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Preliminary Study on Management of Agricultural Scientific Research Projects in the New Situation

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Abstract Project management of agricultural scientific research institutions is an important section of agricultural scientific research plan management. It is of great significance for sustainable development of scientific research work of scientific research institutions. According to a series of opinions and notices about scientific and technological system reform issued by the state, and combining current situations of management of scientific research projects in scientific research institutions, this paper made a preliminary study on management of agricultural scientific research projects in the new trend. Finally, on the basis of the current situations of management of agricultural scientific research projects, it came up with pertinent recommendations, including strengthening communication and cooperation and actively declaring projects, strengthening preliminary planning of projects and establishing project information database, reinforcing project process management, ensuring on-time and high quality completion of projects, and strengthening learning and improving quality of management personnel.

Key words Agricultural scientific research projects, Management, Scientific research institutions

1 Introduction

Since the implementation of *Outline of the National Program for Long- and Medium-Term Scientific and Technological Development (2006 – 2020)*, China's financial input to science and technology has been increasing, and scientific research projects and fund management are constantly improving, which lay powerful support for development of scientific and technological undertaking. However, there are still such prominent problems as separate and repeated project arrangement, not scientific and transparent management, and low benefit of fund use, etc. In view of these problems, the State Council issued *Several Opinions of on Improving and Strengthening Administration of Scientific Research Projects and Funds Supported by Central Finance* ([2004] No. 11) and *Notice on Issuing the Program for Deepening the Reform of the Administration of Central Finance Science and Technology Plans (Special Projects and Funds)* ([2014] No. 64). These proposed overall arrangement and opinions from the project and fund management, and put forward many measures for reform of scientific and technological system, in order to regulate scientific research project and fund management and create favorable scientific research innovation environment. Agricultural scientific research institutions should do well in management of scientific research projects in the new situation. In this paper, we will make a preliminary study on current situation of management of agricultural scientific research projects in the new situation and come up some recommendations

on the basis of current situations.

2 Current situations of management of agricultural scientific research projects

Project management of agricultural scientific research institutions is an essential section of agricultural scientific research plan management. It is the management from declaration, establishment, implementation, and closing of scientific research projects. The existing scientific research management mode of agricultural scientific research institutions in China is like this: most agricultural scientific research institutions are provided with scientific research management department and fixed management personnel; management department notifies and guides frontier scientific research personnel to submit project declaration formalities according to declaration time of various projects; after review and approval of academic committee or related experts, send projects to the declaration department. The approved projects will be implemented and completed by project team members under the leadership of the project responsible person. After the completion of projects, according to requirements of superior management authorities, project organization institutions should submit project closing and acceptance application documents to superior authorities and implement project closing and acceptance under the guidance of superior authorities. In such scientific research project management mode, there are many problems of project management.

2.1 Lack of preliminary study and long-term plan At present, most agricultural scientific research projects lack preliminary study and long-term plan. Most projects are established hurriedly without adequate preparation. Besides, most agricultural scientific research projects are not designed with a long-term plan. Good planning does not always succeed. Poor planning does not always fail. However, without a long-term plan, agricultural scientific research projects will not have distinctive direction. The act of plan-

Received: September 10, 2015 Accepted: October 16, 2015

Supported by Special Project for Reform of Non-profit Scientific Research Institution "Study on Whole Process Management of Agricultural Scientific and Technological Projects".

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ning itself changes the situation in which the agricultural scientific research institutions operate.

2.2 Insufficient reserve of agricultural scientific research projects and inadequate combination with agricultural realities

In China, agricultural scientific research projects are insufficient. Most agricultural scientific research projects are old and out of date. No new ideas are put forward. Researchers just refer to old ideas and opinions and discuss old projects. The reserve of agricultural scientific research projects is small. Besides, most agricultural scientific research projects just remain at theoretical discussion but fail to combine agricultural realities. In other words, most agricultural scientific research project are not practical. We know that theoretical studies should combine practice, so agricultural scientific research projects should also combine agricultural realities.

2.3 Limited project research period and insufficient continuation of research contents

All research projects in China are set with certain period. From declaration, establishment, implementation, closing and acceptance, research projects are not flexible. Some projects need short time, while some projects need long time. If setting a limited period for certain project, it will become rigid and research personnel will fail to bring into play their advantages. They have to complete declaration, establishment, implementation, closing and acceptance of projects in a hurry. As a result, the project results will be bad and no outstanding achievements will be realized. The project will fail to continue and just complete in a hurry to implement the closing and acceptance formalities. Therefore, it is recommended to set project period according to specific project characteristics and realities.

2.4 Lack of supervision and guidance in the implementation of agricultural scientific research projects

At present, most agricultural scientific research projects are implemented without supervision and guidance. Without adequate supervision and guidance, agricultural scientific research projects will become chaotic. Funds for agricultural scientific research projects will become not clear and may be embezzled or misappropriated. Also, without proper guidance, agricultural scientific research projects will become disunited, agricultural scientific research personnel may be confused about how to implement the projects. Therefore, it is required to strengthen supervision and guidance of agricultural scientific research projects in the whole process of management of agricultural scientific research projects.

