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Paddy Processing Research Centre,
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Dated 6th June, 1977.

No.14/PH/RBC&RD/77/

Thiru K. Diraviam,
Secretary for Food & Chairman,
Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation Ltd.,
14, Thambusami Road,
MADRAS-600010.

My dear Sir,

Sub :- Operational Research Project for enhancing
the income and employment opportunities
for landless and marginal farmers in a
rice-based farming system through a
relevant package of Post-Harvest Technology

During the past few weeks, there have been a series of rapid developments, which, if energetically pursued, may lead to quick demonstrable application of scientific methods for the improvement of the earning capacity and betterment of nutrition in a rural area. The immediate object is to improve the conditions of landless labour and marginal farmers; but with the intensification of effort, the whole area can benefit.

On 23/4/77, I had the opportunity to deliver an address at a Seminar organised by the Association of Food Scientists and Technologists in collaboration with some of the Departments of the State and the Food Corporation of India. The Seminar was inaugurated by H.E. The Governor, and Dr. B.L. Amla, Director of the Central Food Technological Research Institute presided over the session. The object of the Seminar was to consider an action oriented programme for the betterment of the nutrition in rural areas. In the course of my talk, I had to make a frank statement that in spite of advances in various directions, the conditions of the rural population have not appreciably improved during the past 6-7 decades and that, if no quick steps are taken, the present trends are such that the conditions will worsen during the next decade. The participants in the Seminar took serious notice of the situation and made appropriate recommendations for action.

Shortly after the above session, I elaborated on my notes and prepared a paper which I discussed with the D.G., ICAR, whom I had an opportunity to meet at Delhi on 8/5/77. He was kind enough to take very active interest and to suggest that we should follow it up with a programme which would produce the desired results in a selected area with the necessary potentials and where there would be scope for quick, demonstrable advance. He

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also advised me that the Governor of Tamil Nadu who is very much interested in Rural Development, had already spoken to him and is keen on supporting programmes of the type which we had envisaged.

Around the same time, the D.G., FAO was also in Delhi and by a favourable coincidence, he advised the DG ICAR that he had already reserved 20 million dollars for such programmes and that he could make an immediate allotment of about \$ 250,000 if India could take the lead and submit a concrete programme at a very early date. The DG ICAR sent me a note about it and advised that I should immediately prepare a discussion paper dealing with different aspects and on the basis of which further action can be taken by the ICAR in collaboration with the State and other Ministries at the Centre.

Subsequent to that, the DG ICAR had come to South India on leave and I had opportunities to meet him on 22/5, and 29/5. Acting on his advice, we had a preliminary meeting at Tiruvarur on 31/5 when he proposed a plan of action with the assistance of a Project Preparation Group representing different disciplines. The M.D., TNCSC had kindly agreed to attend that meeting; but unfortunately he was away on leave during that week and I could not contact him. I have since sent him all the related papers.

I attach herewith copies of 1) the Discussion paper as prepared by me 2) the guide lines for action as prepared by the D.G. and 3) the letter addressed, on the same day, by the DG to his Deputy in Delhi for taking steps to constitute the Project Preparation Group.

As most of the preparatory work will have to be at the State level by specialists who are, not only familiar with the conditions, but ~~we~~ are also actually working in the area, we decided on the same day to constitute a small working committee which will meet today and take steps to divide the work in such a manner that we can get the materials ready for consideration of the Project Preparation Group as soon as it is constituted. The Working Committee is meeting today at Tiruvarur.

The DG, ICAR is now touring in South India and is expected to arrive in Madras on or before 22/6/77. He has already addressed the Governor seeking an interview between the 22nd and 24th when we could both meet him and explain the object and the steps already taken.

Before concluding, I need hardly state that the present effort is a labour of love for me. It is like some one planting coconut for the next generation. I would nevertheless be happy if all our colleagues could rally round and play their respective roles in giving an acceptable shape to the project in such a manner that it will, not only serve as a model, but also be self-replicable. The present conditions are highly favourable and if we act energetically the project can be started before the end of the year. We need a band of dedicated workers who have confidence in the progress and the will to make it a success.

Looking forward to your kind active interest and support, I remain, with best regards,

Yours sincerely,


(V. SUBRAHMANYAN)

AM/16/77.