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Assisting Cooperatives. Always!

राष्ट्रीय सहकारी विकास निगम

**National Cooperative Development
Corporation**

Agri-Exports and Exports Promotion Division

**PROCEEDINGS
of
CONSULTATIVE MEETING
on
Cooperative Sector Exports Promotion Forum
CSEPF**

**16th May 2019
NCDC, New Delhi**

Register Early

IICTF 2019

Incredible Opportunities for Cooperative Trade

11-13 October 2019

Pragati Maidan, New Delhi, India



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- India's first and the largest international cooperatives trade fair: sales promotion, marketing, product display, conferences, buyer-seller-meets, networking, policy advocacy
- To promote cooperative-to-cooperative trade: domestic and international
- Focused on: agriculture and allied sectors complete value chains, cold chain, exports, technology, climate smart agriculture, inputs, commodities, processing, packaging, storage, machinery, brand promotion, marketing, coop-banking, big data analytics, cyber-security, agritech, livestock, dairy, fisheries, handloom, handicrafts, textiles, consumer goods, retail, hospitality, insurance, finance, credit, healthcare, products by women groups, capacity development

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YES BANK

Exhibition Hall

7

Exhibition Area

70,000 sq ft.

Exhibitors

2000

B2B meetings

**Coop 2 Coop meetings
Thematic business conferences**

**Exhibition
Dates**

**11-13 OCTOBER
2019**

**Visiting
Hours**

9.00 am - 8.00 pm

Location

**Pragati Maidan,
15 km from
IGI Airport**



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राष्ट्रीय सहकारी विकास निगम

**National Cooperative Development Corporation
Agri-Exports and Exports Promotion Division**

**Proceedings of the Consultative Meeting on
Cooperative Sector Exports Promotion Forum
(CSEPF) held
on 16th May, 2019 at NCDC, New Delhi.**

Context:

1. As per the NCDC Act 1962, NCDC has been created for the purpose of planning and promoting programmes for the production, processing, marketing, storage, **export and import of agricultural produce, foodstuffs, industrial goods, livestock, certain other commodities and services** on cooperative principles.
2. In order to provide an impetus to agricultural exports, the Government of India have come out with an **Agriculture Export Policy (AEP), 2018**. In line with the AEP which aims at doubling the agricultural exports and integrating Indian farmers and agricultural products with the global value chains, with emphasis on food processing / manufacturing to have much higher growth, NCDC carried out a consultation on 16 May, 2019 at NCDC HO, New Delhi with all the State Governments and UTs (Departments of Cooperation/ Agriculture / Horticulture/ Industries/ Sugar/ Textiles) for formation of a **Cooperative Sector Exports Promotion Forum (CSEPF)**.
3. The idea of formation of CSEPF emerged during the *Chintan Shibir* under *Sahakar Pragya*, held at LINAC, Gurugram in April 2019, on the point of discussion on India International Cooperatives Trade Fair 2019 (IICTF) in the overall context of



Cooperative to Cooperative (C2C) trade mooted by the international organization, NEDAC.

4. Nine Additional Chief Secretaries/ Principal Secretaries/ Secretaries, three RCS and one MD from **20 States and 3 UTs** took part in the consultative meeting. Chairman, APEDA; MD, NAFED; Director in Trade Division, DAC & FW also took part in the deliberations which was **chaired by the Chairman, NRAA and the Chairman DFI Implementation Committee, MoAFW, GoI.** The total number of participants of all levels was 51. List of participants is at **Annex-1.**

Objectives

5. The consultative process aimed at deliberation of issues related to exports in the context of Doubling the Farmers Income. Specific objectives were,

- i. Desirability of giving more articulated voice to the cooperative sector exports players in a formal platform;
- ii. Exports to focus on sectors such as sugar, dairy, food grains, pulses, horticulture, meat, fish, pork, handloom and handicrafts as well as project consultancy exports;
- iii. Desirability of establishment of a Cooperative Sector Exports Promotion Forum (CSEPF) by NCDC for the cooperatives sector.

Proceedings

6. Executive Director (Agri Exports and Export Promotion), NCDC welcomed the Chief Guest Dr. Ashok Dalwai, Chairman, National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) and others. It was followed by introduction of participants.



