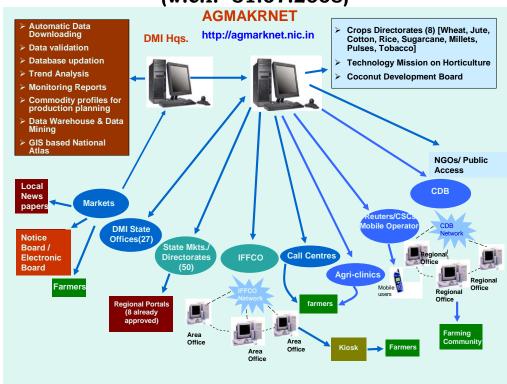
CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEME

MARKETING RESEARCH AND INFORMATION NETWORK

REVISED OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

(w.e.f. 31.07.2008)



AGMARKNET

(NICNET-based Agricultural Marketing Information Network) (www.agmarknet.nic.in)

Empowerment of the Farmers through Market Information



Government of India
Ministry of Agriculture
Department of Agriculture and Cooperation

Background

Market information is needed by farmers in planning production and marketing, and equally needed by other market participants in arriving at optimal trading decisions. The existence and dissemination of complete and accurate marketing information is the key to achieve both operational and pricing efficiency in the marketing system. Advancement in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has made the world a smaller place and a larger market at one go. To fully utilize the new emerging trade opportunities for the benefit of farming community, there is a felt need to establish an ICT based "Agricultural Marketing Information Network' in the country.

Towards this end, Ministry of Agriculture has launched the ICT based Central Sector Scheme of Agricultural Marketing Information Network (AGMARKNET), in March, 2000, to link important agricultural produce markets spread all over the country and the State Agriculture Marketing Boards and Directorates. The project is being executed with the technical support of National Informatics Centre (NIC). The scheme has made rapid strides and by the end of X Five Year Plan, a total number of 2965 nodes have been covered under the scheme comprising of 2784 agricultural produce markets (Annexure-I), field offices of DMI and State Agricultural Marketing Boards/ Directorates and their attached offices, etc. Necessary Computer hardware and system software tools (Annexure-II) have been supplied to all the nodes and as many as 1976 market nodes have become functional with internet connectivity by March, 2007. A user friendly software package 'AGMARK', developed to facilitate and transmission of market data, has been organization implemented in the markets. In order to strengthen interface with and beneficiaries. **AGMARKNET** farmers other portal (http://agmarknet.nic.in) has been evolved. 1700 plus markets are regularly reporting price related data which is being disseminated through the portal. The AGMARKNET portal also serves as a single window for accessing websites of various organizations concerned with agricultural marketing. It provides weekly trend analysis for important markets in respect of major commodities. It is also linked with Online Commodity Exchange of India Limited, providing futures prices in respect of oilseeds, fiber crops, etc. International price trends of various agricultural commodities available on FAO website are also accessible through the portal. The portal is constantly being enriched.

In order to facilitate wider market access to farm produce and better price discovery through value addition, the scheme is additionally disseminating information on market requirements in terms of quality, packing, standards, sanitary and phyto-sanitary conditions, etc.

The Scheme is planned to be continued during the XI Plan period by enhancing its scope to cover 500 additional markets including remaining principal regulated markets, if any, farmer/consumer markets, private markets, panchayat markets, urban markets and special commodity markets. Following activities are also proposed to be undertaken while implementing the Scheme during the XI Plan to fully achieve various objectives of the Scheme:

- (i) Information regarding export documentation, export infrastructure, transportation facilities, exporters, marketing experts, agri-business corporate, quality standards, grading/ pack-house infrastructure, plant quarantine facilities, package of best marketing practices, seasonality of commodities will be provided on the portal.
- (ii) Information on contract farming, direct marketing opportunities, value addition facilities etc. to be enriched and tie-ups between farmers/ growers and sponsors/ buyers will be facilitated through the portal by evolving a specific software system through outsourcing of work to an expert agency. It would be developed as an interactive query based system to educate the farmers on issues raised by them and would serve as a national clearing house for buyback and contract farming arrangements.
- (iii) Information on warehouses along with addresses, accreditation facilities and their distance, pledge financing facilities, etc. will also be provided on the portal.
- (iv) Area specific Success Stories will be loaded at the portal so that farmers get knowledge and can plan for trading of their produce.
- (v) GIS based Atlas will be expedited for the content enrichment and system will be put in place for regular data updating.
- (vi) A data validation software will be developed to identify the wrong reporting and for removal of undesirable data from the central data base.

