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(i)

**COMPOSITION OF THE DEPARTMENTALLY RELATED
STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT (B)
DEPARTMENTS, 2022-2023**

CHAIRMAN::

Shri Ramendra Narayan Kalita,

MLA & Chairman.

MEMBERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| 2. Shri Terash Gowalla, | MLA & Member |
| 3. Shri Utpal Borah, | MLA & Member |
| 4. Shri Sibuj Misra, | MLA & Member |
| 5. Shri Rupak Sarmah, | MLA & Member |
| 6. Shri Kaushik Rai, | MLA & Member |
| 7. Shri Taranga Gogoi, | MLA & Member |
| 8. Shri Diganta Kalita, | MLA & Member |
| 9. Shri Darsing Ronghang, | MLA & Member |
| 10. Shri Rupsing Teron, | MLA & Member |
| 11. Shri Dharmeswar Konwar, | MLA & Member |
| 12. Shri Bharat Chandra Narah, | MLA & Member |
| 13. Shri Kamalakhya Dey Purkayastha, | MLA & Member |
| 14. Shri Jakir Hussain Sikdar, | MLA & Member |
| 15. Shri Nurul Huda, | MLA & Member |
| 16. Shri Rekibuddin Ahmed, | MLA & Member |
| 17. Shri Pradip Sarkar, | MLA & Member |
| 18. Shri Abdur Rahim Ahmed, | MLA & Member |
| 19. Smti. Renupoma Rajkhowa, | MLA & Member |
| 20. Hafiz Bashir Ahmed, | MLA & Member |
| 21. Shri Aminul Islam (Senior), | MLA & Member |
| 22. Shri Phanidhar Talukdar, | MLA & Member |
| 23. Shri Abdul Aziz, | MLA & Member |
| 24. Shri Charan Boro, | MLA & Member |
| 25. Shri Manoranjan Talukdar, | MLA & Member |

OFFICERS, ASSEMBLY SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Hemen Das, IAS, Principal Secretary
2. Shri Dulal Pegu, Secretary.
3. Smti. Prativa Teron, Joint Secretary.
4. Shri Samir Das, Under Secretary.
5. Shri Swapan Das, Protocol Officer.
6. Shri Madhab Chetri, Committee Officer.
7. Shri Fakhar Uddin Choudhury, Committee Officer.
8. Shri Mahen Chandra Doley, Superintendent..
9. Shri Lakhi Nath Mardhi, Assistant Research Officer.
10. Dr. Rosy Saikia, Assistant Language Officer.

(ii)

INTRODUCTION

1. I, as Chairman of the Departmentally Related Standing Committee on Development (B) Departments having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this **Twenty Fourth Report** on Demands for Grant Nos. 48 & 67 of the **Agriculture Department** for the financial year 2022-2023.
2. Demands for Grant have been examined by the Committee under Rule 260 J (1) (a) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Assam Legislative Assembly.
3. The Committee took evidence of the representatives of the Agriculture Department on **23rd March, 2022**.
4. The Draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on **26th March, 2022**.
5. The Committee expressed its thanks to the officials of the **Agriculture Department** for placing before them the requisite materials and their considered views in connection with the subjects under consideration.
6. The Committee would also like to place on record their deep sense of appreciation for the invaluable assistance rendered to them by the officials of Assam Legislative Assembly Secretariat attached to the Committee.

Dispur:

Dated, the 26th March, 2022

Shri Ramendra Narayan Kalita,
Chairman,
Departmentally Related Standing
Committee on Development (B) Departments,
Assam Legislative Assembly.

REPORT

CHAPTER-I

Agriculture Department (Grant No. 48)

Agriculture occupies an important role in the economic development of the State, where more than 70% of the population is still dependent on this sector for their livelihood. Agriculture is the key to rural prosperity and food security and it continues to play a significant role in the economy of the State. In order to further increase the contribution of this sector to the State's Economy, the State Government is committed to accord top priority to the agriculture sector through the overall increase allocation in the State Plan during 2018-19. Food security and poverty alleviation are two major challenges of the sector to be overcome in the interest of Welfare of the farming Community who are mostly small and marginal farmers (86.2%)

As far as the uses of Agricultural Land, net area shown is 26.99lakh Ha, i.e. 34.41% of geographical area. The gross cropped area is 39.75 lakh Ha. Average land holding in the State is 1.09 (Agriculture census of 2015-16) against a National Average of 1.08 Ha. Cropping intensity of the State is 147.24% (2019-20) against a National Average of 141.59%(2018-19). This signifies that a large percentage of cultivable land is not put to use annually and is one of the major challenges stands from the fact a large area of land, i.e., 14.241 lakh Ha is under mono cropping. However, this also offers an opportunity to enhance the production and productivity.

Assam plains have a huge potential of food grain production but productivity is normally low in most of such grains. This is so because the major portion of the plain lies in the Brahmaputra Valley which incidentally is prone to chronic flood and bank erosion. Because of this risk of flood, input management in the Khariff season is at very low level. The summer crop in Assam also has a risk of irrigation water deficit, especially because of lack of viable surface irrigation channels.

The present Government, recognize Agriculture as the vital sector for economic development of the State as given priority to Agriculture Sector.

The Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) for the Financial Year 2022-23:

- 1) **Rashtriya Krishi Vikash Yojana (RKVY)**
- 2) **Parampragot Krishi Vikash Yojana(PKVY)**
- 3) **National Food Security Mission (NFSM)**
- 4) **National Mission on Agriculture Extension and Technology (NMAET)**
- 5) **National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)**
- 6) **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)**
- 7) **National Mission on Oil seeds and oil palm (NMOOP)**

New Schemes Incorporated during FY 2022 -23 under SOPD

1. Special State Mission for Millet and Pulses:

This new scheme is proposed with a view to increasing agricultural growth at rural level for the state economy, to provide food and nutritional security, support farmer's socio economic uplift, aspirations for a comfortable life by minimizing environmental degradation with set up above objectives.

