AGRICULTURE BUDGET 2024 - 2025

SPEECH OF THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE - FARMERS WELFARE

Thiru. M.R.K. PANNEERSELVAM

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Honourable Speaker!

“உழுதுண்டு வாழ்வாரே வாழ்வார்மற் றெல்லாம்
தொழுதுண்டு பின்செல் பவர்”.

(Thirukural- 1033)

These sacred words translated convey,

“They alone live who plough the soil; all the rest lead subservient lives”

Tamil culture and society is inherently agrarian: from ancient times the tillers of the soil have been accorded dignity and respect while their counterparts in other societies have been relegated to the lower rungs of society. The far sightedness and wisdom which recognizes farmers as custodians of sustenance is deeply entrenched in the culture of Tamil Nadu. It is this progressive mindset which informs the policies of the Government of Tamil Nadu: a clear reflection of this being an annual budget dedicated exclusively to Agriculture. I place on record my profound gratitude to our Hon’ble Chief Minister, for steering the State with unwavering commitment and maintaining high ideals in all aspects of governance, especially the welfare of the farming community. It is my honour to present this Exclusive Agriculture Budget for the year 2024-2025 before this august Assembly.

Innovation is challenging; yet, refining an existing concept is comparatively easier. Trailblazing is arduous;

however, journeying on an established path is less so. We have undertaken numerous initiatives to craft and deliver the Agriculture Budget, a pioneering endeavor in the history of Tamil Nadu. I am confident that this Agriculture Budget will act as a catalyst, propelling our farmers toward unparalleled prosperity.

The ***Great poet "Kambar" in his book "Thirukai Vazhakkam"*** dignifies farming by saying that

"மேழி பிடிக்கும்கை வேல்வேந்தர் நோக்கும்கை
ஆழி தரித்தே அருளும்கை - சூழ்வினையை
நீக்கும்கை என்றும் நிலைக்கும்கை நீடூழி
காக்கும்கை காராளர் கை"

"The hands of farmers, that grasp the plough and cultivate the earth, provide sanctuary to all living creatures."

The ***Poet Ilango Adigal*** has mentioned in detail about Agriculture and its nuances ***in the great epic, "Silappatikaram"***. He has observed that for a monarchy and the cultural heritage of its people to endure, a nation must thrive in agriculture. The poet further highlights that both the sovereign and the citizens rely on the toil of farmers for their sustenance."

"இரப்போர் சுற்றமும் புரப்போர் கொற்றமும்
உழவிடை விளைப்போர்"

(Silappathikaram-Nadugankaadhai - 150)

George Washington, the *former President of United States of America, also endorses these views by saying that "Agriculture is the most healthful, most useful and most noble employment of Man".*

To glorify the esteemed farmers who are toiling day and night to provide food and life to us, with immense pleasure, I wish to share the progression of Agriculture over the years.

From the historical archives, we are able to understand that the Stone Age people resorted to animal hunting and cattle rearing and also from the quotes of Tholkappiyar (**மெய்திரி வகையின் எண்வகை உணவில் செய்தியும் வரையார்**) and the research findings of historians that cultivation of Paddy, Grassy rice, Kaadaikanni (Millet), Blackgram, Lablab was taken up. It is also understood that the technologies related to crop husbandry were learned through experience and education.

Sangam literature offers us profound insights, revealing that our ancestors did not merely engage in agriculture for the cultivation of crops and sustenance alone. Instead, they placed significant emphasis on every facet of agricultural life, delving deeply into each activity, meticulously uncovering its nuances, and broadening their expertise in the agricultural domain. The diverse agricultural practices and activities identified and refined

by our forebears are meticulously chronicled in Sangam literature.

The *world-renowned Green Revolution Scientist Bharat Ratna M.S. Swaminathan glorifies food production by saying that* ***"The future belongs to nations with Grains and not Guns"*****.**

Our Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, driven by a commitment to ensure that the farming community reaps the full spectrum of benefits from their profession, has launched an array of welfare initiatives. These innovative schemes are being implemented with the aim of transforming agriculture into a profitable profession.

Nomenclature undoubtedly reflects attitudes and aspirations. By renaming the Department of Agriculture as "Agriculture – Farmers Welfare Department" our Hon'ble Chief Minister has established a farmer centric administration.