7. MD, NCDC outlined the context of consultation and said that the Cooperative Sector had made significant progress in agriculture and allied sectors activities besides working in non-traditional and innovative areas. However, when it came to exports, the cooperative sector did not find adequate representation in export promotion bodies and export activities performed by different organisations. In the backdrop of Agri-Export Policy, 2018 which aimed at doubling Agri-exports, MD, NCDC stressed the need to deliberate upon formation of an exports promotion forum for cooperative sector.

8. Shri J.P. Meena, IAS (Rtd), Senior Advisor, NCDC highlighted the importance of cooperatives in the economy. He stated that the focus of cooperatives in India had been on the production side and they had made remarkable achievements not only at national level but at international level also. Over a period of time, there had been many constraints and the opportunities had not been tapped by the cooperatives. Nevertheless, with the change in the times, when the world was opening up, the economies were integrating and the boundaries were getting demolished, there were new opportunities for trade, Shri Meena observed. On agro-processing sector, he observed that there was increasing awareness among consumers about food safety standards linked to quality and traceability. Food safety standards world over were progressing towards that end. This held new opportunities for cooperatives in areas where there were no large scale organised production to connect emerging opportunities with individuals, small and marginal farmers. This would also provide a platform for better bargaining of products and expressing views of the farmers. Shri Meena said that the Indian agro processing sector was opening up and it was progressing faster than manufacturing sector. But the exports were facing challenges because of lack of awareness about food safety standards and the origin of products being exported. He said that the issue could be addressed if we had sufficient information about demand and the regulatory mechanism. He observed that the information could be better communicated to the primarily level production societies by a forum which could establish network with the larger importers,



the consumer and production interest groups and also educate farmers about the developments in food safety standards.

9. At the start of his keynote address, **Dr. Ashok M Dalwai** congratulated MD, NCDC for taking the much required step. He said that cooperative sector in India was more than a century old, but it was not considered to be a priority sector, while in Europe, cooperative sector leads the economies. During economic liberalization, the cooperative sector went through a rough patch for almost 20 years when cooperatives were thought not so necessary and it was thought that private sector would do everything. But, fortunately, for the last 5 years, the focus was returning to the cooperative domain and people have realized that in a country like India, the decentralized and small production centres would need aggregation and aggregation meant cooperativization, in different forms.

10. He stated that cooperatives were in a way, a parallel economy in the sense that we had a cooperative system of production which had constitutional back up like private production systems and public sector production system. Speaking on post production management and farmers welfare, he said that Government of India had suffixed Farmers Welfare in the name of Ministry of Agriculture to ensure that farmers enjoyed certain standard of living and that standard of living would come from the income that they could generate from their enterprises and agriculture. Dr. Dalwai emphasised that today for agriculture, a consumer should be an industry, a processing plant, an exporter and not just a household consumer because as long as our markets were confined to the house hold consumption, agriculture would continue to suffer.

11. Three things were to be remembered, Dr Dalwai stated. First, agri- logistics, second one was processing and the third one was marketing. Agri-logistics simply meant good storage and a warehouse compliant proper transportation system for seem less

transition of produce; secondly, primary processing of the produce at the farm level and aggregated at the particular level depending upon its perishable nature. Then, from there we need to link them to a proper market which could be an APMC, or some processing plant or it could be an export house. He reiterated that we need to strengthen our agri-logistics system. Processing is important because all that is produced cannot stay for long. Since any agriculture produce is a living organism, it will continue to breed, produce CO₂ and all kind of gaseous elements. It may stay for maximum of 8 months. Therefore, we need to process through agriculture processing, food processing and non-food processing which become so much important and when we talk about the post production, we will have to necessarily talk about agri-logistics, processing and then marketing. Talking about export marketing, Dr. Dalwai explained that Indian share in the international agriculture trade is 2%, while in terms of agriculture production, we are one of the top producers. Strictly speaking, we can call ourselves the agriculture power house of the world. He informed that today we were producing 1.3 billion tonnes of agriculture produce. Why our export was only 2% ? There was need to increase exports.

