

# Golden Agricultural Corridor Plan

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A “golden agricultural corridor” will be built in the western counties of Yunlin and Changhua. The action plan comes as part of the government’s broader Economic Power-Up Plan (2012), which is intended to bring about rapid economic growth in the most effective manner. The golden agricultural corridor plan—integrating the resources of the Council of Agriculture (COA), the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Ministry of Transportation and Communications, and local governments— targets incentives and guidance to farmers, marketing teams and agribusinesses. It also aims to develop water conservation areas for agricultural production.

The COA has been promoting the theme of LOHAS (lifestyles of health and sustainability) agriculture for the “Golden Decade, National Vision” plan put forward by the Executive Yuan in 2011. The COA is preparing to build the Yunlin-Changhua corridor as a model of LOHAS agriculture. Toward the goals of “new technologies, new farmers and new industry,” the COA will invest a total of NT\$3.3 billion (US\$110 million) over 2013-2020 to create an energy and water-conserving agricultural corridor. The project will attract new blood, develop business opportunities for Taiwan’s farming sector and introduce advanced agricultural technologies with a focus on energy saving, water conservation and net house (simplified type of “green house”) farming.

According to the Executive Yuan, programs and measures associated with the corridor is expected to reduce groundwater pumping by 24 million tons per year, or about half the volume of the Hushan Reservoir of 52.18 million tons. Agricultural tours can also attract around 12,000 visitors per year to benefit local industries. Other efforts to develop high-tech, eco-friendly and profitable agriculture will make Taiwan’s produce and technologies more competitive worldwide.

The Yunlin-Changhua corridor will target land subsidence problems for a 3-kilometer stretch along the High Speed Rail route. Key guidelines are as follows:

- Create water-saving agricultural production zones; maximize use of agricultural resources;
- Strengthen the application of water-conservation technologies and information;
- Expand the scale of farm operations; attract new generations of farmers;
- Develop agritourism; bring sophistication to traditional products; diversify marketing strategies.

Under these guidelines are 17 measures, including:

- Upgrade facilities in drought-resistant crop and vegetable zones; offer marketing assistance;
- Provide rice farmers with incentives for growing water-efficient crops;
- Introduce cloud computing applications for agriculture;
- Establish crop-processing demonstration factories;
- Combine rural regeneration with water-conserving agriculture;
- Train the next generation of farmers;
- Promote agritourism;
- Create an agricultural product value chain;
- Bolster solar and green technology R&D for farming uses.

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