2. Extensive Maize Cultivation for fodder purpose nearby bank of Brahmaputra:

This new scheme is proposed with a view to Agricultural growth in rural areas, promoting Commercialization and for employment generation to meet up feed and fodder requirement for emerging dairy sector of Assam as a significant portion of land (20%) area adjoining streams and rivers is either lying waste due to water logging or marshy conditions, or degraded or flood prone. The state may restore all these areas affected by various types of degradation or erosion, so that this can be put to productive use in agriculture.

3. Development of Integrated District Agriculture Campus:

There are several Dist. Agriculture Office which are constructed long back, presently in dilapidated condition. To provide a better environment or work new DAO office complex construction is now essential to give quick and quality service to farming community. To accommodate the other allied agencies like Engineering, Seed Corporation etc. in complex to provide single window services.

4. Integrated farming system with irrigation facilities:

In Assam, a high percentage of natural and man made ponds are being unutilized or underutilized. The conversion of these percentage through integrated farming system with irrigation facilities and harvesting tank etc would bring a revolution to the farming community. Water use efficiency, utilization of natural resources, increasing the cost benefits ratio in relation to irrigation would be achieved which eventually will lead to the doubling of farmers income.

5. Cold Rooms in different places of Assam:

Along with increase in production and productivity of perishable Agril. Items like Fruits and Vegetables, Potatoes and some other Horticultural product like cut flower and Dairy related products, establishment of Cold storage is quite essential nowadays. In view of above fact, proposal for construction of one cold storage is prepared in phase manner. Being the 1st year an amount of Rs 500.00 lakhs as phase-1 of the work is proposed.

6. Agriculture Statistical Survey for development of farmer:

Work already underway, AADHAR based strong single nodal database of farmers being created.

7. Agricultural Management System through data capturing and Remote Sensing Technology (RST) Pilot for crop yield estimation :

8. To modernize Agriculture through various application of information technology.

9. Promotion of Natural Farming: To validate the natural farming technologies/ITKs for producing important field crop using various natural farm inputs like Panchagarva, Amritpani, Vermi -Composts etc.

10. Infrastructure Development of Agricultural Seeds Farm:

Infrastructure development of seed farm at 40 different locations (construction of Boundary wall, godown, office building, quarters etc)

11. Integrated supply chain management : To aggregate farm produce at farm gate level value addition through cleaning, grading etc.

REPORT

CHAPTER- II

Agriculture Department (Grant No. 48)

2.1 After the presentation of the Budget in the House for financial year 2022-23 on 16th March, 2022 the Departmentally Related Standing Committee held the meeting on 23rd March, 2022 to discuss on Grant No.- 48 relating to Agriculture Department. At the same time, the Committee also considered the action taken report on the recommendation made on 2021-22 in its 23rd report presented to the House on 4th August, 2021.

2.2 The Budget provision made under Grant No.-48 relating to the Agriculture Department 2022-23 are as follows :-

	REVENUE	CAPITAL	TOTAL (Rs in lakhs)
VOTED	141724.95	11690.08	153415.03
CHARGED	0.00	0.00	0.00

2401 Crop Husbandary-Horticulture	93008.88
2415 Agricultural Research and Education	44286.06
2435 Other Agricultural Programmes	4430.01
4401 Capital Outlay on Crop Husbandary	11690.08
Grand Total	153415.03

While discussing the Budget provision for the year 2022-23 ,the Committee found that the Budget so allocated comparatively less than the previous Financial Year and there is no clear indication as to why the Budget allocation has been reduced .However, the committee feels that the Department should communicate with the Finance Department ,Assam for necessary Budget provision in order to restrict the hindrances that may arise while performing the function of the Department.

The Budget estimate under Grant No.48 is Rs. **153415.03** Presented before the House for approval. The total allocated money is proposed to be spent in the Revenue and Capital expenditure respectively .

R E P O R T

CHAPTER -III

Grant No.-67

Horticulture and Food Processing Department

The Departmentally Related Standing Committee on Development (B) Department discussed the Budget provision made under the Grant No.- 67 relating to the Horticulture and Food Processing Department for the financial year 2022-23. At the same time the Committee also considered the action taken report on the recommendation made on 2021-22 in its 23rd report presented to the House on 4th August 2021.

The Budget provision made under Grant No.- 67 for the financial year 2022-23 is as below :----

	REVENUE	CAPITAL	TOTAL (RUPEES IN LAKH)
Voted	28784.35	114.00	28898.35
Charged	0.00	0.00	0.00

2401 Crop Husbandry-Horticulture	28759.35
2415 Agricultural Research and Education	25.00
4401 Capital Outlay on Crop Husbandry	114.00
Grand Total	28898.35

The budget estimate under the Grant No.-67 is Rs 28898.35 presented before the House for approval. The total allocated money is proposed to be spent in the Revenue and Capital expenditure respectively.

Horticulture sector comprising fruits, vegetables, spices, medicinal and aromatic plant, mushroom, honey and their value addition has become a viable option for farmers and entrepreneurs of the State to augment their doubling by 2022 income. It is a means of nutritional security for both Urban and Rural masses. It is also generates employment opportunity to the unemployed educated youths. Assam is making inroads towards commercialization of horticulture sector which is to be sustained for economic development of rural farming community, doubling of farmer's income and the annual growth rate has increased from 8.15% to 12.20%.