Strategies to Mitigate Risks in Agriculture

The Department of Agriculture-Farmers Welfare has rolled out several flagship programmes over the past three years aimed at mitigating the risks associated with agriculture. These initiatives have been conceptualised to convert challenges into opportunities and safeguard the welfare of our farmers.

Thanks to the implementation of key strategies from the Vision for Agriculture set forth by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, we have seen a notable increase in the gross cropped area from 152 lakh acre in 2020-2021 to 155 lakh acre in 2022-2023.

The result-oriented schemes of the Government of Tamil Nadu have given fillip to the enthusiasm of the farmers: this is evidenced in the food grain production which has risen to an impressive 116.91 lakh MT in 2022-2023.

Electric power is crucial to agriculture. The State Government took up the long pending applications for energizing irrigation pump sets and provided around 1.50 lakh electricity connections in the past two years. In continuation of this service to ensure that agriculture is not hampered by shortage of electricity, another 50,000 electricity connections have been provided in the current year.

Recognising the critical role of youth in agriculture's future, the Government has initiated programmes to draw their interest towards this sector. Youth are pivotal to the growth of any nation, and their involvement is crucial in the development of agro-based industries. In line with this, 268 agriculture graduates have been incentivized with subsidies of Rs.1.00 lakh each since 2021-2022, contributing to the sector by establishing agriculture-based enterprises, including Agri-Clinics.

Proactive measures have been taken to ensure that farmers receive better prices for their produce. The Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation has been procuring paddy at prices over and above the minimum support price by giving Rs.107 per quintal for fine varieties and Rs.82 for other varieties as incentive. Around 45 lakh MT of paddy have been procured last year. To safeguard against price drops, pulses and copra are also being procured directly from farmers.

For the 2022-2023 crushing season, Rs.260 crore has been provided as special incentive @ Rs.195 per metric ton of sugarcane. Farmers Markets, e-markets, and Regulated Markets are operational to help farmers achieve profitable returns for their produce. These initiatives have significantly enhanced the marketing opportunities for the farming community, ensuring fair pricing for their commodities.

Considering that labour costs often surpass input costs in farming, subsidies are provided for agricultural machinery and implements. Additionally, custom hiring centers have been established to facilitate easy rental of agricultural machinery for farmers.

I am proud to announce the ongoing efforts to enhance post-harvest management through the provision of new cold storage godowns, food grain storage facilities, and drying yards, aiming to minimize post-harvest losses in agricultural produce.

Overview of the Agriculture Budget in the Last Three Years

The initiatives rolled out over the past three years have been executed with diligence, often surpassing our expectations. The long-term projects are under stringent supervision to ensure their successful implementation.

The **Kalaignarin All Village Integrated Agriculture Development Programme**, a comprehensive programme that includes the schemes from the Agriculture-Farmers Welfare Department along with farmers' welfare initiatives from other departments, has made significant strides. Over the last three years, it has been implemented in 7,705 Village Panchayats. This initiative has revitalized 23,237 acres of fallow land, bringing it under permanent cultivation with agricultural crops, and has greened an additional 3,587 acres of fallow land with fruit tree seedlings and other trees. To support SC/ST farmers, 1,202 borewells/tube wells have been installed, and 1,564 farm ponds have been constructed, enhancing the irrigation coverage. Additionally, under this programme, approximately 4,773 ponds, water bodies, and supply channels managed by the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department have been desilted and upgraded.

Aiming to uplift the economically weaker sections of society, an additional subsidy of 20 percent was introduced in 2022-2023 for high-value components such

as agricultural machinery, establishment of polygreen houses, and Integrated Farming Systems for small and marginal farmers belonging to the Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe communities. Due to the overwhelming success of this scheme an additional allocation of Rs.9 crore was made for 2022-2023 & 2023-2024, supplementing the initial provision of Rs.17 crore. This initiative has benefited 4,980 farmers, so far.

Efforts to augment groundwater through desilting, rejuvenation, and restoration of water bodies, along with the conservation of runoff water by constructing water harvesting structures and promoting water use efficiency through technologies like Micro Irrigation, have expanded the irrigated area successfully from 89.06 lakh acres in 2020-2021 to 95.39 lakh acres in 2022-2023.