12. Speaking about the importance of exports, Dr. Dalwai said that however efficiently we created our marketing system domestically, unless we captured the larger export market, we would not be able to correct the demand and supply position. So those of us concerned with farmers' welfare and with the agriculture sector must begin now to focus on agriculture exports. At broader level, why we were not able to do that was because the exports were suffering in India on account of constraints at both supplies and demands level. On the supply side, there were primarily two or three issues. One was that we were not able to gather market intelligence. Secondly, we had not been able to maintain the quality standards as per specification of different countries and different continents. And third one was cost competitiveness. Industry sector long back realised that if we needed to compete in the market domestically or at international level, we needed to ensure cost efficiency, quality efficiency and service efficiency. The cost efficiency we all understand – the cost



of production must be as low as possible. The quality efficiency we understand - the quality must be comparable with the best in the world. By service efficiency we mean that we must adhere to the commitment. The product must be delivered on time, in a particular package form and if the percentage of quality suffers at threshold, it must be taken back. These were the supply side constraints in India, he said. There were many people who were not honouring the commitment. So how do we as cooperative sector, concerned with the supply side marketing or export marketing, took charge of cost of cultivation, cost of production, the quality and then the services related. If we take any crop for example, India's cost of production was comparably high. The reason was that our farms were small. That meant we found methods of cooperativization by now. There was now scope for cooperative delivery of services. Citing an example of Punjab, Dr. Dalwai informed that UPL, which was a company had taken a responsibility of a large area for pest management. They were primarily pesticides sellers, but now they had gone beyond pesticides sale and were supervising the farms. They kept a watch on the economic threshold limits of a particular pest threat.

13. Dr. Dalwai said that we had to reduce cost of cultivation by using technology and to ensure quality of product. We had to ensure that farmers were actually adhering to the processes. Quality would be ensured when processes were taken care of. Dr. Dalwai said cooperative sector in India was strong enough to take up the challenges and now getting back to limelight including in agriculture sector. What we could do for small cooperatives and how do we create a federation of those cooperatives that were willing to export, was an issue before us. If we really wanted to do that, the NCDC could act as the secretariat for giving them knowledge platform and secretarial services. APEDA looked after all sectors commodities, cooperative, private, etc. It was a generic organization. But since NCDC was dedicated and mandated to serve the cooperative sector, it could set up a knowledge and technology platform and also a secretarial platform for cooperatives so that the NCDC starts studying and diagnosing the problems and filling the gaps as to why cooperatives are not able to integrate themselves to agriculture value system for domestic market as well

as for export market. We should begin to start with two items, make a smaller team and with the help of APEDA have a consultant to study agriculture value system chain and identify where the weaknesses are and then build up the platform.

14. Chairman, APEDA narrated the problems being faced in exports. He said in spite of continued support of different Ministries and agencies of Government of India to APEDA, EPCs and various commodities Boards, the exports faced issues like poor quality, high freight, Free Trade Agreements, low production, export duty, perishability of fruits and vegetables, low price, quota, swine flu, pesticide, etc. He said that agri-exports were not simple, it was a complex problem. For doing exports in a sustainable manner, we needed cooperation from all levels and sides. Nobody could do it alone. He said APEDA had been working on Export Specific State Plan. In Agriculture Export Policy, announced by the Government of India, certain guidelines had been issued in parts to go ahead. APEDA was working on them. In the AEP, the emphasis was given to export centric cluster development. Shri Borthakur said that the role of cooperatives in this backdrop was very important to integrate a number of things like creating awareness among farmers, collection, aggregation and post harvest management, etc. He opined that cooperatives could identify the commodities that had to be produced and could export the surplus themselves instead of selling them to some other exporter. APEDA would help cooperatives in fulfilling their requirements, training, making award, capacity building, etc. to make cooperatives good exporters. Shri Borthakur said that APEDA had signed an MoU with NCDC and was a partner in the India International Cooperative Trade Fair (IICTF) scheduled to be held on 11-13 October, 2019.

15. In his address, **Shri Sanjay Bhoosereddy, Principal Secretary Sugar GoUP** said that there were five main sugar producing States namely, Maharashtra, UP, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. UP was the top ranked in exports of sugar in the country. During one season of sugar, the



production in UP accumulates for next three years. For export there was need of transportation of sugar to ports and exports by ships as it was comparatively cheap. Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu had the advantage of ports. In UP the cost of transporting sugar to ports was roughly Rs.8/- per kg., which was huge. There is good demand for sulphur free sugar. India is not exporting sulphur free sugar. The production of sulphur free sugar requires investment and cost of sulphur free sugar is higher. In all Sugar Melas, farmers are requested to convert the sugar to sulphur free sugar. Meanwhile, it was realised that sugar can be exported easily from UP to Bangladesh, Nepal and Burma due to transportation advantage. However, it was found that Bangladesh does not buy refined sugar, it buys only raw sugar as they have put up their own refinery. Similarly, there are other countries as well that buy raw sugar. The cost of production of raw sugar is cheaper. But again entire process systems have to be tinkered or altered. These are some of the issues in export of sugar. Presently, some private exporters are also exporting sugar.

