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News ID-IPR (OD)/CS-GA-1199-02/02/21



Agro-Enterprise and Agri-Business brought to Focus by Asit Tripathy

Dept Directed to assess the current presence and potential of Private sector investment

Bhubaneswar, 2 Feb

In another step towards enhancing farmer's income, Sri Asit Tripathy Principal Advisor to Chief Minister and Chairman WODC directed the Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment department to focus on agri-business and argo-enterprises. He gave this direction while reviewing such programmes of the department in *Krusha Bhawan* wherein Additional Chief Secretary and Production Commissioner Sri Raj Kumar Sharma outlined the issues for discussion. Sri Sharma highlighted the need to build infrastructural support for promotion of agriculture and allied sector.

Reviewing the ongoing programmes, Sri Tripathy said, "agro-enterprise with market linkage will bring real transformation in rural sector. It will make the sector more rewarding and attractive for youths". Sri Tripathy added, "Each district has its own potential. Because of the

supportive business climate and promising returns, many private entrepreneurs have entered in to agro-enterprise in the districts under western Odisha development council. They need handholding support”. Sri Tripathy directed that the field level officers be oriented to be in touch with such private entrepreneurs and support them as per their requirement. Easy credit support, market linkage and technical advisory would be of great help for big changes in this sector.

Further, Sri Tripathy directed the department to make a state wide assessment of the current presence and potential of the private sector investment in these sectors. He advised the officers to take into account the production and marketing of the private enterprises who might not have come to Government for availing any subsidy. The officers were asked to come out of the “silos of implementing the Governmental programmes only and explore possibilities available in this large sector”. Sri Tripathy also directed the officers “to work with winners in private sector” so that others could be motivated to take up similar ventures.

Presenting the present scenario, Principal Secretary Dr Saurabh Garg said, “A progressive State Agriculture Policy is in operation from January 2020. A comprehensive approach comprising the themes like agri-business, warehousing,



farm level basic processing unit, promotion of farmer producer organization, agriculture marketing intelligence, procurement of oil seeds, skill training for value addition, linking farmer with trading organizations is being followed under the policy.

Dr Garg added, around 61.80 lakh hect land is under cultivation out of which around 13.60 lakh hect is under horticultural crops. Presently, 34 sea food processing units, 36 lemon grass extraction unit and 16 cashew processing units are operating in the State. Potential agro-and food processing cultures have been identified. ‘One district and one product’ list has also been prepared for development of food processing units and marketing support.

Director Agriculture Sri Muthu Kumar appraised that *Mukhyamantri Krushi Udyog Yojana* (MKUY) has been launched to promote enterprises in agriculture and allied sector. Under the scheme, around 40-50% of capital investment subsidy subject to a limit of Rs.50 lakhs is being provided to the entrepreneurs. Around 83 types of projects have been enlisted for support under the Yojana. So far, 365 operating units have been supported under the MKUY. In the current year, a total number of 113 units involving capital investment of Rs.44 cr have been operationalised. These units have been provided a capital investment subsidy of Rs.12 cr and they have created sustainable employment opportunity for 565 persons.

Additional Chief Secretary and APC Sri R. K. Sharma, Secretary Fisheries and Animal Resource Development Sri Raghu G. along with senior officers from NABARD, APICOL, Agricultural Marketing Organization participated in the discussions.

****U.K.Mohapatra, PRO to Chief Secretary.****