Hon’ble Speaker,

The agricultural budgets presented over the last three years have been like a vibrant, youthful entity, bringing joy and optimism to all involved. It is with immense pride that I declare this Fourth Agricultural Budget as the mature iteration of our initial vision, now fortified with essential ingredients for sustainable growth and resilience. Government orders have been issued for all the announcements made in the third Agricultural Budget and all the related schemes are actively underway. The fruits of various schemes launched in the

preceding years continue to benefit our farming community, and we are introducing new initiatives for the fiscal year 2024-2025 to enhance this progress.

Farmers Welfare

The unpredictability of monsoon rains and natural calamities such as cyclones, floods, and droughts recurrently affect Tamil Nadu, jeopardizing food production and farmers' livelihoods.

In an effort to shield our farmers from the financial repercussions of natural disasters, since this Government assumed office, crop insurance claim amount of Rs.4,436 crore has been disbursed to 25 lakh farmers. I wish to mention that the claim amount for yield loss of paddy in Samba season during the years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 have been settled in the same year.

Input subsidy totaling approximately Rs.380.40 crore from the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) has been disbursed to 4.50 lakh farmers for crop damages which occurred during the excess rains in South West monsoon, Mandous cyclone, excess rains in North East Monsoon, and unexpected rainfall in 2022-2023 including a hailstorm in March 2023. Additionally, Government Orders have been issued to provide input subsidy of Rs.118.77 crore to 1.85 lakh farmers for the yield losses like maize yield loss in Kharif season due to inadequate rainfall and Michaung cyclone. Also, input subsidy to the tune of Rs.208.20 crore will be disbursed shortly to

2.74 lakh farmers towards yield loss incurred during the natural disasters like inadequate rainfall during South West monsoon in Tenkasi district and excessive rainfall in December, 2023 in the southern districts.

Despite the limited storage in Mettur Dam, as a special case, the Honourable Chief Minister ordered to release 3 tmc of water on 03.02.2024, which helped in saving nearly 25,000 acres of Samba paddy crops in Delta, facing the risk of withering.

Agricultural Expos were organized with grandeur in Tiruchirapalli and Chennai, highlighting various farmers' welfare schemes, agricultural machinery, and value-added products from Farmers Producers Companies. This event recorded participation of over 2 lakh farmers and 1.5 lakh people, who benefited from the information.

Milestones

In a concerted effort to expand the double-cropped area, remarkable progress has been achieved with an increase to 35.15 lakh acres during 2022-23. Due to innovative technological interventions in sugarcane cultivation, Tamil Nadu has positioned itself at the top as the leading state in sugarcane productivity across India by producing 111 metric tonnes per hectare.

Despite the challenges posed by natural calamities in the current year, cultivation has been undertaken across 114.19 lakh acres. Our relentless endeavors are

aimed at attaining the goal of 127 lakh metric tonnes of food grain production in the year 2023-2024.

Under the esteemed guidance of our Hon'ble Chief Minister and in line with the practices of the past three years, we have actively sought the perspectives and recommendations from a diverse group of stakeholders. This includes Special Representatives, Representatives of Farmers and Farmers Associations, Sugarcane Farmers Association, Tamil Nadu Agricultural Input Dealers Association, Food Processing Industries, Food Analytical Labs, Farmer Producer Companies, Organic Farmers, Horticulture farmers, Seed producers, representatives of Agriculture machinery manufacturing companies, Agricultural Traders, Agricultural Exporters, Egg Producers, Milk Producers, Marine Fishers, Inland Fishers, and Agriculture Experts. Engagements through petitions, mail, and video conferencing have significantly contributed to the formulation of the Fourth Agricultural Budget, which we are proud to present in this Legislative Assembly.

Department of Agriculture

1) Chief Minister's Mannuyir Kaathu Mannuyir Kaappom Scheme (CM MK MKS)

In the current budget, we are proud to announce a new scheme namely Chief Minister's Mannuyir (**மண்ணுயிர்**) Kaathu Mannuyir (**மன்னுயிர்**) Kaappom Scheme (CM MK MKS)

Soil is the basic source of Agriculture. Soil is the base for growth and it provides necessary nutrients in available forms to all crops. The growth potential of crops depends on the fertility of the soil.