- (vii) Electronic display boards will be provided at every networked market for displaying minimum and maximum price of important commodities, arrivals, temperature, etc. These efforts would be dovetailed, as far as possible, with the action being taken by the Forward Market Commission under the Scheme of the Department of Consumer Affairs.
- (viii) An aggressive publicity campaign of Agmarknet will be launched for efficient and timely utilization of information by the farmers, traders, etc.
- (ix) The programme of capacity building of different stakeholders of the Scheme will be taken up with the help of NIAM/ MANAGE/ SAMETIS/ ATMAs/ KVKs. The programmes for sensitization of farmers and training of stakeholders and extension functionaries of the States will also be taken up under the Scheme.
- (x) The translation of contents of portal into regional languages is necessary and this work be undertaken through the concerned State Marketing Boards/ Directorates.
- (xi) Strategic alliances will be developed with corporate, telecom players and private users for strengthening market intelligence services.
- (xii) The programme initiated under Common Service Centers (CSC) Scheme of DIT would help in achieving wider dissemination of information on establishment of linkage of Agmarknet portal with the proposed IT kiosks at CSCs.
- (xiii) To ensure timely collection and regular transmission of market information from each node, the personnel engaged by State Marketing Directorates/ Boards would be given monetary incentive and best market functionaries/ Boards/ Directorates would be given recognition (awards).
- (xiv) DMI will collaborate with the agencies of Ministry of IT & Communications and others for facilitating dissemination of market information at grass root level through mobile telecom service providers.
- (xv) The price forecasting software developed by NIAM will be strengthened by outsourcing the work to a competent agency and will be integrated with Agmarknet.

(xvi) After ensuring consistent and timely reporting of data with the help of the State Governments/ Marketing Boards and achieving the optimum coverage, infrastructure and strength for the portal, the revenue model recommended in the Evaluation Study will be evolved and implemented towards the end of the XI Five Year Plan. In this regard, a strategy would be evolved in consultation with respective State Marketing Boards, for adopting public-private partnership (PPP) models, to maintain the portal beyond XI Plan duration. As recommended in the Evaluation Study, the Ministry would consider to adopt Buy – Build – Own – Operate (BBOO) model. The revenue generation model for Agmarknet portal will be a mix of two established models i.e., advertising model and subscription model which would be coined as advertising – cum – subscription model.

Promotion of nationally and internationally acceptable standards of grading and standardization, packaging and labeling, storage and warehousing and sanitary and phyto-sanitary requirements and quality certification in farm sector will enable trade and processing sector to undertake large scale agricultural marketing operations in domestic as well as international markets.

The information relating to the schemes in respect of agricultural marketing implemented by Government Departments and central agencies viz. Commerce, Food and Public Distribution, Consumer Affairs, Health and CCI, JCI, NCDC, NAFED, NTGF, TRIFED, NCCF, NDDB, NHB, APEDA, MPEDA will also be disseminated in user friendly manner. An e-directory of AGMARKNET nodes will be published over the portal to facilitate effective and timely exchange of information among markets and other users. Once the farm produce is standardized and labeled, backed by quality certification, it can be directly offered for sale on web site in national and international markets.

Aim of the Scheme

- i) To establish a nation-wide information network for speedy collection and dissemination of market information and data for its efficient and timely utilization.
- ii) To facilitate collection and dissemination of information related to better price realization by the farmers. This would cover:

- (a) Market related information such as market fee, market charges, costs, method of sale, payment, weighment, handling, market functionaries, development programmes, market laws, dispute settlement mechanism, composition of market committees, income and expenditure, etc.
- (b) Price-related information such as minimum, maximum and modal prices of varieties and qualities transacted, total arrivals and dispatches with destination, marketing costs and margins, etc.;
- (c) Infrastructure related information comprising facilities and services available to the farmers with regard to storage and warehousing, cold storage, direct marketing, contract farming, buy-back arrangements, grading, re-handling and repacking etc.; and
- (d) Promotion related information covering accepted standards and grades, labeling, sanitary and phyto-sanitary requirements, pledge finance, marketing credit and new opportunities available in respect of better marketing;
- iii) To sensitize and orient farmers to respond to new challenges in agricultural marketing by using ICT as a vehicle of extension.
- iv) To improve efficiency in agricultural marketing through regular training and extension for reaching region-specific farmers in their own language.
- v) To provide assistance for marketing research to generate marketing information for its dissemination to farmers and other marketing functionaries at grass-root level to create an ambience of good marketing practices in the country.