16. Shri Bhoosereddy said that creating too many institutions would not be of much help in the longer run. Creation of synergies between institutions was more important. He was optimistic that the proposed forum would bridge the synergy gap of taking the products of cooperatives. For creation of a Forum for cooperative sector, a lot of spade work for defining the process backward and forward because farmers lack information. A lot of efforts were required in educating the farmers so that the product could be taken for standardisation and other connected issues. He requested NCDC to create a specific cell within the Forum to collect market intelligence. Shri Bhoosereddy added that in international market the price of sugar was Rs. 19/- per KG whereas the cost of production in India was Rs 30/-. How to reduce the cost of production and compete in international market was a big challenge. He said that besides transportation, the storage of sugar was very expensive. He hoped that NCDC could come in a big way in creating effective storage facilities and transportation of sugar by cooperatives.

17. Shri Rajendra Kataria, Secretary (Agriculture and Horticulture), Government of Karnataka said that making by-product of sugar was important. Sugar itself was not exportable as cost of production was very high. Farmers should be encouraged to produce high yielding variety. He said sugar cooperatives of Karnataka were not in their best shape. NCDC was required to revive the cooperative sugar sector of Karnataka. NCDC could also assist in post harvest management of agriculture and horticulture produce. Further he emphasised professionalism was the key requirement to be imbibed in the cooperative sector. He supported the idea of the Forum.

18. Shrimati Jyoti Arora, Addl. Chief Secretary (Cooperation), Government of Haryana pointed out that there were issues of market information and market intelligence in Haryana. Insofar as agriculture resources were concerned, there were issues of competitiveness and commitment, quality control and post harvest management. The State did not have information on these aspects. She hoped that NCDC through this Forum would be able to provide intelligence and information to all the states along with APEDA for, the states do not have the capacity and resources to collect and use the market information from different countries individually.

19. Regarding quality control, she said that adoption of standardized processes and procedures would need handholding and capacity building by the Forum. In Government of India, Agriculture and Cooperation were one department but in States, these were two different departments. For export activities in states, these departments need to act together. She said in Haryana agri-export policy was discussed in agriculture department while the Cooperative Department was not aware of it. She suggested that for exports, there should be one body in a State, otherwise there was every likelihood that one sector would get 70% subsidy whereas the other would get only 20%. She expressed willingness that Haryana would like to participate in Export Promotion Forum for sugar, dairy, horticulture and meat.



20. Shri Sanjeev Kumar Chadha, MD, NAFED said that NAFED as a state trading agency, exported grains and other agri-products. Highlighting the problems being faced in exports, he said we were not competitive enough in the international market. We could not export sugar as we were not able to match the international price like Brazil. In Government, there was a tendency to enhance MSP every year. The moment the MSP was enhanced, we failed to compete in the international market, which was the major constraint faced by the exporting country. Sometimes bonus was given which worsened the situation further. We fail to compete with Vietnam and Cambodia in rice exports because in Chhattisgarh price was enhanced by giving bonus over and above the MSP. So the policies of the Government need to be in tune with the export objectives. Otherwise, there was a tendency of making the commodity costlier which affected our capacity to compete. He further informed that NAFED had market intelligence cell and could contribute in providing market intelligence. He pointed out that there was a huge difference in FPOs and cooperative societies when it came to professionalism. He said NAFED could provide necessary support in formation of the Forum which was the need of the hour.

21. Shri Alok, Principal Secretary (MSME) Government of Rajasthan said that agri-export was not much in Rajasthan. It was only Guar gum that Rajasthan exported. In Rajasthan, export of Guar gum was about 37% which also depended on fuel prices. Textiles, gems and jewellery, handicrafts were main items of export, which were independent export items. So Rajasthan would require a different type of support from NCDC to export. He supported the formation of Forum.

22. MD, NCDC informed that NCDC provided assistance for handloom and handicrafts and project consultancy by cooperatives.



