

The Establishment of Agricultural Technology Research Institute

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In order to actively develop a market-oriented, high added-value agriculture industry supported by advanced technology, the Council of Agriculture officially announced the establishment of the Agricultural Technology Research Institute (ATRI) on Jan. 1, 2014 after a four-year preparation. The institute will serve as a platform for the application of the advanced agricultural technology in order to create a more competitive agricultural industry as well as speed up the commercialization and internationalization of agricultural R&D achievements, which will in turn help reach the objective of globalizing Taiwan's agriculture.

The COA stated that in order to reduce the direct impact of trade liberalization on Taiwan's agriculture, the industry must change its former conservative defense strategy. Therefore, the COA proposed innovative concepts aimed at transforming the current production policies to "new value chain agriculture" as its strategic objective. It will further strengthen innovative value and interdisciplinary integration and expand agricultural industry's jurisdiction. The COA will also take advantage of this new ATRI's flexible organizational operation to encourage innovation in order to increase agricultural productivity and business opportunities. Furthermore, industrial cluster can also be formed solidly.

According to the COA, there are over 100 innovation cases of technology transferred annually to the commercial sector from its branch research institutions and laboratories. The revenue created by these licensing and technology transfers grew from NT\$1 million in 2002 to NT\$80 million in 2013. It is expected that after the ATRI commences its full operation, the revenue created by relevant intellectual property and new venture outputs will increase dramatically.

The COA also suggested that the ATRI will bridge the gap between the academic and the industrial sector by offering solutions to the problems of the industry. Besides improving complementary policy by analyzing market information and technology development, the institute will also provide training services such as industry analysis and marketing for agricultural research institutions, in order to strengthen their human resources and give support to new start-up ventures. In the meantime, the ATRI will also assist enterprises in international marketing by setting up successful business models of technological agriculture as well as increasing their products' value and their international markets' competitiveness. Eventually, Taiwan's agriculture will possess vigorous and competitive advantages which will provide stable income to farmers. The ultimate goal would be for local farmers as well as the whole nation to be able to share the fruits of economic achievement through agricultural technological development.

(Data Source: Council of Agriculture)

Date submitted: April 28, 2014

Reviewed, edited and uploaded: April 29, 2014