”சாரல் சிறுகோட்டுப் பெரும்பழம் தூங்கியாங்கு”

The lines of the *Kurunthogai* say that the jack fruit tree produces larger fruits in fertile soils.

In ancient times, conversion of forests into agricultural land led to decrease in productivity over a period of time. Realizing that it was due to decline in fertility of soils, our ancestors started practicing shifting cultivation. It is evident from the following quote from ***Puranaooru*** that soil fertility can be increased by adding manure to the soil.

“கவைக்கதிர் வரகின் அவைப்புறு வாக்கல்
தாதெரு மறுகிற் போதொடு பொதுளிய”

In the realm of conventional agriculture, the prevalent practices of monocropping and cultivating high-nutrient-exhaustive crops have contributed to the gradual depletion of essential nutrients from the soil. The indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides, initially employed to boost production, has taken a toll on the beneficial soil microbial population, leading to a decline in overall soil fertility and health. This has resulted in soil degradation, manifested in highly alkaline, saline, and acidic soil conditions. If this situation

persists, we run the risk of bequeathing to our future generations a barren soil that is unsuitable for cultivation.

Recognizing the imperative to shift towards sustainable and chemical-free agricultural practices for the well-being of society, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has directed me to prepare a flagship programme. Hence, a new scheme called the **"Chief Minister's Mannuyir Kaathu Mannuyir Kaappom Scheme (CM MK MKS)"** with 22 components will be implemented at an outlay of Rs.206 crore during the year 2024-2025.

i) Striking a balance between organic carbon and essential nutrients in the soil can foster the growth of beneficial micro organisms, creating an environment, conducive to nutrient availability for the crops and resulting in significantly higher agricultural production. This scheme aims to preserve soil fertility through the promotion of Green Manure usage among farmers. In the initial phase, slated for the year 2024-2025, an allocation of Rs.20 crore has been earmarked for the distribution of Green Manure Seeds to cover 2 lakh acres benefitting 2 lakh farmers.

ii) **"தொல்லது விளைந்தென நிலம் வளம் கரப்பினும்"**

The above words of ***Puranaanooru*** convey that if we don't apply manure to the soil, the crop will fail. As the livestock population is declining, vermicompost, which is obtained by composting cow dung and farm waste, is gaining importance. Vermicompost provides rich nutrients besides improving the soil's physical properties. Therefore, to produce vermicompost and to improve the soil fertility, 10,000 farmers will be provided @ two vermicompost beds per farmer for a total outlay of Rs.6 crore. Additionally, a sum of Rs.5 crore will be allocated for setting up of permanent vermicompost pits.

iii) It is essential for every farmer to understand soil fertility and apply fertilizers judiciously. For this purpose, ***Tamil Mannvalam*** portal has been created to facilitate farmers access to crucial information and enabling them to download the Soil Health Card. This provides tailored, crop-specific fertilizer recommendations to the farmers.

Comprehensive Soil Health campaigns are slated to be organized across all villages in Tamil Nadu, fostering awareness on the importance of balanced fertilizer application and Integrated

Nutrient Management. In the upcoming year 2024-2025, an extensive soil testing initiative is set to be taken up in farmers' fields in the 2,482 village panchayats selected under Kalaignarin All Village Integrated Agriculture Development Programme. As part of this initiative, 2 lakh Soil Health Cards will be distributed and farmers will be advised on ways to improve the soil health. Thus, to reduce the chemical fertilizers usage and to maintain soil fertility an allocation of Rs. 6.27 crore will be made from both State and Union Government funds.

iv) The alkaline soil lacks aeration due to its compactness, while in acidic soil, the microbial activities are low resulting in reduced crop growth and yield. To address this, a sum of Rs.7.50 crore for the reclamation of 37,500 acres of alkaline soils and a sum of Rs.15 crore for the reclamation of 7,500 acres of acidic soils will be allocated.

v) Liquid Bio-Fertilisers have the ability to make available important nutrients like Nitrogen, Phosphorous, Potassium and Zinc to crops and increase the crop productivity by 10-20 per cent thereby cutting down the expenditure on chemical fertilizers. A sum of Rs.7.50 crore will be allocated for the distribution of 5 lakh litres of liquid Bio