23. Shrimati Mini Antony, Secretary (Cooperation and Consumer Affairs), Government of Kerala said since time immemorial, Kerala had been doing good business in sectors like spices, coffee, rubber, coconut, coir, cashew, nuts and other value added products. In marine sector, there were about 700 cooperative societies. Kerala was getting support from coffee board, rubber board, coconut board, and cashew nuts board and marketing federations. Registrar had nominal control over cooperatives. The HODs of these departments were functional Registrars and they had control. If the proposed Forum would provide guidance, knowledge and financial assistance to cooperatives, the Government of Kerala would bring all these cooperatives within its ambit and the cooperative department would take a lead. She informed that labour cooperatives were doing very well in Kerala. Standardisation was required with the help of state Government so that they could be brought under single umbrella. She said transportation was not a problem in Kerala as ports were there. However, technology, information, processes and procedures were required to be updated. She supported the formation of the Forum.

24. MD NCDC informed that Uttarakhand had launched largest ever Cooperative Sector Development Project for the entire state of Uttarakhand.

25. Shri R.M. Sundaram, Secretary (Cooperation), Government of Uttarakhand said that Uttarakhand was one of fastest growing states in the country. Since its creation, it had registered double digit growth rate continuously, which was largely because of the manufacturing sector and to some extent the services sector. Primary/ agriculture sector remained stagnant in Uttarakhand. In some of the areas it might have negative growth rate. The growth was very fast in sectors like tourism, hospitality, education centres, etc. Agriculture was one sector where the state wanted to realise the potential. He observed that intervention in the primary sector was essential to extend development to interior areas. So it was conceptualised and decided to have cluster based



approach and aggregation to increase the marketable surplus to areas where buyers will be really interested in buying the products. Series of production and growth and interventions were planned and the commodities were carefully chosen. He further informed that in Yamuna valley in Uttar Kashi district, a lot of off seasonal vegetables were grown. There was an NGO which organised farmers into clusters. 15-16 villages form a cluster tackle one particular vegetable. He expressed exports was one of the activities and supported the Forum.

26. Shri Mohd. Shahid, Secretary (Cooperation), Government of Gujarat informed that dairy sector of Gujarat had faced problems in exports of milk powder as international prices of milk powder were quite low as compared to AMUL. On the request of dairy sector, the state Government provided subsidy to cover difference in the international price and domestic price for promoting the exports. He suggested having a policy to assist the dairy sector in case of problems. He further suggested that Forum should have some policy framework to provide assistance in the form of interest intervention in loan. Forum could assist in aggregating agri-products where cooperative committees and local sale purchase committee could play a significant role. Forum could play a significant role in organising FPOs and cooperatives, which could produce as per export market requirements

27. Smt. Jyoti Arora, Additional Chief Secretary (Cooperation) Haryana raised the issue that cooperatives were not crying for help and urged the Forum to act as an Advocacy Body for policy intervention in States at the time of need of cooperatives. All the States were facing problem in sugar and dairy sector. In Haryana, when the State Government was approached for intervention it was said perhaps it was inefficiency problem. In such a situation can the Government of India had collective intervention in all the concerned States through Agriculture Ministry, Commerce Ministry and Cooperation Department by interest subvention, export or import duty influence.



28. MD, NCDC said that the suggestion was noted for action in right spirit. NCDC would rather be more proactive in that respect through the Ministry.

29. Shri Abdul Majid Bhat, Secretary (Cooperation), Government of Jammu & Kashmir stated that the State of J&K was land-locked and chances of exports were very less due to high cost of transportation. J&K was leading in export of horticulture, pashmina shawl, handicrafts and Basmati rice. None of these items were exported by cooperative sector, while individual exporters were earning huge profits in export business.

30. Shrimati Yasha Mudgal, Additional Resident Commissioner, J&K said the State of J&K was exporting many commodities but the synergy between the different departments like agriculture, horticulture, cooperation and industry was required. A body of senior officers from all these departments needed to be formed for export promotion in the State. Cooperatives had not geared up as per scope and expectations of the State. The export by cooperative sector could be explored in the State.

31. Shri J.P. Agrawal, Secretary (Cooperation), Government of Mizoram said that Mizoram was hilly terrain and it was difficult to grow crops in Mizoram. Even then, Mizoram produced rice, maize, banana, ginger, pineapple but most of the products are for domestic consumption. Surplus products like ginger and pineapple were sent to Assam. The State could explore export business because of its location bordering Myanmar and Bangladesh. He supported the formation of Forum.