3 Recommendations for management of agricultural scientific research projects in the new situation

In view of the current situations of agricultural scientific research projects and combining existing policies and regulations, we came up following recommendations for management of agricultural scientific research projects in the new situation.

3.1 Strengthening communication and cooperation, and actively declaring projects

A distinctive characteristic of scientific and technological development is the crossing of disciplines and

rapid change of science and technology^[4]. These require scientific and technological communication and cooperation of different disciplines, fields and objects, to improve scientific and technological strength jointly. After reform of new scientific research system, various projects will be consolidated and project sources will become less. Therefore, it is recommended to strengthen communication and cooperation between committees and ministries, scientific research management departments of nine provinces in South China and scientific education institutions of each province, to participate in more competitive scientific and technological projects, to strive for project establishment and funding.

3.2 Strengthening preliminary planning of projects and establishing project information database

Agricultural scientific research institutions should follow closely development frontier of domestic and foreign agricultural scientific research development, fully survey and study key problems restricting industrial development, constantly update research contents, and strengthen scientific research reserve work, to realize benign cycle of agricultural scientific research projects. Establishment and completion of scientific research projects are relative and dynamic. Application of new projects should be based on preliminary researches and combination with new problems, so as to make the study constantly deepening, constant generation of achievements, and gradual improvement of level, to guarantee healthy and sustainable development of scientific researches.

3.3 Reinforcing project process management and ensuring on-time and high quality completion of projects

Whether projects can be completed in high quality and on time will exert influence on person responsible for projects, but also influence reputation of the institution^[5]. Therefore, after the project is approved and established, it is recommended to reinforce project implementation, implement the project from person responsible for the project, project team, and research institute, to guarantee completion of projects on time and in high quality, and ensure reputation and credit of the research institute, to lay solid foundation for future project declaration.

3.4 Strengthening learning and improving quality of management personnel

Scientific research management personnel are the most direct and grass-roots managers of scientific research management of research institutions. In the declaration and research of scientific research projects, they function as reporting and assigning research jobs. Familiarity and understanding degree of scientific research management personnel about agriculture-related policies as well as scientific research jobs directly influence management level and implementation effect of scientific research institutions. Therefore, scientific researches set forth high requirement for quality and ability of scientific research management personnel. It is recommended to strengthen learning and understanding of related national policies and project management provisions of project jurisdiction departments. Besides, scientific research management personnel should get familiar with in-house business,

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ment and examination system and select villagers and cadres with high sense of responsibility, rich experience of water conservancy and high reputation among villagers to serve as water conservancy management workers. In addition, it is recommended to improve treatment and establish post promotion mechanism for grass-roots water conservancy projects, establish and improve scientific and reasonable personnel management system, improve target evaluation and examination system, and provide refresher training opportunity, and make effort to improve management and service level and ability of grass-roots water conservancy projects. Further, it is recommended to actively implement election of chief water conservancy management worker, cultivate a good many experienced, professional and outstanding grass-roots water conservancy management workers, and encourage water conservancy management workers to be conscientious and meticulous in work, to promote improvement in overall quality of water conservancy management worker team.

4.3 Actively developing rural water use cooperative organizations and specialized service organizations It is recommended to encourage and guide farmers to voluntarily set up cooperative organizations, responsible for construction, management and maintenance of farmland, water conservancy, and portable water projects, to solve the problem of vacancy in entity of collective water conservancy management. Townships (offices) should provide financial support for water use cooperative organizations. Civil affairs department and water conservancy department at all levels should strengthen management and guidance of registration of water use cooperative organizations, and support benign operation and reasonable charging. In addition, it is recommended to strengthen study and practice of professional service organizations and water affair law enforcing teams such as specialized water conservancy management organizations, specialized flood prevention and rescue teams, drought-resistant service teams, and water conservancy scientific and technological extension service organizations, and actively explore specialized service team construction

and management mode.

4.4 Straightening out fund input mechanism Rural grass-roots water conservancy service belongs to public welfare function and nature, so the personnel wage, office funds and social security funds should be incorporated into financial budget of county government. Specifically, county-level financial department should establish and improve fund guarantee mechanism and strictly appraise grass-roots water conservancy management personnel and office fund standard, and do well in fund allocation and management. Besides, county and township government should energetically support construction of township level water conservancy management stations, actively assume construction and management funds for grass-roots water conservancy service institutions, and improve work and service conditions of grass-roots water conservancy management service organizations. For poor-stricken counties, it is required to provide preferential policies and provide suitable financial support. County-level financial department should strictly appraise subsidy and office funds standard of grass-roots water conservancy management station personnel and village-level water conservancy management station personnel, to ensure benign operation of grass-roots water conservancy service system.

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