Fertilizers to cover an area of 10 lakh acres which will benefit 2 lakh farmers.

vi) **Field level Surveillances** are being conducted daily by the Agricultural extension workers in collaboration with farmers in paddy, the major crop of Tamil Nadu and suitable pest management advisories will be provided based on the population dynamics of both beneficial and harmful insects, water management techniques, soil fertility status, crop growth stages, and local weather conditions. This will substantially reduce the reliance on plant protection chemicals and protect the soil health.

vii) Azadirachtin, an active ingredient found in neem-based products, stands out as an excellent pesticide for the effective control of pests and diseases in plants without causing harm to the environment. Neem leaves are also utilised as green leaf manure. To promote the cultivation of neem trees, during the year 2024-2025, 10 lakh neem tree saplings will be distributed to farmers at no cost for which Rs.2 crore will be earmarked under agroforestry scheme.

viii) Plant species like Adathoda and Nochi which have natural Bio-Insecticidal properties will be promoted for cultivation in fallow lands and field

bunds by distributing 50 lakh saplings to farmers in all districts at an outlay of Rs.1 crore.

ix) In ancient times, our forebears thrived for extended periods by adhering to wholesome dietary practices. To promote a healthy lifestyle, the cultivation of traditional varieties with medicinal properties, such as Seevan Samba known for its diabetes-controlling attributes, will be actively promoted. In the year 2024-2025, these specific seed varieties will be distributed to farmers, to cover an area 1,000 acres.

x) Under **Nel Jayaraman Mission on Conservation of Traditional Paddy Varieties**, seeds of traditional varieties like *Arupadham Kuruvai, Poonkar, Thooyamalli, Seeraka Samba, Mappillai Samba, Seevan Samba, Karuppu Kavuni* are being produced in State Seed Farms and distributed to farmers. During 2023-2024, 20,979 farmers benefited by cultivating traditional varieties in an area of 12,400 acres. During the financial year 2024-2025, 200 MT of traditional Paddy variety seeds will be produced in State Seed Farms for cultivation in an area of 10,000 acres during the year 2025-2026 covering farmers of all districts for which Rs.50 lakh will be allocated.

xi) Traditional Millets and Pulses rich in Protein, Fibre, Calcium, Iron and Vitamins help to

keep the Blood Sugar level under control, reduce weight and boost immunity. Hence, traditional millet varieties like Thalaivirichan Cholam, Vellai Cholam, Irungu Cholam and Sencholam of Salem and Karur districts, Kakka Cholam of Thoothukudi district, Vensuruttai Kezhvaragu, Karunchuruttai Kezhvaragu, Karikattai Kezhvaragu, Poovadan Kezhvaragu, Kuruvikkaran Kambu, Kattu Kambu, Thattai Varagu, Perum Samai, Sadai Samai, Sittan Samai, Karunchittan Samai, Nattu Thuvarai, Malai Thuvarai of Tirupattur, Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri and Tiruvannamalai Districts, Nattu Ulundu and Kodi Ulundu of Trichy and Thanjavur districts will be identified, collected, produced in State Seed Farms and preserved. These varieties will be used in developing new varieties and improving the existing varieties.

xii) In order to promote the concept of Organic Farming among all farmers, **One model Organic Farm** will be created in each block of the State. The farmers will be encouraged, trained and guided on schemes available for organic farming, certification methodologies, organic input production and marketing of organic produce for which Rs.38 lakh will be allocated.

xiii) In an effort to foster comprehensive organic farming practices and secure organic

certification, a budget of Rs.27 crore will be allocated which will support the second-year activities of the 725 Organic Farming Clusters established in the year 2023-2024, covering an area of 35,815 acres across 36 districts. The aim is to provide farmers with the necessary resources and knowledge for adopting organic farming techniques, from sowing to marketing and enhance their profits.

xiv) To encourage farmer groups interested in production and sale of organic inputs like Panchakavya, Jeevamirtham, Vermicompost, Amirthakaraisal, Meen Amilam etc., which are necessary for organic production, 100 Organic Input Production Centres will be established at a cost of Rs. One crore.