Implementation Plan

The agencies involved in execution of the scheme will be Directorate of Marketing and Inspection (DMI), National Informatics Centre (NIC), State Governments through State Agriculture Marketing Boards (SAMB)/ Departments, National and State level institutions, individual market committees/ authorities, **local bodies, private market operators,** wherever applicable in the country. NIC will make available computer hardware, develop software, train market personnel in handling computer hardware and software, update the software package from time to time, provide internet connectivity and develop and

commission State level portals. It will also arrange to harmonize/integrate software package developed by the State with AGMARKNET to bring uniformity in database. It will continue to manage AGMARKNET portal. Management of State level portals could be outsourced wherever considered necessary by respective competent authorities.

The State Government/ **Marketing Board** will provide to the DMI the list of markets to be covered for computer connectivity under the scheme. The selected markets will provide site for installation comprising (1) Dust free computer room; (2) Power Requirement; (i) Electrical points-3 (15 Amp 6 pin sockets with switches), input to be protected by 6 Amp MCB; (ii) 220/230 Volt power supply; (iii) Line, neutral and Earth connection on the specified socket terminals; (iv) Proper Earth Pit copper wire earthing (with earth to neutral voltage less than 3 V) with an exclusive phase; (3) Computer Operator; (4) One telephone with STD facility, wherever required.

Market Committees/ Controlling authorities of AGMARKNET node at market level would continue to collect relevant data and information, feed it and transmit it to the State level and AGMARKNET portal. NIC will train suitable persons from each node in operating computer & handling software package. At each market node, for one person engaged in the work of data collection and transmission, an incentive amount of Rs.500/- per month will be paid under the Scheme subject to the maintenance of a regular reporting performance of more than 20 days in a month. NIC would be arranging this payment through the concerned Marketing Boards/ Directorates/ State Departments based on the performance diary of each market node. The SAMB/ State Department will nominate a nodal officer to coordinate functioning of the scheme. The State level Nodal Officer of the scheme will ensure that market level officials perform their functions regularly to keep the scheme operational.

The State level Servers will preferably be located at the Headquarter of the State Marketing Board/Directorate implementing the scheme.

In order to encourage various functionaries for taking keen interest and involve themselves enthusiastically in the activities of the Scheme, the Ministry of Agriculture would set up Awards for outstanding performance in dissemination of market information/market intelligence, design and management of State Portals and

conduct of market led extension/ awareness programmes for State Governments/ State Agricultural Marketing Boards/ SAMETIS etc. Awards would also be set up for best performing officials of State Agricultural Marketing Boards/ Directorates, DMI & NIC. Detailed guidelines of giving these Awards would be formulated by the Ministry including the incentives to be given and the Awards would be administered through an Awards Committee set up under the Chairmanship of the Additional Secretary (Agricultural Marketing) and having outside experts as members.

Assistance under the Scheme

Computerization

The State Agricultural Marketing Boards/Directorates and the Agricultural Markets will be provided:

- Server system alongwith necessary software tools to facilitate content generation and management of State level portal in local languages.
- Supply of hardware and software tools to all selected markets and also their substitution, wherever genuinely required at the market nodes covered during previous years.
- Free annual maintenance for a period of **three to five years**.
- Internet Connectivity for an **initial period of 5 years by NIC**. In cases where NIC will not be able to provide internet connectivity, it will reimburse an amount upto Rs.3000/= per annum to the controlling authority to take services from local authorized internet service providers (ISP).
- Training of market personnel in handling of hardware & software; research & analysis and refresher training.
- Assistance for harmonization/integration of software packages developed by State with that of the package developed by NIC .