Brief Note on Grant No. 67

Assam is traditionally rich in Horticulture due to its diverse and unique agro climatic situation conducive for growing wide range of fruits, vegetables, spices, nut-crops, flowers, medicinal and aromatic plants, mushroom, bee keeping etc. And the climatic condition of Assam is conducive for growing these wide range of Horticultural crops. Horticulture crops occupy about 17% of the gross cultivated area of Assam and annually produce more than 90 lakh MT of various Horticulture produces- contributing significantly towards food and nutritional security of the State. But there are two other factors that may make Horticulture in Assam a very important sector and they are its inherent capacity for employment generation and secondly income generation at farmers level. No other sector can claim to be in a better position in this regard for a State like Assam. Foreseeing this potentiality, the Govt. of Assam took a timely decision in the year 2004 to create a separate Directorate of Horticulture and Food Processing in Assam to give focus attention on inherent potentiality of commercialization of various sectors of Horticulture. This new Directorate has started supporting farmers and Horticultural entrepreneurs in their endeavour towards commercialization which is the need of the hour.

Assam being encompassed under one of the fourteen global bio-diversity hot spots, the State is endowed with favourable agro-climatic conditions that offer wide range of options for farming as well as investment in Horticulture sector.

In order to reap the benefits of the above mentioned factors and to sustain the growth rate that has been achieved during last decade, the Department has sorted out the under mentioned strategies which remains as a big challenge for the Department.

Aims and objectives:-

- 1) Strengthening production base through area expansion of various horticultural crops and raising their productivity is the greatest challenge before the Directorate and a good beginning has been made in this direction.
- 2) In order to achieve this, the most important aspect is availability of the elite planting materials fruits, vegetables , flowers etc within easy reach of farmers.
- 3) Encourage nurseries to produce quality planting materials from genuine mother plants using latest technology.
- 4) Import elite planting materials from ICAR farms for propagation at departmental and private nurseries.
- 5) Rejuvenation of senile orchards for enhancing productivity of fruit crops.
- 6) High density planting for more return per unit area.
- 7) Special emphasis on protected and off season cultivation.
- 8) Thrust on horticulture mechanization and use of modern tools to enhance efficiency of labour and minimize the cost of production.
- 9) Importance of micro irrigation-use of sprinkler or drip system.
- 10) Precision farming.
- 11) Popularization of High Value Crops like Orchid, Anthurium, Strawberry, Apple ber, Dragon fruit , Rambutan etc.

Major Initiatives Taken Up By The Directorate

- Massive area expansion program of thrust crops like Orange, Pineapple, Banana, Apple-bar, Ginger, Turmeric, Dragon Fruit, Strawberry and flower crops etc.
- Farmers training to infuse commercial concept amongst traditional Horticultural growers in India and abroad.
- Maximum focus on raising productivity of various commercially potential crops of Assam through use of better technology, Management practices, bee keeping and planting materials is being given .
- Establishment of Model Horticulture Nursery at Byrnihat , Guwahati where Root Stock Block and Mother Block of various new varieties fruit crops has been establish.
- Up-gradation of private sector nurseries which Govt. subsidy under specific guidelines to generate adequate quality planting materials of horticultural crops.
- Similarly, post harvest aspects like pre harvest treatment, scientific harvest, setting up of pack houses collection centers with grading facilities and transport facilities are given due importance.
- The concept of organic farming is induced in the mindset of farmers and cultivation is started in ten clusters covering nine districts. The districts are – Sonitpur, Dhemaji, Golaghat, Majuli, Kamrup, Chirang, Cachar, Nalbari, Kokrajhar and Kamrup (M).
- Bee keeping is given due importance and training conducted at various level.
- Green houses provided to farmers for off season production of vegetables and raising of seedling.
- Pack houses are constructed in production pockets.
- Mushroom cultivation is getting due importance.
- Formation of FPOs and FPCs has been encouraged for doing the Agri-Business among the small holders.
- Introduction of new and high remunerative crops like Strawberry, Apple Ber , Musk melon, Dragon Fruit etc.

Centrally sponsored schemes in Assam are :

1. Horticulture Mission for North East and Himalayan States (HMNEH) :-

This is a centrally sponsored scheme being implemented in the State with a 90:10 (Central share : State share) sharing patter since 2001-02. The main objective of the scheme holistic support in production of high value crops, production of elite planting materials, development of project based activities, development of market infrastructure, farm mechanization, plant protection, skill development and post harvest management in food processing sector. The scheme provides 40-50% Government assistance for following major components :-

- (i) Area expansion of horticulture crops
- (ii) Production of planting materials of Fruits, Vegetables etc.
- (iii) Mushroom spawn production unit
- (iv) Protected cultivation
- (v) Bee box and bee colony
- (vi) Horticulture mechanization .
- (vii) Training of farmers
- (viii) Post harvest management infrastructures
- (ix) Market Infrastructure

2. Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), Per Drop More Crop :-

The Govt. of India has introduced the centrally sponsored scheme 'Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana' under 'Per Drop More Crop' programme with the objective to enhance water use efficiency in the agriculture sector by promoting appropriate technological intervention like drip and sprinkler irrigation technologies and encourage the farmers on water saving and conservation. Improvement in productivity and quality of crops is another major objective of the scheme. The scheme provides 55% Government subsidy for Small and Marginal farmers in the ratio of 90:10 between Centre and State and 45% for other farmers. In addition, the State Govt. Has given a top-up subsidy of 30% raising the total subsidy to 85% for Small and Marginal farmers and 75 % for other farmers.

3. Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), Horticulture :-

The RKVY aims at achieving 4% growth in the Agri-horticulture sector during the XI and XII plan period, by assuring a holistic development of agriculture and allied sectors. The main objectives of the scheme are to incentivize the states so as to increase public investment in agriculture and allied sector in a flexible mode so that local priorities can be emphasized. To bring about quantifiable changes in the production and productivity of various components of agriculture and allied sectors and thereby increase farmers' return.

