

Pilot Program for Cultivation of New Career Farmers

Zhen Zhong

Assistant Professor

School of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development

Renmin University of China

In recent years, as more and more rural farmers immigrate to major cities and towns, the shortage of labor forces in some areas during farming seasons has become more and more prominent. The accelerating aging of farming crowds poses new challenges to agriculture. Who is going to cultivate farmlands and raise pigs in the coming years will become a major issue that our society has to confront in the future.

Meanwhile, the proceeding transformation of traditional agriculture to modern one differentiates farmers and raises higher demands for the developing pattern of agriculture, bringing up dire needs for the training of new career farmers.

Raised in the first Central Document of 2012 issued by the Central Committee of the CPC, the training of the new career farmers is a new specific requirement of the implementation of the Scientific Outlook on Development, a guideline for the current and future training and education of farmers, and a major institutional innovation.

First, speeding up the training for a large number of new career farmers is conducive to promote the profession, and help them to get jobs with higher social insurance and status in the urbanization, and at the same time, attract more farmers to stay and work on farmlands.

Second, it is helpful to transform traditional farming to the production and management of modern agriculture, encourage farmers to go further on their profession and large-scale agriculture, and increase their benefits and incomes.

Third, it could contribute to the transformation of farmers from being mere traditional small-scale producers to socialized mass producers, beef up the development of the new type of production and business operation entity, and guarantee the national food security as well as the supply of major agricultural products.

In August, 2012, the MoA issued the Pilot Plan for the Training of New Type of Career Farmers, under which a pilot training was launched in 100 selected counties nationwide. In each county, the project trained 500 to 1,000 new farmers specializing in two or three main industries, hoping to finalize the career-farmer training system which coordinates education and training, authentication management and subsidy policy in three years.

For the education and training system, regional departments are encouraged to make full use of all farmer training and educational institutes on different levels such as agricultural broadcasting and television schools, agricultural colleges and scientific research institutions among others, so as to build a training system which balances professional education with

short-term training and coordinates comprehensive education as well as regular training.

For authentication management, authorities should clear the authentication conditions, fully respect farmers' willingness, give preference to the authentication of young and systematically trained farmers who have good sense of social responsibility and professional ethics as well as a certain scale of production. For those authenticated ones, authorities should set up their information archives and practice dynamic management.

Regarding subsidy policies, support will be offered to new career farmers on land circulation, production support, financial credit, agricultural insurance and social security, among others.

Date submitted: Nov. 5, 2014

Received, edited and uploaded: Nov. 10, 2014