Research

Assistance under the scheme will be provided to State Agricultural Marketing Boards/Directorates and Market Committees and National and State level institutions for:

- 1) Preparation of state level as well as market level publications in local language based on data and information generated and its publication/dissemination by the State level nodal agencies as well as market committees/authorities.
- 2) Preparation of material with regard to accepted standards of grading, packaging and labeling, quality certification, sanitary and phyto-sanitary aspects, good farming practices as related to better price realization, success stories in contract farming, group marketing, right practices in regulated markets, farmers' duties, responsibilities and rights in regulated markets and other marketing related issues.
- 3) Preparation of national level atlas, commodity profiles, CDs, uploading and downloading of knowledge required to be disseminated, in regional languages to facilitate market led extension. Atlas would provide information in respect of the commodity with regard to major areas of production, movement and storage and of market and consuming centers, etc. It would also facilitate public and private sector in planning and development of appropriate marketing strategy in agricultural sector.
- 4) Preparation of training and educational modules in the areas of market driven production, marketing finance, post-harvest management, information on facilities for quality assurance and standards, grading, packaging, storage, transportation, contract farming, direct marketing, alternative markets including forward and future markets, commodity exchanges, online market information system etc. for reaching the target farmers and marketing functionaries in vernacular language.
- 5) Undertaking marketing studies through outsourcing the professional/experts available in private, cooperative, public and corporate sectors. The research will focus on information generation and dissemination directly beneficial to the farmers through the use of ICT.
- 6) Conducting farmers awareness programmes at market/village level to disseminate market related information from the website to farmers and other market functionaries in local language **by involving ATMA**, **SAMETIS, KVKS, MANAGE and NIAM**, etc.

Procedure for Sanction of Assistance under the Scheme

The State Agricultural Marketing Boards/ Directorates will identify the markets to be covered under the information network in order of priority and forward the same to the Directorate of Marketing & Inspection, Faridabad for sanction in a prescribed format. The State Marketing Boards/ Departments/ State Level Institutions will route the proposals related to preparation of CDs, Atlas, research and Updation, marketing research and information generation as well as dissemination and any other awareness or publicity activities to educate farmers through State/Regional level Offices of the DMI for release of funds to undertake the same. National level Institutions can directly submit the proposals to DMI, Faridabad for sanction of assistance. Priority in the sanction will be given to the States who take active interest in the implementation of the scheme. The Regional and State Level Offices of NIC, State Agricultural Marketing Boards (SAMBs)/ Directorates and market Committees/ Authorities will work in close collaboration for implementing the scheme.

A Committee **is already in place** under Agricultural Marketing Adviser to the Government of India and Joint Secretary (Marketing) to consider proposals so received for sanction of necessary funds for marketing research as well as web-enrichment to facilitate ICT as a tool for marketing extension.

Undertaking to be furnished by the Implementing Agency

The Implementing Agency has to furnish an undertaking to maintain the system i.e. the State level portals and the markets nodes covered under the scheme after the completion of the project, to regularly upload market related information on the website and to disseminate the information available on the portal to farmers for improved marketing. Implementing agency will provide an undertaking to this effect in the prescribed Proforma at Annexure-III.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementing agencies in the States would monitor the progress of the scheme every month by constituting a State Level Committee of officers comprising DMI, NIC and State Nodal Agency. A Mid-Term Evaluation of the scheme would be taken up through an independent agency in the year 2009-10 and a final Evaluation in the terminal year of the scheme i.e., 2011-12.

Contact Offices

The list of contact offices of Directorate of Marketing and Inspection – National Implementing Agency is provided at Annexure-IV.

Financial Outlay

An amount of Rs 20.00 Crore has been approved for the implementation of scheme during XI Plan period (with a Plan outlay of Rs.15.00 crores). The details of outlays involved during the XI Plan are as under:

(Rs. In crores)

Component	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Total
_						
1. (i) Setting up of	1.11	2.12	1.12	0.30	0.30	5.00
AGMARKNET nodes and	(93	(175	(92	(replace	(replace	
substitution of obsolete	new	new	new	ment of	ment of	(360
hardware/ software	nodes	nodes	nodes	old	old	new
including recurring costs	@Rs1.19	@Rs1.21	@Rs1.21	nodes)	nodes)	nodes)
such as AMC, Internet	lac per	lac per	lac per			
connectivity etc.	node)	node)	node)			
(ii)Payment of incentives/	0.00	0.36	1.20	1.68	1.98	5.22
honourarium to one person		(1200	(2000	(2800	(3300	
@ Rs 500 per market node		node x	node x	node x	nodes x	
per month (through NIC)		Rs. 3000)	Rs.6000)	Rs.6000)	Rs.6000)	
2. Regional Portals to be	0.00	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.60
located at State Capitals		(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(12)
3. Strengthening of						
(i) DMI MIN Cell	0.05	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.65
(ii) NIC at DMI Hq.	0.05	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.45
4 Marketing Research	0.05	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.85
5. Non-recurring/	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.50
Recurring						
6. (i) National Atlas,						
Research Updation and	1.38	1.50	1.30	1.30	1.25	6.73
Knowledge Transfer						
System (CDs), Awareness						
(Market led extension						
programmes) and						
Publicity, electronic						
display boards,						
professional services,						
Awards, outsourcing of						
software preparation/ sub-						
portals etc. for the scheme.	0.71	4.60	4.00	0.00	4.00	20.00
Total	2.74	4.68	4.32	3.98	4.28	20.00