4. Mission organic Value Chain Development for NER :-

Realizing the potential of organic farming in the North Eastern Region of the country, Govt. of India launched this special scheme during the 12th plan period. The scheme aims at development of certified organic production in a value chain mode to link growing with consumer and to support the development of entire value chain starting from inputs, seeds, certification to the creation of facilities for collection, aggregation, processing, marketing and brand building initiative etc.

The scheme is approved for a period of 3 years (2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19) and fund of Rs. 3875 lakh for the three years was allotted against which Rs. 3875 lakh were spent in production, extension, crop certification and seminar on related activities. Again, the same scheme is approved by GoI in Phase-II for another 5000ha area during the years 2018-19 for three years (2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21) and total fund of Rs. 3809 lakh for the three years was allotted against which Rs. 1762 lakh was received and spent in production, extension, crop certification and seminar on related activities and Rs. 388.92 lakh and remaining fund for value chain component is already allotted to concern FPCs and work is under process.

States own Priority Development Schemes :

The following activities are taken under SOPD 2021-22 :-

1. Establishment of Dima Hasao College, Haflong were the budget announcement during 2018-19. The Land allocation for establishment of Dima Hasao Horticulture College and NOC from Hill Area Development has already obtained . DPR and other preliminary works already completed by the actual Implementing Agency that is Assam Agricultural University , Jorhat and FOC for an amount of Rs.22.28 lakh submitted.
2. Establishment of Orchid Farm at Kaziranga against budget announcement of 2018/19, DPR prepared by NABCONS. Aerial mapping and Geo Technical Investigation is completed.Estimate to be submitted by NABCONS .Preliminary works like lay out ,jungle clearing ,fencing etc. are in progress.

Significant achievement of Horticulture and Food Processing Sector

- (1) New crops i.e. Strawberry, Apple Ber and Watermelon introduced in the State under HMNEH becomes commercially accepted important crops.
- (2) Processing variety of Potato (Chip Sona, LR, Atlanta & Kufri Pukhraj) and Tomato (Vaishali) was introduced and becomes commercially profit making crop during recent years.
- (3) Climate Resilient Production Technology of Potato (Zero tillage, partial root drying etc.) is introduced in the State with good result. Potato planter and harvester newly introduced in traditional potato cultivation areas.
- (4) A total of 10 nos. of Nurseries assisted under HMNEH affiliated for NHB Accreditation as authentic source of planting material in the State.
- (5) State Farmers Produced Papaya, Ginger, Pineapple have started export to African and Middle East Countries from Cachar, Kamrup.
- (6) Honey production becomes commercially organized sector (Honey BEE FPC, Jorhat).
- (7) 'M/s. Sigma Spices Industries Pvt. Ltd.' in the Brand name "Everyday Masala" with assistance from HMNEH established a spices processing unit at Boko and 'M/s. Amalgamated Plantation Pvt. Ltd.' at Kaliabor are major achievement for food processing in the State.
- (8) A total of 64 nos. Of Farmers Producer Company (FPC) has been formed under RKVY, MOVCD and HMNEH out of which 10 nos. Obtained C3 Certificate and 6 Nos obtained C2 Certificate .The main objective of the formation of FPC's is to enhance the value addition and export.
- (9) With the co-ordination of APEDA, Directorate has taken initiative for export of numbers of Horticultural produces to European and Gulf Counties .

New Schemes proposed by the Directorate

Additional Budget demand for existing and for new schemes

Considering the scope of different Agri-Horti commodities the Directorate of Horticulture has taken initiative to strengthen the horticulture sector and proposed an amount of Rs.171.1189 crore as additional budget under SOPD-G for the year 2022-23. The components/schemes are Up-Gradation of community canning & Training Centre, development of Orchid Park at Kaziranga, Establishment of Packaging unit of horticultural produces with natural materials like Arecanut leaf sheath in selected district of Assam, Backyard kitchen Garden ,development of production ,marketing & value addition of commercial flowers to reduce the outflow of money for commercial flower and planting material to other states, establishment of Horticulture college at Dima Hasao ,Improvement of 23 nos. progeny Orchards, Special drive on potato cultivation for process and Table variety, Special drive on onion & Garlic cultivation and renovation of existing farmers' hostel cum training center at khetri FTS adjacent to Indo-Israel Project.

Assam organic Product Promotion

Realizing the potential of organic farming in the north Eastern Region of the country, Govt of India launched this special scheme during the 12th plan period. The scheme aims at development of certified organic production in a value chain mode to link growing with consumer and to support the development of entire value chain starting from inputs, seeds, certification to the creation of facilities for collection, aggregation, processing, marketing and brand building initiative etc.

Products like Pineapple, Banana, Ginger, Red Rice, King Chillies (Bhoot Jalakia) etc. have been produced in selected clusters for promotion of Organic production.

ACTION TAKEN REPORT FURNISHED ON THE OBSERVATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS MADE IN TWENTY THIRD REPORT OF THE DRSC ON DEVELOPMENT (B) DEPARTMENTS FOR 2021-22 ON GRANT NO.48

1. During the course of discussion the Committee observed that the awareness program has not been initiated towards the uses of good quality of seeds in agricultural sector for which good quality of output has not been come out of expectedly. Therefore, the Committee recommended that the awareness program should be organized for the farmers in rural areas considering the sanctity of farmer's interest and the benefit involve therein.

Action Taken Report.