32. Shri Vikas Garg, RCS, Punjab informed that Punjab had 70% area under paddy cultivation, 75% area under wheat cultivation and 4% area under horticulture cultivation which caters to the local needs of the people, except for few crops. He



said that there were hardly any surplus of agriculture produce. Besides private exporters, only Punjab Markfed exported canned food and basmati rice under the cooperative sector. He said Pakistan allowed only 138 items to be imported whereas India allowed all items for import. He expressed hope that the Forum could help in tackling such issues where we could have lobbying type of structure and put up our voice. He insisted that each State should participate in the Forum and build up an emphatic structure for facilitating exports of agriculture produce through cooperative enterprises.

33. Shri B. Babu, Deputy Director (Horticulture), Telangana informed that cooperatives did not have infrastructure in Telangana State. He said that APEDA was giving assistance for infrastructure development for cargo in International Airport, Hyderabad. He further informed export was mainly being done by private persons and the Forum was required.

34. Chairman, APEDA, added that in States where cooperative sector was strong and vibrant, it was good for the society. But where it was not so strong, it was also good in the sense that it gave us a green area to start afresh. He said that new cooperatives could be formed to start producing those products that have higher export demand.

35. Dr. K Rajendran, Addl. RCS, Tamil Nadu informed that in Tamil Nadu there were two masala powder- manufacturing companies, Everest and NG which were popular in Northern India also. These companies were exporting spices powder to Middle East countries, Singapore and Malaysia. A cooperative masala powder manufacturing unit was started by a cooperative marketing society. The cooperative had fifteen types of spice powder with 100 tons of capacity. Of late, the cooperative had started online sale of its products. Impressed by its success, other cooperatives had followed suit and diversifying their activities. He supported the Forum.

**36. Shri T P Rajesh, MD TN Investment Promotion Bureau**

said that TN was producing 6000 products and had an investment of Rs. 1.95 lakh crore. The Government of Tamil Nadu had created new structure namely, Tamil Nadu Investment Promotion Bureau for facilitating exports. The bureau acted as a syndicate and a hub for providing information on the national and international trade and taking intelligence of overseas market. He said if we have a Forum to express ourselves and interact effectively it should be formed.

37. Shri DC Gupta, Deputy Resident Commissioner, Goa

informed that with sound cooperative base Goa did not have any facilities to export through cooperatives. He supported the Forum.

38. Shri Ranjeet Singh, Additional RCS, Delhi

informed that in Delhi agriculture produce was brought from the neighbouring States. The NCT of Delhi did not have any cooperative society in agriculture sector. There was a Directorate of Agriculture Marketing which regulated mandies. He supported the Forum considering the non agriculture based cooperatives in NCT Delhi.

39. Shri Jayant Kumar Ray, Additional Resident Commissioner, Puducherry

stated that Puducherry was a small union territory. Earlier Puducherry used to export textiles and beer. Of late, these exports had been discontinued. He said that in agriculture sector, the state had some potential to export onion and jack fruit, for which they were in constant touch with APEDA. He supported the Forum.

40. Shri Navin Kumar Bahl, OSD/ Liaison Officer, Coffee Board had various strategies for export. One was media campaign and the other was branding and promotion of GIA and the Coffee Board was also establishing state of art plant in Mangalore. He



said that the Coffee Board was also encouraging farmer producer organizations and cooperatives to have association with agri-value chain for export promotion. He supported the Forum.

41. Shri Vijay Rajmohan, Director (Trade and International Cooperation), Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare said that procedure of conversion from Export Promotion Forum (EPF) to Export Promotion Council (EPC) was a normal procedure. Where there was no EPF in a particular segment, one could directly go for EPC as per the Commerce Ministry guidelines.

42. He said that though MoAFW did not have dedicated market intelligence officers but as of now six market intelligence missions had been created in the Agriculture Cell of Indian Embassies abroad. They have designated existing Foreign Service officers in countries like Vietnam, China, USA and probably synergy groups could be developed there.

43. He said that for agri and allied produce, we could request Government of India to waive off the condition of registration in respect of any person, firm, cooperative or FPO so that they could export and get the benefit from Government of India. For example, for participating in trade fair abroad on agri-sector, we should waive off this requirement, even if they were not member of any EPC.

44. He further observed that creating EPF or EPC could be beneficial in traceability, gathering market intelligence, etc. For the cooperatives, marketing and brand promotion was very important aspect. For example, cooperatives were in the trade of banana. Internationally, we produce maximum quantity of banana in the world but we hardly export any. Many countries demanded banana but we did not have logistics support or connectivity to export. Further, many of our individual items were not known abroad. So, NCDC could take necessary steps through the EPF.

