

FUEL AND FODDER

(Item No. 12)

01. Afforestation programme for fuel, fodder and timber is mainly rural labour intensive . About 80% of the cost on works flow as wages to the labourers. The scheme for fuel tree plantation is being implemented in the fuel scarcity districts. To meet the fuel wood requirement the forest department is implementing schemes like Social Forestry Programme, Interface Forestry and Comprehensive Forestry Programme. The interface forestry envisages utilisation of forest area and common wastelands for raising fodder (peripheral) fuel wood (middle) and timber (interior). The local people living in the forest belt area are being involved in this scheme, which will create additional employment and income to them. Hence, the benefit of the scheme directly reaches the local people by way of providing employment during the plantation establishment period and as a produce during the harvest period. Agriculture Department and Rural Development Departments implement agro forestry in the private wastelands and social forestry in the Community/Panchayat/Panchayat Union vested wastelands, and tanks respectively.

02. Fodder development and production farms are part and parcel of the Animal Husbandry Programmes. Agriculture and Forest Departments also undertake the fodder development programmes. Fodder being very vital the success of the dairy programmes in the State, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University and Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University carry on the fodder research. Forest Research Institute also takes up fodder research in a limited scale.

03. The Animal Husbandry Department is paying special attention to the fodder development activities throughout the State to augment fodder, supply to meet the increasing demand. In Tamil Nadu the farmers are generally inclined to grow commercial or food crops other than fodder crops due to limitation of land, and irrigation. However, Government sponsored fodder development motivates the livestock owners to take up fodder cultivation to meet their requirements. The department supplies fodder slips, fodder tree seedlings, fodder seeds etc., through various programmes.

04. In order to increase the fodder production, high quality fodder seeds and seedlings and fodder slips are supplied to the farmers under schemes such as World Bank aided Livestock Development Programme and projects under EEC, HADP. The staff in the district forage development team in each district also provide technical assistance to farmers in intensifying fodder production. Thus fodder production and development are intensified by various development programmes and schemes without affecting the production of other essential crops of the State. The demand for fodder is likely to increase due to the importance attached to dairy development activities. Generally, there is no scarcity of fodder in the State. During severe drought conditions, certain areas face fodder shortage, which is overcome by inter district movement of fodder. However, the Evaluation and Applied Research Department had undertaken an evaluation study on 'Cattle Feed Management in Tamil Nadu 1994' adopting Multi stage random sampling method. According to the evaluation report it is informed that there exists wide gap between the requirement and consumption of animal feed in Tamil Nadu. The gap is found to be 63% in dry fodder, 93% in green fodder and 78% in feed concentrates. The demand for fuel wood will also increase manifold because of growing population. Changes in regulation of Forest Department such as banning of fuelwood collection from the reserved forest will further worsen the supply position of fuelwood. Therefore, the Village Panchayat and Panchayat Union have to play a crucial role in increasing the supply of fodder and fuel by involving the community and using the common property resources. The Animal Husbandry Department and the Forest Department would supply fodder seeds, fodder slips, seedlings for raising fuelwood plantations. Under forest sector, fuel and fodder are produced through the schemes viz; (1) Raising firewood and fodder plantation under National Waste land development and (2) Rural fuelwood plantation and afforestation. There are eleven Livestock Farms functioning in the State under Animal Husbandry Department.

05. Village Panchayats are normally vested with the ownership of grazing porombokes and should, therefore, take up the role to promote social and farm plantations in community wastelands, panchayat vested lands for generating income, creating local employment besides meeting the fuel, fodder and timber needs in the village. Village Panchayats should encourage and assist villagers to develop their own fodder plots, fuel plantations with suitable species on commercial scale. For cattle grazing in community and panchayat pastures, Village Panchayat should charge appropriate licence fees. Panchayat Union can implement fuel and fodder development schemes directly or through Village

Panchayats and under take review of schemes implemented by Animal Husbandry, Agriculture, Forest and Rural Development Departments. The role of the District Panchayat is to draw up plans and review the fuel and fodder development programmes through the Standing Committee on Agriculture. In the above background, the following entrustment of powers are recommended for the rural local bodies.

I. VILLAGE PANCHAYAT

<i>ACTIVITY</i> (1)	<i>ENTRUSTMENT OF POWERS</i> (2)
1. Production of Fodder and Raising of fuel wood lots.	1. Assessment of fuel and fodder requirements for the village. 2. Identification of Village wastelands/degraded lands for taking up fuel wood lot and fodder plantations. 3. Selection of species/sites for fuel/fodder plantations. 4. Encourage in supply of nurseries, seed farm for the fodder and fuel. 5. Maintenance and protection of fuelwood plantation/fodder plots in community/panchayat/unreserved Forest, Interface Forest lands. 6. Deciding mechanism and over-seeing the distribution of fuel and fodder produce from community plots. 7. Promote awareness building for use of fuel efficient devices like smokeless chullah and solar cookers and improved fodder species. 8. Collection of fees for permitting animals for grazing in the community forest. 9. Raising and distribution of fodder seeds/slips to local people.

II. PANCHAYAT UNION

<i>ACTIVITY</i> (1)	<i>ENTRUSTMENT OF POWERS</i> (2)
1. Production of fuel and fodder.	1. Identification of waste lands/degraded lands for taking up fuel/ fodder plantation. 2. Identification of sites for fodder nurseries. 3. Co-ordinating nursery establishment programme. 4. Distribution of fuel-efficient wood stoves, smokeless chullahs, and solar cookers. 5. Awareness building for use of fuel-efficient devices and improved fodder species. 6. Implementation of Rural Fuelwood Plantation and Afforestation Programme and raising of firewood and fodder plantation programmes. 7. Review, fuel and fodder schemes implemented by Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Forest and Rural Development Departments.

III. DISTRICT PANCHAYAT

<i>ACTIVITY</i> (1)	<i>ENTRUSTMENT OF POWERS</i> (2)
1. Production of Fuel and Fodder.	1. Undertake district level Planning for fuel and fodder development programmes and advise the State Government and Panchayat in the subject. 2. Supervising and monitoring of the local bodies and Departments, Agriculture, Rural Development, Forest and Animal Husbandry in the implementation of various schemes on Fuel and Fodder. 3. Arranging supply of fuel and fodder from surplus area to deficit areas in the district.

Administrative and Legal Implication

06. The developmental activities of the Animal Husbandry Department are carried out by Staff employed in all the Veterinary Institutions of the State. The Livestock farms and implementation of various schemes are under the control of Animal Husbandry Department while the Forest Department is having administrative control of their schemes. There are no legal implication in this subject.

Financial Implication

07. With regard to the scheme "Rural Fuelwood Plantation and Afforestation" in Eco-sensitive Non-Himalayan areas under assistance shared between State and Centre during 1994-95 was Rs.216.44 lakhs, 1995-96 Rs.284.03 lakhs and for the year 1996-97 will be Rs.289.73 lakhs. The financial assistance sanctioned under Animal Husbandry and Forest Departments are extended in 3 other schemes namely (i) Fodder Development, (ii) Rural Fuelwood Plantation Programme and (iii) Raising of firewood and fodder plantation programme in Non-Himalayan Sensitive Area. These funds need to be transferred alongwith scheme implementation functions to Panchayat Unions.