Every year, for the interest and benefits of farmer's ,the department has been endeavouring different initiative like, crop demonstration with good agricultural practices (GAP) ,giving quality seed either HYV or hybrid seeds along with technical training and organizing awareness programs under various schemes like RKVY,NFSM,APART, Seed Village program etc for crop production through involvement of farmer etc. As such the DAOs along with his subordinate officials with the helps of scientists from AAU, KVK, have organized different trainings, workshop, at different levels For use of good quality seeds, Department of Agriculture, Assam published crop calenders and brochures on different crops. In this publications, information on good quality seed and approved crop production practices have been incorporated. These publications were sent to all the District Agriculture Officers for distribution among the farmers which were distributed at various training programme accordingly.

Some of the initiative taken are tabulated below

Table 1.

ATMA Demonstration (under APART)

Year	Number of Demonstrations	Number Of Trainings	Number Of field Day	Remarks
2021-22	26,945 Nos.	1122 Nos.	614 Nos.	Each of the technical training involves 30 Nos. of farmers

Table 2.

Seed Village programme under Assam Seed Corporation Limited.

Season of crop	Name of Crops	Quantity of seed distributed(in n Qtl)	Area (in Ha)	Numbers of seed Village of organized	Quantity of seed produced	Total beneficiary Covered
kharif	Paddy, Black Gram,, Green Gram & Groundnut	53873.52	145400.18	2066	3263479.44	363500
Rabi	Mustardand lentil	2437.91	15433.30	185	129732.05	38583
	Total	56311.43	160833.48	2251	3393211.49	402083

It is worth mentioning that for the benefits of farmers, a substantial numbers of demonstration have been conducted under CS /CSS schemes like RKVY,NFSM etc which is reflected under performance budget chapter.

Besides ,a part of celebration of Azadika ka Amrit Mohutsov ,180 number of seeds sample have been drawn from various seed dealer and sent to Assam seed and organic certification Agency(ASOCA) to aware the seed dealer and farmers for use of quality seeds.

2. The Committee observed that many farmers left the paddy field undone anything after cultivation of first phase of production .

Therefore, the Committee opined that the department should take necessary initiative to create awareness amongst the farmers organizing awareness programme in LAC wise and training of the farmers so that the farmers could be emphasized to cultivate the paddy lands in different phase depending on weather .

Action Taken Report.

The Departmental extension machineries /filled functionaries have been engaged to motivate farmers for profitable cultivation of pre kharif crop like mustards, lentil, pea etc demonstration were conducted at various locations among farmers. Moreover, farmers were encouraged through distribution of seeds and input under various departmental schemes like RKVY ,NFSM etc

Every year, farmer's awareness programme on cropping system based training under NFSM has been undertaken to change the existing practices to double or triple cropping for doubling farmer income. Some of the cropping consequences are as follows-

Winter paddy-Pea, Winter paddy –Mustard, Winter paddy-Potato, Winter paddy-Rabi vegetables.

These sequences are for specific areas based on potentiality ,and accordingly, awareness programme have been undertaken under different LACs at ADO Circle level.

In this Districts, the block level training /awareness program have been conducted with the intervention of APART,KVKs and involvement of different organization like RGVN ,NGOs,to make the farmers aware about double/triple cropping for rising income of farmers while selecting the beneficiaries of the schemes /training sthe local MLAs or his representative are involved .

To create awareness for double cropping, the Department of Agriculture, Assam organised various program time to time by way of organizing road shows through LED Vans, Documentary Film, advertisement in News paper, Social Media Campaign etc.

Farmers also motivated towards utilization of fallow land for productive purpose by making available necessary inputs like improved seeds from NFSM-TRFA, irrigation facilities like STWs, Solar Pumps, and other means of irrigation facilities through departmental schemes like RIDF.

3. While discussing the Committee observed that the Agricultural products did not get the proper market value. Therefore, the Committee directed the Department to establish Marketing Board or any other State Govt. Agency in each District for obtaining the proper market value of local Agricultural products.

Action Taken Report.

Under the Provision of the Assam agricultural Produce Market Act 1972,24 Numbers of regulated market Committees had already been established under Assam State Marketing Board which Covers all the districts except East and West Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao Districts.

The Department of Agriculture, under Directorate of Agriculture and Horticulture, besides ARIAS Society have already established 135 Nos. of FPOs/FPCs under different schemes /projects viz RKVY, HMNEH, APART, MOVCD-NER under different sectors / focus commodities. These sectors/focus commodities includes Paddy(Black rice, Red rice, Joha rice, Maize, Sugarcane etc), Pulses (Black gram, green gram etc), oil seeds(Mustard and Toria), Horticultural Crop (Banana, Pineapple, Assam lemon vegetables etc), Spices (Ginger, Turmeric, Chillies, Bhoot jolokia ,etc), besides other sector like Fisheries ,Piggery ,Sericulture(Eri & Muga) The ARIAS Society under the project APART Has renovated 47 nos of markets in different districts for availing marketing avenues by the farmers. The works for the same are in progress .

4. The Committee observed that the local farmers are experiencing various difficulties for not obtaining the proper value locally produced agricultural products. Therefore , considering the increase of locally produced Agricultural products,the Committee instructed the department to make necessary step to communicate with FCI For purchasing the local Agricultural product.

Action Taken Report

As per the mandate , the FCI has been procuring paddy in the State along with other procuring agencies notified by the State Food & Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department .The Govt. has targeted to procure 10 Lakhs MT of Paddy @MSP through different agencies like Assam Food and Civil Supply Corporation, ASAMB, FCI, NACOF, NAFED and NCCF in the current financial year forgetting remunerative prices for Paddy. The present procurement price is Rs 1940/-per Qtl .The process of procurement is in progress .The paddy procurement status till 11th March 2022 is 86,894 MT by different agencies .A total of 12,342 nos. of farmers are benefited till date .

