

Reform on Rural Collective Property Rights

Zhen Zhong
Assistant Professor
School of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development
Renmin University of China

INTRODUCTION

Reform on the system of rural collective property rights is a great innovation in the rural economic system. It meets the demands of injecting vigor into the development of agriculture and the rural areas. The CPC Central and the State Council attach great importance to the work and put forward requirements in various documents. The Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee proposed giving farmers greater property rights, protecting the rights of members of farmers' collective economic organizations, actively developing farmers share cooperation and giving farmers the rights to hold, benefit from, mortgage, inherit, the collective assets share, and establishing rural property transfer market, furthering the development of rural property transfer in a public, fair and orderly manner. They are new requirements and plans for reform on rural collective property rights.

Main content of policy

In 2013, the CPC Central Committee's Document No.1 proposed reforming the system of rural collective property rights and protecting farmers' property rights, demanding the establishment of a rural collective property system with clear ownership, complete functions, smooth transfer and strict protection, improving finance, assets and resource management system of rural collective economic organizations, protecting farmers' rights of land contract, using homestead, and benefiting and from collective income in accordance with the law, encouraging advanced regions to promote the reform of shareholding cooperative system of rural collective property rights, and exploring ways to determine membership of collective economic organizations.

1) In accordance with the requirements of the CPC Central Committee, the Agriculture Ministry adopted the following measures to advance the reform on rural collective property rights in 2013.

Inspecting the reform on rural collective property rights pf various nationwide. The general office of the Agriculture Ministry distributed the notification on inspecting the reform on rural collective property rights, selecting Chongqing, Yunnan, Guangdong, Zhejiang, Shandong, Fujian, and Jiangsu for field trips.

2) Studying the reform on rural collective property rights. Researchers on such key issues as membership determination, shareholding format and management, and the position of the collective after reform were carried out.

3) Symposia on the reform on rural collective property rights were convened in several provinces and cities, focusing on devising reports and guiding documents on the reform on rural collective property rights. A Collection of Documents on the Reform on Rural

Collective Property Rights was issued.

4) The spirit of the Third Plenary Session of 18th CPC Central Committee was implemented. The documents of Plans to advance the reform on rural collective property rights in an Active and Study Manner and Work Plan on Pilot Zones on Establishing Rural Collective Property Rights Exchange Market were devised, proposing thoughts, major tasks and working measure for the following period of time.

5) Fostering a conducive atmosphere for institutional reform on rural collective property rights. The MoA invited CCTV-7, Xinhua News Agency, Economic Daily, Farmers' Daily and other media outlets to field reporting tours in Guangdong and Shandong provinces, resulting in two feature programs and six special reports. Two training programs were carried out, respectively in Ningbo and Guilin, for more than 200 key promoters and instructors from 16 provinces over the institutional reform on rural collective property rights, and they effectively helped improve the professional qualities and competence of the management personal involved in the reform.

Major achievements

By the end of 2013, 27 provinces set up pilot zones for the reform on rural collective property rights, 14 provinces distribute guiding opinions and plans for the reform on rural collective property rights, 28,000 villages and 50,000 farmers completed the reform. The reform was rolled out in such cities and regions as Beijing, Suzhou and the Zhujiang River delta, covering 95% of areas. Achievement on reform on rural collective property rights was listed as the following.

1) Relationship concerning rural collective property rights was clarified. The reform on rural collective property rights made an inventory of collective property, determined membership, and clarified collective and individual rights to possess, use, benefit from and deal with collective property. By the end of 2013, quantitative assets of two levels reached 436.22 billion yuan, and the number of individual shareholder was 42.021 million. Rural "property was turned into equity and farmers became shareholder" accomplishing a historical change.

2) Various rural factors of production were vitalized. The reform on rural collective property rights promoted the capitalization of rural collective property and the re-formation of rural and urban factors. Authorities of Wuhan City of Hubei Province, set up the Wuhan countryside comprehensive property, completing 1,669 deals of 9.969 billion yuan, covering 65440 hectares of land and benefiting 160,000 farmers.

3) Farmers' property-related income was increased. The reform on rural collective property rights connected the interests of the collective and the farmers via the system of shareholding cooperation, protecting the property rights of the members of collective economic organizations and increasing farmers' property-related income. By the end of 2013, dividends of two levels reached 156.32 billion yuan, including 29.15 billion yuan paid for shares.

4) The foundation for the development of urbanization was laid. The reform on rural collective property rights give equity to members of collective economic organization and clarify farmers' shares of collective, lightening the burdens of migrant farmers, leading farmers to towns and new type of communities, quickening the process of rural urbanization.

5) Social stability and harmony in rural areas were safeguarded. The reform on rural collective property rights turn farmers into owners of collective property, and endowed the

farmers with the rights to vote, manage, make decision and supervise in collective economy, and turned the farmers into beneficiaries of collective economy. There are few complains of ambiguous collective property rights and bad management after the reform, thus, social stability and harmony were safeguarded and the CPC's rules were consolidated.

Date submitted: April 15, 2016

Reviewed, edited and uploaded: April 19, 2016