

Experiments on Registration of Right to Manage Contracted Land

Zhen Zhong

Assistant Professor

School of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development

Renmin University of China

Introduction

The CPC (Communist Party of China) Central Committee's Document No.1 in 2008 asked to "strengthen regulation and administration of rural land contracts and speed up work toward the establishment of a regime for the registration of rights to manage contracted land".

Given the fact that rural land contracting was delayed and there were big regional differences in follow-up settlement, and the fact that there were widespread problems of incorrect areas of contracted land, blurred land boundaries, unidentified geographic location, and incomplete register books, conditions were not right at that time for the launch of registration of rights to manage contracted land across the country.

To be prudent, the CPC Central Committee's Document No.1 in 2009 asked to "carry out experiment on the registration of rights to manage contracted land in a steady manner, define the exact area of contracted land, its geographic location and deliver the certificate of ownership to the contractor household."

The CPC Central Committee Document No.1 in 2010 asked to "expand experiments on the registration of rights to manage contracted land and guarantee needed funds for such experiments".

In 2011, the State Council required to "speed up the determination, registration and certification of rural collective land ownership, rights to manage contracted land, rights to the use of rural homesites, rights to the use of collective land for construction, and to deliver funds for such work".

Implementation of policy and evaluation

- 1) Organization and leadership were enhanced, and experiments were carried out in places where conditions were right. In 2011, the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Land and Resources, the Office of the Central Leading Group for Rural Work, the Legislative Affairs Office of the State Council, and State Archives Administration jointly established a leading group for the experiments on the registration of rights to manage contracted land.

Opinions on Experiments on the Registration of Rights to Manage Contracted Land in Rural Areas was formulated and released.

Fifty counties (cities, districts) in 28 provinces (autonomous regions, municipalities) were designated as venues for the experiments, involving 4.77 million rural households and 2.253 million hectares of farmland in 12,000 villages of 710 townships. The authorities in Liaoning, Jilin, Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces designated their own areas of experiments.

- 2) Publicity and mobilization were boosted and laws and regulations were strictly followed. For mobilization and arrangements, the above-mentioned six government bodies held a national video conference for experiments on the registration of rights to manage contracted land.

The MoA held a meeting on the training of staff to be involved in experiments on the registration of rights to manage contracted land.

Various localities enhanced publicity of policies and laws through radio, television, newspapers, open letters, policy posters, flyers and banners to mobilize enthusiasm of grassroots cadres and rural households for experiments on the registration of rights to manage contracted land.

In areas where such experiments were launched, laws and policies were strictly followed and many problems left over from the past were properly handled.

- 3) Plans were designed according to local conditions and registration methods were explored. In areas where experiments were launched, plans for experiments were formulated according to their own conditions. They emphasized the principle of respecting history and provided for clear guidelines on the handling of differences between actual size of land and the recorded size in the contract or the certificate.

The Gaoling county of Shaanxi province, building on experience, developed a nine-step registration method including publicity and training, investigation to know the real situation, surveying and mapping, public notification and issuance of certificate, and archiving.

In area where experiments were launched, the employment of modern cadastral surveying technologies was explored to enrich and improve geographic information about contracted land.

- 4) Funds were sought to push forward the experiments. In areas where experiments were launched, financial and agricultural departments worked together to secure funds for the running of experiments, enhanced the management of subsidies and ensured smooth registration work.

Remark and prospect

In various areas where experiments were launched, the experiments were welcomed and supported by farmers and social stability was not affected as the authorities always respected the will of farmers and followed the principle to stabilize current relations involved in land contracts.

According to statistics, 307,000 households in 642 villages had finished registration of rights to manage contracted land by 2011, accounting for 6.4% of households whose rights should be registered. Rights were determined for 145,730 hectares of land, accounting for 6.5% of land that should be registered. In addition, 23,000 certificates were replaced or renewed. In a dozen provinces including Heilongjiang, Shaanxi, Zhejiang and Hainan, experiments had been expanded from villages to townships.

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