5. The committee observed that in many cases the Agricultural products are found destroyed due to the lack of proper preservation .The Committee also observed that proper maintenance has not been made in case of some cold storage already existing The committee therefore ,recommended that the Department should take initiative to construct new cold storages at Nagaon , Kamalpur,Shorbhog,Kharupetia. The Committee also noted that there is an urgent need of establishment cold storages after identifying the places where Agricultural product is higher ,particularly inShorbhog ,Kamalpur ,Nagaon,Kharupetia.

Action Taken Report

Two Nos. of 5000 MT capacity each cold storages one at Kharupetia and other at Chaigaon have been constructed and ready for use. Subject to availability of fund and Govt. direction process may be initiated for construction of cold storages at Nagaon,Kamalpur,Shrobhog.It is to be noted that the process has been initiated for assessment of damage to defunct cold storages at Jorhat and Gosaigaon for repairing and to make the cold storages functional, but due to paucity of fund the process of repairing is awaited. During the preparation of DPR,tapping of Solar energy instead of electricity subject to feasibility.Besides farmer have been informed to avail the subsidized cold storages of different capacities as per the requirement from the schemes of HMNEH and also have been encouraged to purchase 4 MT to 9 MT capacity refrigerated van at 50 % subsidy under HMNEH .One cold storage is proposed to be established at Azara near Guwahati Airport to facilitate export from the state. The preparation of DPR is under process.

6. After threadbare discussion, the Committee observed that after devastating flood the cultivated land was unuseful to grow crop and for which farmers were becomes helpless. Therefore the Committee recommended that the concern department should take initiative to examine how to cultivate crops by farmers in such devastating flood affected land so that the farmers will be benefitted .

Action Taken Report

Generally after flood, the field becomes more fertile for early cultivation of Rabi crop if there is no siltation. If there is early flood damages to paddy crop, farmers are encourage to cultivate short duration varieties of paddy to recoup the production. Cultivation of pulses like black gram, green gram is being encouraged. Moreover after flood the department has been taking up massive Rabi crop cultivation programs to substantiate loses due to flood.But when there are major siltation initiatives have to be taken for removal of slits with the help of Agriculture Engineering wing of the Department. After removal of Silts the field maybe reclaimed for use of Agricultural practices adding organic/farm yard manure etc. It is to be noted that the AAU has recommended so many varieties of crop for post flood cultivation.

7. The Committee observed that the Govt. has given importance in Agricultural sector implementing various new schemes throughout the state but the farmers are not aware about such schemes implemented for which the farmer are not getting any benefit as desired .Therefore, the Committee recommended that a district wise list should be prepared on various new schemes and the same should be handed over to the respective local MLAs with creation of wide publicity /awareness in block/District Agriculture Offices.

Action Taken Report

The Department has been facilitating for erection of holdings, banners at different prominent location of the district and different Departmental office premises for wide publicity of the benefits offered to farmers through departmental schemes. Moreover ,publicity of the benefits of the various departmental schemes were done at departmental meetings, training etc .To create awareness among the farmer/growers in District level ,Block level, ADO, Circle level, several training programs /awareness camps have been organized for getting benefit of different schemes. The guidelines of different schemes have been apprised to the concerned stake holders for implementation and selection of beneficiaries .It is worth mentioning that most of the departmental schemes have been implemented at the field level with concurrence of MLAs/MLAs representative/PIR member for the farming communities.

The following are the initiative taken for implementation of different schemes in district level

- I) Wide publicity through print and digital media.
- II) Allotment of inputs like seeds etc usually done in consultation with Hon'ble MLAs of the respective constituencies or their representative.
- III) Selection of beneficiaries is mandatory for approval by District Level Approval Committee where the Hon'ble MLAs are member of the Committee.
- IV) IV) Different inputs are usually distributed ceremonially in presence of Hon'ble MLA.
- V) V) Regular monitoring of all schemes have been carried out through video conferencing from the head quarter.

8. The Committee observed that a gross violation is found in the preparation data entry list for farmers. Consequently some fake beneficiaries are incorporated in the list.

Therefore, the Committee recommended that data entry verification should be made in such a way so that the genuine farmer should not be left out.

Action Taken Report

The Govt. of Assam has conducted a one man enquiry in May, 2020 under Shri Jishnu Barua, IAS the then Additional Chief Secretary to Govt. of Assam. After the probe PM-KISAN portal has been left with 19.47 lakhs of eligible beneficiaries out of total 31.25 lakhs of 1st level validated portal registered beneficiaries.

After formation of new Assam Govt. in 2021, a verification of all the eligible beneficiaries from in the year 2020 were verified under the supervision of Principal Secretary in BTC, KAAC & NCHAC and the Deputy Commissioners of all the districts with the help of Revenue Circle Officers. During verification it has been noticed that many bona fide farm families were getting marked as ineligible due to land occupancy criteria required as defined under PM-KISAN.

On receiving such feedback from the verification, the Govt. of Assam has issued relaxed guidelines on land occupancy criteria for the PM-KISAN Schemes vide Notification No. AGA.242/2021/1 Dated 12th August 2021. The Directorate of Agriculture, Assam as the implementing department of the scheme, has requested all the Principal Secretaries to BTC, KAAC & NCHAC and the Deputy Commissioners to verify the complete list of 1st level validated beneficiaries and self registered beneficiaries available on the portal with the help of Revenue Circle officers, so that all eligible beneficiaries get the benefit of the scheme.

The Directorate of Agriculture also issued instruction to the Districts to take initiative for enrolment of new eligible beneficiaries on the portal in line with the PM-KISAN operational guideline. As on date 1,28,561 nos. of new beneficiaries have been registered on the portal after due field verification and approval of DLCC For PM-KISAN against total receipt of 7,17,618 nos. of new application in the district. The process of new beneficiary registration is underway.