 $\underline{\textbf{Annexure-I}}$ Distribution of markets covered under AGMARKNET up to X Plan

S1. No.	Name of the State/UT	Computer Provided	Market Nodes
1	Andaman & Nicobar	1	0
2	Andhra Pradesh	360	349
3	Arunachal Pradesh	16	15
4	Assam	26	23
5	Bihar	60	58
6	Chandigarh	2	1
7	Chattisgarh	76	74
8	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	2	1
9	Daman & Diu	3	2
10	Goa	9	6
11	Gujarat	323	319
12	Haryana	152	131
13	Himachal Pradesh	37	35
14	Jammu & Kashmir	43	41
15	Jharkhand	28	26
16	Karnataka	146	143
17	Kerala	95	92
18	Lakshadweep	1	0
19	Madhya Pradesh	220	218
20	Maharashtra	350	346
21	Manipur	6	5
22	Meghalaya	13	11
23	Mizoram	12	9
24	Nagaland	15	14
25	NCT of Delhi	12	9
26	Orissa	81	73
27	Puducherry	3	2
28	Punjab	185	181
29	Rajasthan	175	166
30	Sikkim	8	7
31	Tamil Nadu	120	93
32	Tripura	14	13
33	Uttar Pradesh	259	257
34	Uttrakhand	21	20
35	West Bengal	59	44
36	H.O.,Faridabad	32	0
	Total	2965	2784

Annexure-II

Hardware and Software Tools supplied to AGMARKNET nodes

Each AGMARKNET node has been equipped with the following hardware and system software tools:

Hardware

- 1. Client Computer System
- 2. Printer supporting Hindi, English and a local language
- 3. Line interactive UPS system with battery backup
- 4. Modem to enable dial up based communication

Software

- 1. Windows XP Operating System
- 2. Micro Soft Office
- 3. AGMARK Application Package

FORMAT FOR UNDERTAKING to be furnished by the Implementing Agency

The Implementing Agency does hereby undertake that it will:

- 1) Ensure maintenance of the system provided under the scheme so that the Marketing Information Network will remain operational on a sustainable basis.
- 2) Provide requisite budgetary support for the maintenance of the system and sustainability of the project after the financial assistance given under the scheme ceases.
- 3) Provide requisite manpower for the smooth operation of the network.
- 4) Follow the operational guidelines issued by the Central Government in this connection from time to time.

Implementing Agency

Annexure-IV

Contact Offices of Directorate of Marketing & Inspection with Address

Name of Office	States/UT(s)
Asstt. Agricultural Marketing Adviser, Directorate of Marketing & Inspection Green House 3 rd Floor, Block 1, Sultan Bazar, Hyderabad-500019 (A.P.) Ph.040-24657446 dmihy@ap.nic.in	Andhra Pradesh,
Senior Marketing Officer, Directorate of Marketing & Inspection Rukminigaon, Navaratna Path, House No. 09, 1st Floor, P.O. Khanapara, Guwahati-781 022 (Assam) Ph.0361-2229272, 2229273 dmias02@nic.in Senior Marketing Officer, Directorate of Marketing & Inspection Nagina Niketan Opp. A.N.College, Boring Road Patna-800013 (Bihar) Ph. 0612-2266691	Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, Manipur Bihar
Asstt. Agricultural Marketing Adviser, Directorate of Marketing & Inspection, General pool Offices Building, 4th Floor, A Wing, DF Block, Sector-1,Salt Lake, Kolkata-700064 (W.B.) Ph.033-23340845, 23347553 dmiwb03@nic.in	West Bengal Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Sikkim, Jharkhand
Senior Marketing Officer, Directorate of Marketing & Inspection, 6th Floor, Kendriya Sadan, Sector 9 'A', Chandigarh-160 047 Ph.0172 - 2743201 dmich01@nic.in	Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh UT

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<u> </u>	
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(You may also contact State level NIC Offices as well as State Agricultural Marketing Boards/Directorates (addresses available at www.agmarknet.nic.in) for detailed information and guidance.)

For further information, please contact:

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