xv) Under Sustainable Green Cover Mission, 1.96 crore tree saplings were distributed to 72,597 farmers at a cost of Rs.24.85 crore. The agroforestry initiative on the farmer's land is designed not only to establish a permanent green cover but also to serve as a profitable agribusiness. During the year 2024-2025, Rs.13 crore will be allocated for the production of quality tree saplings, strengthening of nurseries and establishment of small, big and hi-tech nurseries.

xvi) Under Integrated Farming System, farmers are encouraged to diversify their agricultural practices by incorporating crop cultivation with complementary activities such as dairy farming, goat rearing, fruit tree cultivation, honey bee rearing, and vermicompost production. This approach aims to achieve self-sustaining livelihoods through holistic development. Over the past three years, 40,888 units have been successfully established, at a cost of Rs.142 crore benefiting 40,888 farmers. During the year 2024-2025, 14,000 Integrated Farming System units will be established at an outlay of Rs.42 crore.

xvii) In Tamil Nadu, paddy, millets, pulses, oil seed crops, cotton and horticultural crops are being cultivated in an extent of about 60.62 lakh acres in rainfed areas. Majority of these lands which are cultivated by small and marginal farmers are deficient in nutrients and are characterised by poor water holding capacity due to which the ground water table has come down, affecting the productivity. Assistance for ploughing and seeds will be provided to cover an area of three lakh acres with an allocation of Rs.36 crore for the benefit of rainfed farmers during 2024-2025.

xviii) There is a noted shortfall in the consumption of fruits and vegetables among consumers. To encourage the cultivation of nutritious fruit crops in home gardens, kits comprising saplings of banana, papaya, moringa, curryleaf will be distributed. This initiative aims to provide access to pesticide-free, non-toxic fruits and vegetables. An allocation of Rs.4 crore has been designated for this scheme.

xix) “Honey Bees play a crucial role not only in the collection of sweet honey but also in facilitating pollination among flowers.”Recognizing the significance of beekeeping for public health, a ‘Honey Production Hub’ will be established in Kanyakumari district with a budget of Rs.3.60 crore. This Hub will have a honey testing lab, a processing laboratory for honey and its byproducts besides having a provision for giving training to beekeepers.

xx) Climate change is likely to present significant challenges to biodiversity, crop yields, and food security in the coming two decades. In anticipation, the dissemination of appropriate technologies is crucial to mitigate the effects of climate change and safeguard against losses in crop production. To achieve this, special climate-smart villages will be developed, demonstrating

climate change mitigatiion technologies to farmers and stakeholders, besides spreading awareness. A budget allocation of Rs.1.48 crore will be made for this initiative.

xxi) In agriculture, ensuring sustainable productivity necessitates the continuous monitoring of soil fertility and standard productivity levels. In Tamil Nadu, enhancing and augmenting the functional capacity of soil as a critical living system depends on soil organic carbon and beneficial microbial consortia, which are essential for maintaining soil health. To enhance soil health and productivity, research on soil microbiome engineering will be undertaken to develop and evaluate microbial consortia for the decomposition of organic matter, including crop residues, to increase soil carbon and convert unavailable nutrients into available forms. An allocation of Rs.1.39 crore will be made for this.

xxii) To facilitate the easy access of quality agricultural produce and value-added products, to urban consumers, 100 Uzhavar Angadis will be established along the lines of Uzhavar Sandhais at an outlay of Rs. 5 crore from the State fund. Agricultural produce, adhering to specified quality norms, will be directly procured from farmers,

graded, packed, branded and sold through Uzhavar Angadis.

“Chief Minister’s Mannuyir Kaathu Mannuyir Kaappom Scheme (CM MK MKS)” will be implemented from the year 2024-2025 for which Rs.206 crore will be allocated.

2) Kalaignarin All Village Integrated Agricultural Development Programme

The Kalaignarin All Village Integrated Agricultural Development Programme, in conjunction with the Anaithu Grama Anna Marumalarchi Thittam of the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department, is being implemented for a five-year period starting from 2021-2022 across 12,525 Village Panchayats. The programme aims to transform every village into a model of self-sufficiency by focusing on the development of agriculture as the primary occupation, and by converting fallow lands into cultivable lands to increase the net cultivable area.