9. The Committee observed that the Agricultural sector can enhance the income of the farmers by knowing new technologies of Agriculture.

Therefore, the Committee recommended that selected farmers with MLA have to take for exposure visit outside the Country, so that they can be acquainted with new Agricultural technologies.

Action Taken

Time to Time exposure visit of farmers has been conducting within state as well as within the country to provide knowledge regarding new Agriculture technologies amongst the farmers. Under APART, a project by ARIAS Society, there is a provision for international visit which is availed by Govt. staff, consultants in the past. However the international visits have been put on hold for last two years due to COVID-19 pandemic. Once the pandemic situation improves international visit can be taken up including farmers and Hon'ble MLAs. Further initiatives will be taken up from the department for visiting outside country for gathering knowledge on advance Agriculture Technologies.

ACTION TAKEN REPORT FURNISHED ON THE OBSERVATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS MADE IN TWENTY THIRD REPORT OF THE DRSC ON DEVELOPMENT (B) DEPARTMENTS FOR 2021-22 ON GRANT NO.67

1. The committee has observed that scope for Employment generation in floriculture sector Involving women and educated unemployed Youths. The Committee has recommended that fund For development of Entrepreneurship in floriculture sector is to be earmarked under Grant No.67 and as such recommended that an amount of rupees 500.00 lakh maybe allotted Under SOPD.

Action Taken :

Budget for a project proposal on "Development of production marketing and value addition of commercial flower to reduce the outflow of money for Commercial flower and flower planting materials to other states" for Rs.500.00 Lakh has been submitted for the year 2022-23.

2. The committee observed that out of 23 Numbers of Departmental Farms/Progeny Orchards,15-16 farms/progeny orchards are lying Idle. The committee has recommended that a Strategy is to be taken so that the farms are remain free from encroachers and develop in a Phase manner.

The committee also recommended to allot Rs.300.00 lakh under SOPD besides support from Ongoing schemes.

Action Taken:

Budget demand of 550.00 lakh has been submitted for 2022-23 for development of all the 23 progeny orchards in phase manner. Out of Rs.537 lac against SOPD Sectoral Allocation a demand of Rs.55 lac against development of progeny orchard has been Submitted for 2022-23. For the year 2021-22 an allocation of Rs.21.54 lac Against development of 4 Nos.Progeny orchard has been submitted. Detailed status of progeny orchards under Directorate of Horticulture & FP ,Assam is placed as Annexure I. In the Progeny Orchards located Inside city/town or adjacent areas, where planting material production of fruits/flower crops and Training centres for skill development of rural as well as urban educated youth will be taken up.

3. The committee observed that the Directorate of Horticulture & FP is running with shortage of manpower and functioning mostly officers attached from Directorate of Agriculture. .Therefore ,the committee has recommended That proposal for creation of 55 new posts under Directorate & FP ,as per correspondence made to the finance department.

Action Taken:

Proposal in prescribed format has already been submitted to Government vide No. HortFP/493/Vacancy & Appointment /2019/20/45 dated 28-09-2021. Cabinet Memorandum under preparation.

4. After threadbare discussion the committee observed that there is Tremendous scope for entrepreneurship Development and employment generation in Horticulture sector.

Therefore the committee has recommended that the fund under SOPD is to be allotted to the Directorate of Horticulture for entrepreneurship development and product promotion at national as well as international level and to attract investors.For this component an amount of Rs.15.00 Cr is to be allotted to the Directorate of Horticulture ,Assam under SOPD.

Action Taken

Budget demand (2022-23) for the following schemes have already been placed as-1.) Establishment of packaging unit of horticultural produces with natural materials like Arecanut leaf sheath in selected districts of Assam =350.00 L 2.) Renovation of existing Farmers' training centre cum hostel at Khatri FTS adjacent to Indo Israel project=200.00 L 3.) Development of production ,marketting and value addition of commercial flower in Assam=2050.00L TOTAL=2600.00L or 26.00 cr.

5. During the course of discussion, the Committee has observed that few selected Horticultural commodities like Assam Lemon, Jack fruit,pineapple,banana etc.have scope. .For value addition and market linkage.

Therefore,the committee has Recommended that Directorate of Horticulture & FP should initiate for market linkage of Various horticultural products giving thrust for Export promotion of such commodities so that the producers/farmers can get remunerative Prices.

Action Taken:

The proposal for product promotion campaign of Assam Lemon in four metro cities,viz.,Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Pune,has been approved by the Government Sensitization of different district on export promotion is going on. Regular meeting with exporters / district level officers and producers are conducted in association with APEDA. Identification of area under exportable crops In each districts is going on in association with DAOs / KVKs.

6. The committee has observed that the Centre of Excellence (CoE),Citrus at Bamunigaon, Chaygaon under Kamrup District is not fulfilling the objective for which it was set up. Therefore,the committee has recommended to take steps to develop the CoE, Citrus at Bamunigaon, Chaygaon so that large scale generation of quality Planting Material of citrus can be taken up to meet up the demand of local citrus growers .The committee has recommended an amount of Rs 50.00 lakh under SOPD to make it self sustainable.

Action Taken:

- a) Preservation of different varieties / species of citrus under protected conditions has already been proposed.
- b) Already 2 Nos.shade net house measuring 1000 Sq.mt each has already been developed for production of citrus seedling.
- c) During last season ie. May June/2021,total 1000 Nos.of mother plant of different species of Citrus has been planted at CoE,Citrus at Bamuni-gaon for Multiplication of planting materials.

7. The committee has observed that several Unemployed youth have come forward for scientific Cultivation of high value crops like water melon in different districts specially at Mazbat.(Udalguri district). But the farmers are not getting proper market linkage.

