



## **A New Chapter in Taiwan's Agriculture in 2019**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

In order to expedite the promotion of the New Agriculture Innovation Program, the Council of Agriculture (COA) finalized the New Agricultural Technology Strategic Planning in January 2019 report based on the vision of integrating interdisciplinary resources, creating predictable safety production system, developing innovative new technologies, and moving towards resilient sustainable agriculture with high recoverability. Through the interdisciplinary cooperation between biotechnology and agricultural engineering, the implementation of new agriculture could be accomplished in Taiwan in the near future. Important Policies will be introduced as follows:

#### **Forward-looking infrastructure development program: urban-rural development**

The aims of promoting urban-rural development within the framework of the Forward-looking Infrastructure Development Program are to improve the living environment and quality of life while advancing balanced development between urban and rural areas. Resources are limited, however, as reflected in the guiding principles for project selection; i.e., small investments, big benefits, quick turnaround, rapid start-up and making a difference in people's lives. Between 2017 and 2021, a special budget totaling NT\$137.2 billion (US\$4.4 billion) is being invested across three terms to complete projects in 10 major categories, including transportation, general welfare, industry, culture and recreation. These various projects will allow the people of Taiwan to enjoy the benefits of expanded public investments in both the cities and the countryside. Work in the first term (September 2017 to the end of 2018) drew NT\$35 billion (US\$1.1 billion) from the overall special budget, while NT\$72 billion (US\$2.3 billion) has been allocated for the second term (2019 through 2020). (Executive Yuan in Taiwan, 2019)



Figure 1 Urban-rural infrastructure project in Taiwan

### **Foster the transformation of agricultural industry through agricultural technology**

The COA enhanced the New Agricultural Technology Strategic Plans and took current development of agricultural-related environment, society and economy in the world as reference, reallocated the present technological resources, and collected the advice of experts in the industry, academic and research fields to evaluate the efficiency and strength of various technology related policies and measures. A total of 29 measures from 10 key policies were devised including: 1. Introduce advanced technological assessment to make better use of land resources. 2. Alert disasters in advance by means of intelligent technology, to reduce potential damage. 3. Enhance the aquatic livestock production management to ensure animal health. 4. Construct diverse farming system to maintain sustainable environment. 5. Take advantage of agricultural eco-resources to upgrade industrial value. 6. Integrate interdisciplinary resources and grasp state-of-the-art technology to enhance innovative research and development capability. 7. Integrate supply chain management know-how to stabilize the balance between supply and demand. 8. Control the safety from source and improve production quality. 9. Adopt digital technology to link up physical and virtual distribution channels. 10. Highlight functional application of agricultural products to strengthen regional economy. The COA in 2019 pointed out that the planning of new agriculture technological strategy has combined the three essence of agriculture, namely production, life, and ecology, which may serve as the reference to promote agricultural technology program as well as industrial development. The goal is to set a new agricultural economic service model in Taiwan.

## **Support new agriculture program in response to the National Agricultural Conference conclusion**

The COA in 2019 stated that the program matched the conclusion of the 6<sup>th</sup> National Agricultural Conference, which aims to achieve resilient agriculture and integrate interdisciplinary resources from various new agricultural technology policies and measures to create a predictable safe production system. In the meantime, advanced technology could be utilized to move towards sustainable agriculture with high recoverability. Backed by Taiwanese agriculture's profound technological capability, a new agriculture that combines technological innovation, ecological sustainability, and shared value could be achieved.

Facing the global climate change, trade liberalization, the development trend of science and technology, and the opportunity for the establishment of the Ministry of Agriculture, the agricultural structure needs to be transformed, the added value should be effectively increased, and the core values of the rural areas should be paid attention. Taiwan agricultural policy focuses on the consensus of the whole people in Taiwan, and hope to propose more holistic, forward-looking and strategic governance plans by the 6th National Agricultural Conference (The Council of Agriculture of Taiwan, 2019a). These four topics are as follows:

- (1) Safety: Improving the safety system of agricultural products and promoting the production and consumption of high-quality agriculture.
- (2) Perseverance: Conserving agricultural resources and ecological environment to ensure sustainable development of agriculture.
- (III) Foresight: Using smart technology to adjust the industrial structure and comprehensively enhancing agricultural competitiveness
- (4) Happiness: Improving the economic security of farmers and creating a livable new rural area.