During 2024-2025, this scheme will be implemented in 2,482 selected village panchayats at an outlay of Rs.200 crore.

3) Area expansion in agriculture crops to meet production requirements

The recent Russia-Ukraine war has brought to the fore the need for self-sustainability in food grain production. Achieving self-sustainability depends on

achieving the required quantity of food grain production. While strides have been made in meeting the paddy requirements, there is still a shortfall in meeting the demand for pulses and oilseeds. Tamil Nadu requires 18.45 lakh MT of edible oil annually. Currently, the cultivated area under oilseed cultivation yields only 4.85 lakh MT of edible oil. Hence, there has to be a dedicated effort to expand the cultivation area for these crops to increase production.

i. Pulses Development Scheme

Pulses production is a part of sustainable food production which aims at food security and nutrition. To attain self sufficiency in pulses, Pulses Development Scheme will be implemented during 2024-2025 in an area of 4.75 lakh acres at an outlay of Rs.40.27 crore with Union and State Government funds.

ii. Mission on Area Expansion in Redgram

Redgram is a widely consumed pulse in Tamil Nadu. However, the area under redgram cultivation is constantly on the decline. Currently it is cultivated only in an area of 1.25 lakh acre. Hence, during 2024-2025, cultivation of redgram will be promoted in 50,000 acres as sole crop, bund crop or intercrop at a cost of Rs.17.50 crore allocated from the State Government fund.

iii. Edible Oilseeds Production Enhancement Scheme

Oil plays an important role in our routine diet. In order to popularise the highly remunerative oilseed crops such as Groundnut, Gingelly, Sunflower, Soybean and Castor, cluster demonstration and cultivation of oilseeds in rice-fallow condition will be encouraged. During 2024-2025, this scheme will be implemented in all the districts of Tamil Nadu covering an area of 2.50 lakh acre at an outlay of Rs.45 crore with Union and State Government funds.

iv. Area Expansion under Gingelly Cultivation

As announced in the Agriculture Budget 2023-2024, major oilseed cultivating districts have been declared as “Oilseeds Zone”. In continuation, to increase the area and productivity of gingelly, Rs.3 crore will be earmarked to provide subsidy for inputs and harvesting charges for 25,000 acres.

v. Sunflower Area Expansion

Rs.Two crore will be allocated to increase sunflower cultivated area to 12,500 acres during 2024-2025.

vi. **Castor Area Expansion**

Cultivation of high yielding castor hybrids will be promoted in an area of 1,500 acres at an outlay of Rs.18 lakh.

Schemes for area expansion of pulses, oilseeds will be implemented at a total outlay of Rs.108 crore.

4) Scheme for Incentivising Enhanced Crop Productivity

Enhancing the productivity of food grains, coconut, sugarcane, cotton, and sunflower, to position Tamil Nadu as one of the top three states in terms of productivity, is a long-term vision of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. With the diminishing cultivable area, it is imperative to maximise production on the available arable land. To achieve this, special schemes that incorporate yield-enhancing technologies in cultivation will be implemented.

i. Crop productivity is projected to increase by 15% through the use of quality seeds, which are essential for achieving higher yields. To empower farmers to produce their own quality seeds and attain higher yields, under the Seed Village Scheme, 12,510 MT of paddy seeds, 260 MT of millet seeds, 940 MT of pulse seeds and 2,100 MT of oilseeds, amounting to a total of 15,810 MT will be distributed to farmers at a subsidy of 50 to 60 per cent. An allocation of Rs.35 crore from Union and State Government funds will be made for this initiative during the year 2024-2025.

ii. Breeder seeds, Foundation seeds and Certified seeds of less than 10-year-old high yielding varieties of paddy, millets, pulses and oilseeds released and notified for Tamil Nadu by other State Agricultural Universities will be procured by Tamil Nadu State Seed Development Agency and distributed to farmers.

iii. Application of Gypsum will be encouraged for agricultural crops like Groundnut to increase the crop productivity through Integrated Nutrient Management. Gypsum will be distributed to cover an area of 50,000 acres with an allocation of Rs. 1 crore. About 50,000 farmers will benefit under this scheme.

iv. To address the nutrient deficiency resulting from continuous paddy cultivation in Tamil Nadu, Zinc Sulphate and Gypsum will be distributed across 4 lakh acres at a cost of Rs. 9 crore to improve soil health and yield.

v. Application of Micro Nutrient mixture in Paddy crop will be encouraged in two lakh acres with a total budget outlay of Rs. 3 crore.