Therefore the committee has recommended to visit to such upcoming location /areas by the head quarters officers and district officers with experts from AAU/KVKs so that the farmers can be guided for entire value chain development of high value crops.

Action Taken

A visit was paid by the HQ officials accompanied by KVK,Udalguri scientist and District Agricultural Officer,Udalguri along with Senior officials from the district. A fruitful interaction was done with the farmers of Mazbat area by the KVK scientist and Agricultural Officers regarding value Chain Development of high value crops. Marketing strategy has been planned involving APART team from Darrang district for Marketing of watermelon during coming harvesting season.

8. The committee has observed that there is excess use of chemicals in some area which adversely affect the soil health.

Therefore, the committee has recommended that prior to taking any demonstration, soil testing is to be done so as to avoid indiscriminate use of chemicals including in the departmental farms .

Action Taken:

Training on judicious use of insecticides & pesticides using integrated pest management Practices (IPM) has been a regular activity conducted by the Agricultural Extension assistant (AEA), Agricultural Development Officers (ADO) and other officials of the department. Soil samples from the villages are regularly collected and tested free of cost in the departmental soil testing laboratories located in different districts. Many farmers are also provided Soil Health Card (SHC) free of cost under the Centrally Sponsored scheme ,viz., National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NAMSA).

Directorate of Horticulture & FP, Assam has been implementing a Central Sector Scheme, viz., Mission Organic value chain development For North Eastern Region (MOVCD-NER) under which organic farming is being promoted through Farmers Producer Company (FPC). Here, after selection of organic area, buffer zone is maintained by concerned FPC which is Maintained by State Lead Agency (SLA) through Resource Institute. Moreover, every farmers are provided to Construct on farm unit individually and remaining off farm inputs were supplied by state Lead Agency (SLA), Assam to concerned FPC as per Scheme provisions. Certainly no chance of chemical in this area.

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
(AGRICULTURE)
Grant No. 48

The Committee scrutinized the records and took evidence of Departmental Officials and after threadbare discussion made the following observations and recommendations:-

1. During the course of discussion the Committee observed that the Budget allotted for the Financial Year 2021-22 could not be utilised due to lack of action plan.

Therefore, the Committee directed the Department to prepare the action plan of various schemes for the Financial Year 2022-23 so that the Budget allotted should be utilised properly in due time.

2. While discussing, the Committee observed that the construction of cold storage at Kharupetia has been completed. Priority should be given for establishment of other cold storages at different places.

Therefore, the Committee recommended that the construction of cold storages at Nagaon, Kamalpur, Sorbhog should be given priority and also directed the Department to make a survey to identify the places where Agricultural production is higher.

3. The Committee observed that the farmers were taking loans from different banks/Institutions at higher interest rates.

Therefore, the Committee recommended that the department should take necessary initiative for large publicity amongst the farmers for taking loans from Co-operative society at low interest rates.

4. The Committee observed that the farmers have to provide knowledge of new Agricultural technologies.

Therefore, the Committee recommended that farmers with Hon'ble MLAs have to take for exposure visit outside the country.

5. During Discussion, the Committee observed that District Agricultural officers are not aware about the publicity of Agricultural products.

Therefore, the Committee recommended the concerned Department to open an website apps regarding the publicity of Agricultural products.

6. During the course of discussion, the committee observed that some of the Sub Division officers under Agriculture department are not in a good condition.

Therefore, the Committee recommended that necessary steps to be taken to examine and renovate the Sub Division officers in a phase manner.

7. The Committee observed that the farmers did not get the proper market value under MSDP Scheme.

Therefore, the Committee directed the Department to establish Government agency in each block so that the farmer can get proper market value.

With these observations, the Committee recommend that the total amount of Rs.153415.03 lakhs as sought for, under Grant No.48 (Agriculture) for the Financial Year 2022-23 be approved by the August House.

The Action Taken Report on the recommendation may be submitted to the Committee within 90 (Ninety) days from the date of presentation of the Report in the House.

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
(HORTICULTURE & FOOD PROCESSING)
GRANT No.67

The Committee scrutinized thye records and took evidence of Department Officials and after threadbare discussion made the following observations and recommendations:-

1. During the course of discussion,the Committee observed that out of 23 numbers of Departmental Farms /Progeny orchards,15-16 farms/progeny orchards are lying idle.

Therefore, the Committee recommended that a strategy is to be taken so that the farms are remaining free from encroachers and to develop in a phase manner. The Committee also recommended to allot the remaining 245.00 lakh under SOPD to develop the 23 Nos.of Progeny orchards in a phase manner.The Committee also advised the concerned Department to enhance the rate of production through FPO or NGO.

2. The Committee observed that the farmers are not aware about different schemes under Horticulture Department.

Therefore,the Committee recommended that necessary steps to be taken for arranging wide publicity and training of different ongoing schemes so that farmers can avail the benefits of the schemes.

3. The Committee has observed that the Directorate of Horticulture & FP is running with shortage of manpower and functioning mostly officers attached from Directorate of Agriculture.

Therefore,the Committee has recommended that proposal for creation of 55 (fifty five) new posts under Directorate of Horticulture & FP as per correspondence made to the Finance Depratment.

4. The Committee observed that fruits production in some places are very excellent such as Bhabanipur - lemon,Mazbat- watermelon and there is a huge scope for production in other places also.

Therefore, the Committee recommended that a strategy is to be taken to increase the food processing where production is higher.

With these observations, the Committee recommend that the total amount of Rs.28898.35 lakhs as sought for, under Grant No.67 (Horticulture & Food Processing) for the Financial Year 2022-23 be approved by the August House.

The Action Taken Report on the recommendation may be submitted to the Committee within 90 (Ninety) days from the date of presentation of the Report in the House.