45. Regarding quality and standard, Shri Vijay Rajmohan said that the information was disintegrated due to lack of knowledge/ coordination between departments. Information was normally not passed on across the country through our extension system. This gap could also be filled by NCDC. He suggested that the items which were produced by cooperatives could be branded, their quality could be upgraded, and the farmer could be informed of the technology and procedures. We could think about a specific area where we could produce those which were in demand. For example, the costliest vegetable in the world was Wasabi, which had price of Rs. 10,000 per kg in the international market. India had suitable agro climatic condition for growing that vegetable, especially in the hilly region, but we were not growing that. Moringa was another example that could be grown in Tamil Nadu. Quinoa was internationally recognised as a super food. In India, except Rajasthan and some parts of AP, we were not growing Quinoa. Through the Export Promotion Forum, NCDC could fill these Gaps.

46. Another aspect was stake holder consultation. There was hardly any representation from trade division about foreign trade agreements. Besides, there was no State Government representation in such agreements. Either there was no stake holder mechanism or they were not aware of the facts. So here also, NCDC could fill up the gaps in passing on information on problems in our policies or foreign trade agreements entered into with other countries.

47. Speaking about export duties, he said that during the last two years, it had been ensured that there was no export restriction on any agri produce. Even in sugar, the duty had been removed. Minimum Export Price (MEP) was used to be fixed on various items many times. The matter was taken up with the Commerce Ministry. Now there was no MEP on any agri item. Through the Forum, NCDC could play such roles in future.



48. He said that holding an event like India International Cooperative Trade Fair was a very good initiative. In future, we should also hold this event out of the country, especially in neighbouring countries like Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh to conduct Trade Fair for cooperatives enabling them to go out and establish linkages with buyers abroad.

49. Shri P. S. Sarpraj, Deputy Secretary (Cooperation), Government of Chhattisgarh said that sugar sector in Chhattisgarh had liquidity problem as it was not getting loans from banks or the NCDC. The State was going to establish Maize Processing Units. The State was also establishing minor forest produce processing units through TRIFED. Hopefully, we would be able to export these products through the Forum, he stated.

50. Smt. Mini Antony, Secretary (Cooperation and Consumer Affairs), Government of Kerala informed that in Kerala cooperatives were doing good business in health and IT sector. If initiative could be extended to these sectors towards standardisation, it would be of a great help.

51. Shri G. Nyorak, Dy. RCS, Arunachal Pradesh said that the Forum to be established by NCDC could help in export of organic tea. Weavers cooperatives also need help of NCDC. He informed that one weaver cooperative had signed an MoU with other countries for export of its products.

52. Shri R. E. Lotha, Director (Horticulture), Nagaland explained that in Nagaland there was one export promotion committee. This Committee had identified and authorised Nagaland State Marketing Board to take up export initiatives. Nagaland had potential in export of organic pineapple and chilly. He said that there was commodity specific 20 FPOs and FPCs into



horticulture activities registered with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. However, markets were not organised. Ministry of Civil Aviation had agreed to provide aerodrome facility at Dimapur. The State had an educated young population which was eager to work for betterment. He said that Nagaland wanted to become a part of this movement and assured its participation.

53. Shri J.P. Meena, Ex-Secretary, MoFPI, Government of India & Senior Adviser to NCDC while summarizing the deliberations held in the meeting, appreciated the delegates for rendering valuable suggestions. He said that the issue for creating a platform, where cooperatives' voice was heard, had already been agitating in the mind of officers dealing with the cooperative sector.

54. He said that there were number of bodies, which were working in their own field with limited objectives. But, when we saw cooperative sector it encompassed almost all production system and all commodities. He said that there was hardly any forum where one could express or manifest requirements, needs and could take forward the need to demand and to the supply side.

55. So everybody had supported the idea that there had to be a forum which should not be like a government department. Slowly, it should take a shape of an organisation which would represent entire cooperative sector of the country, take stock of all major schemes of the cooperatives and would identify areas where it could work. As cooperative was a huge sector, taking up the entire sector, all commodities, all aspects might not be possible in the first instance for a body like this. However, some focussed area and certain focussed commodities in regions where it was easier to connect and much easier to network with the markets could be identified initially to work with.

56. He said that market intelligence, definitely, was very important aspect of collecting information if we wanted to realise



value. We would have to create a platform where we could collect market intelligence in the beginning. We could set up some nodal points which could act as information feeder and information disseminator to the cooperatives. It should have representatives not only from the State Government, but also have representatives representing major sectors like sugar, textile, horticulture so that the forum voice was heard, collated, collected, disseminated and taken forward. NCDC could provide in-house secretarial assistance in the beginning till the Forum was able to get its own resources.