## **Promote representatives of New Southbound Policy partner countries to Taiwan to observe and study the development of the agro-tourism industry**

The APO (Asian Productivity Organization) is an important international organization. It was founded in 1961, with the ROC as one of the founding members. For a long time now, the COA has held APO-related activities in Taiwan, exchanging agricultural technology and new knowledge with other member countries. The main objectives of this "Multicountry Observational Study Mission on Best Practices in Agrotourism" are to upgrade APO member countries' ideas about, and understanding of new trends in, agrotourism; to search for potential tourism business opportunities as part of rural development; to increase the participants' knowledge of tourist attractions in Taiwan; and to share each country's promotional strategies for developing commercial opportunities in agrotourism.

The COA states that this observational study mission can facilitate mutual learning among Asian and New Southbound Policy partner countries regarding the development and promotion of agrotourism. Through on-the-spot visits, national representatives can personally experience the situation with regard to the development of agrotourism in Yilan and Miaoli. Moreover, it is hoped that visiting the “Agrotourism Pavilion” at the “2018 Taipei International Travel Fair” will be helpful to the development by these countries of their agrotourism industries. At the same time, the COA is taking this opportunity to promote Taiwan’s agrotourism industry in foreign markets and attract international tourists to Taiwan, thereby increasing farmers’ incomes and the value added of the “sixth level” agrotourism industry.

### **Enhance universal food and agricultural education to be implemented through “Monthly Food Day”**

To promote food and agricultural education, the Council of Agriculture (COA) sets the 15<sup>th</sup> day (similar pronunciation to food in Mandarin) of each month to be Food Day. To kick off a series of related events the COA organized a press conference led by COA Minister Lin Tsung-hsien along with the participation of celebrity chefs, consumer groups, and nutritionists. The Minister invites every citizen to take part in promoting the monthly Food Day campaign, and share locally food with friends and relatives while learning to cherish food. He hopes that more people and groups would join the cause and make food and agricultural education a country-wide movement.

The COA stated that the future emphasis of food and agricultural education would be put on the integration of school and continuing education’ s pedagogical resources to provide diversified food and agricultural educational materials; encourage the innovation and preservation of local dietary culture while creating an exchange environment for producers and consumers; establish integral food and agricultural education information platform and raise consumers’ recognition, trust, and support of domestic produce through the enhancement of domestic product labeling. The COA would work hard to expedite food and agricultural education’s legalization process so that a complete food and agricultural education system can be developed. The ultimate goal is to have every citizen in Taiwan onboard the project and enjoy high-quality domestic agricultural products as well as healthy diet.

The COA added that it vows to embed the monthly Food Day movement into people’ s mind and daily life so that it can become a healthy lifestyle that everyone enjoys while giving support to domestically produced agricultural products. The COA invites every citizen to observe Food Day every month by eating local unprocessed food in season, and share food instead of wasting food (The Council of Agriculture of Taiwan, 2019b).

The COA in Taiwan enhanced the New Agricultural Technology Strategic Plans recently. And also, COA's "New Taiwan Agricultural Technology" focuses on the themes of agriculture, fishery and livestock industries, exhibiting many innovations and products in agricultural science and technology. The COA invites some companies receiving technologies to participate together, with an aim to business matchmaking outcomes. Meanwhile, the COA exhibits quality seeds and seedlings and promote Taiwan seedling industry. The COA expects to utilize public and private partnership for promoting innovative products and technologies particularly full of international potential. The ultimate goal is to increase production value and export opportunities for Taiwan agricultural industry. The 3 pillars and 10 key policies of new agriculture policy are: (1) Establishing new agricultural paradigms: promote green payment on farmland, stabilize farmers' income, improve competition of livestock industry, advocate environment-friendly farming, support sustainable usage of agricultural resources, and develop innovation agriculture. (2) Constructing food security and food Safety System: enhance food security and ensure agricultural product safety. (3) Enhancing abilities of agricultural marketing: expand diverse domestic and overseas distribution channels for agricultural products, and increase agricultural added value.

## REFERENCES

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