/2011 – Hort
Government of India
Ministry of Agriculture
Department of Agriculture & Cooperation
(Horticulture Division)

434, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi-1
Dated 2nd September, 2011

Sub: Minutes of the Meeting held on 23.8.2011 to review the implementation of National Horticulture Mission programme in West Bengal - regarding

Please find enclosed the minutes of the Meeting held on 23.8.2011 under the Chairmanship of Shri Sanjeev Chopra, Joint Secretary & Mission Director (NHM) to review the implementation of National Horticulture Mission programme in West Bengal for information and necessary action.

State Horticulture Mission is requested to initiate necessary follow up action on the action points and furnish the action taken report to this Department at the earliest.

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Distribution

1. All participants
Mission Director, State Horticulture Mission, Government of West Bengal