57. We needed to think on the line that it became an independent agency to work. Shri Meena said that we should not be totally dependent upon the Government otherwise we would have to work according to the Government. There had been many examples like Mahagrapes, which had organised all grapes producers, created infrastructure and processing facilities and found export markets. Mahagrapes had done well in exporting grapes. There was big demand of Indian grapes overseas. This system could be replicated for other fruits like mangoes, pomegranate etc.

58. He cautioned that we must be very careful about keeping the Forum lean and thin. At the same time we should ensure that all major sectors were taken care of. He suggested that some contribution in the shape of membership fee or annual fee, etc. must be taken so that it could become viable and a revenue generating organisation which, in the long run, could take care of its own finances. Initially, it might require some support from outside, but, ultimately, we would be able to raise our own resources.

59. Concluding his final address, Shri Meena observed that not many ideas had come up from the producers or the actual exporters with the regard to the issues connected to policies, agreements, negotiations, etc. He hoped that establishment of an effective Forum would be a breakthrough in cooperative sector.



The Forum would give feedback to the Ministries before signing of international agreements and take up issues and concern of the producers in advance.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

60. Actionable Points Based on the Deliberations

S.N.	Actionable Points	Proposed Action
1	To form Cooperative Sector Exports Promotion Forum	NCDC would take steps to form the Forum (CSEPF) under its stewardship with secretarial assistance.
2	To set up an information sharing platform for exports by cooperatives.	NCDC to take steps with the support of Government of India/ APEDA.
3	To synergize with activities by cooperatives under AEP.	NCDC and APEDA
4	To collect and disseminate market intelligence for exports.	NCDC would prepare a framework.
5	To develop capacity for the cooperative sector stakeholders.	NCDC would conduct consultation with stakeholders in this regard after the Forum comes into being.

**ANNEX**

CONSULTATIVE MEETING
on
Cooperative Sector Exports Promotion Forum (CSEPF)

16th MAY 2019

Venue : Board Room, 7th Floor, National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), 4, Siri Institutional Area, Hauz Khas, New Delhi.

Time:11.00 A.M.

A. List of Participants

S. No.	Name	Designation	Contact
1.	Dr. Ashok Dalwai, IAS	Chairman, National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Govt. of India, New Delhi.	011-23383830
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47.	Sh. Sunil Kumar	AM Marketing VITA, Haryana	9729591889
48.	Sh. Rohit Singh	PS to Principal Secretary Sugar & Cane Govt. of Uttar Pradesh	9971776700
49.	Sh. Pushp Rat Singh	DDA Meerut, Uttar Pradesh	9410240930

B. NCDC Officers In Meeting

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C. NCDC Managing Committee

S. No.	Name	Designation
1.	Sh. Mukesh Kumar	Executive Director (AE & EP)
2.	Sh. Lalit Goel, Director	Director (Legal, AE & EP)
3.	Smt. Sujata	Director (Library & Hindi)
4.	Sh. C. L. Meena	AD (Library)
5.	Sh. Satya Prakash Sharma	AD (AE & EP)
6.	Sh. Sandeep Singh	AD (P & A)
7.	Sh. Sankalp Kulshrestha	AD (GA / Protocol officer)
8.	Smt. Santosh	AD (Hindi)
9.	Smt. Saroj Grover	Principal Private Secretary
10.	Smt. Sunita Dhingra	Senior Private Secretary
11.	Smt. Geeta Nair	PO (Library)
12.	Sh. Hemant Kumar	PO (MIS)
13.	Sh. Piyush Kumar	Sr. Assistant (MIS)
14.	Sh. Keshav Thakral	Sr. Assistant (AE & EP)
15.	Sh. Mayank Saxena	Jr. Assistant (Hindi)



Some snippets of the meeting:



MD NCDC, welcoming Chairman,
National Rainfed Area Authority



Sh. Sundeep Kumar Nayak, MD NCDC, addressing the meeting



Dr. Ashok Dalwai, Chairman, National Rainfed Area Authority ,
addressing the meeting



A view of the meeting



Some participants of the meeting



Sh. Sanjay R. Bhoosreddy, Principal Secretary (Sugar), U.P.
addressing the meeting



Cooperatives Transforming Business!
11-13 October 2019, New Delhi, India



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