A total of Rs. 48 crores will be allocated to the Scheme for incentivising enhancement of crop productivity of important Agricultural crops.

5) “One Village One Crop” – Demonstration

In alignment with the Gandhian philosophy that the progress of a nation lies in the development of its villages, the "One Village – One Crop" scheme will be introduced in 15,280 revenue villages to catapult production in rural areas.

This initiative will feature demonstrations covering land preparation, seed treatment for high-yielding varieties, and integrated nutrient management for a range of crops including Paddy, Cholam (Sorghum), Maize, Cumbu (Pearl Millet), Kudiraivali (Barnyard Millet), Ragi (Finger Millet), Red gram, Black gram, Green gram, Groundnut, Gingelly, Sunflower, Cotton and Sugarcane. These demonstrations will be conducted over 5 to 10 acres in each village, focusing on one crop per village to enhance farmers' awareness.

In order to help farmers distinguish between beneficial and harmful insects, "Permanent Pest Surveillance Plots" will be established, and effective plant protection measures will be recommended.

6) Tamil Nadu Millet Mission

“கருங்கால் வரகே இருங்கதிர்த் தினையே
சிறுகொடிக் கொள்ளே பொறிகிளர்அவரையோடு
இந்நான் கல்லது உணவும் இல்லை”

The *Puranaanooru* poem says that food is incomplete without millets and pulses.

Considering the importance of millets in the regular diet, the year 2023 was celebrated as the International Year of Millets to globally propagate the importance of nutritive values of millets.

In order to increase the area, production and productivity of the major millets like Sorghum, Pearl millet, Finger millet and minor millets like Kodo millet, Proso millet, Barnyard millet, Little millet and Foxtail millet, two Millet Special Zones have been formed by the Government of Tamil Nadu encompassing 25 Districts. Moreover, Tamil Nadu Millet Mission Scheme is being implemented for five years from 2023-2024 to 2027-2028 in the two millet special zones. The scheme will be continued in the year 2024-25 at an outlay of Rs.65.30 crore.

7) State Agriculture Development Scheme

The Government of Tamil Nadu is dedicated to propelling agriculture towards significant advancement through the **"State Agriculture Development Scheme,"** initiated in the year 2022-2023. By engaging with farmers during various stakeholder meetings, the government meticulously prepares plans and implements strategies aimed at enhancing the overall development of agriculture.

Under this scheme,

i. A cash prize of Rs.2.5 lakh as first prize, Rs 1.5 lakh as second prize and Rs.1 lakh as third

prize will be awarded to the first three farmers, who get **highest productivity in Millets, Pulses, Oilseeds and Sugarcane at State level**. During 2024-2025, 33 awards will be given to farmers at an outlay Rs.55 lakh.

ii. In an effort to promote less water demanding crops like Millets, Pulses and Oilseeds instead of water intensive Paddy crop, Alternative Crop Cultivation scheme will be implemented to cover an area of 1 lakh acres during 2024-2025, by providing subsidy for seeds, bio-fertilizers, bio control agents, micro nutrient mixture, foliar nutrient spraying charges, harvesting expenses for which an allocation of Rs.12 crore will be made.

iii. To transform **Young Graduates into Agri Entrepreneurs,** during the year 2024-2025, a maximum assistance of Rupees one lakh will be given to 100 graduates who establish any agri based business by availing bank loan. An amount of Rs.One crore will be earmarked for this scheme.

8) Village Agriculture Development Group

To enhance crop production and income, it is crucial to provide farmers with timely and relevant advisories on seasonal crop cultivation, adoption of advanced technologies, and effective market strategies for sustainable growth. In alignment with this objective, village development groups have been formed, offering

training within the village panchayats under the Kalaignarin All Village Integrated Agricultural Development Programme. During the year 2024-2025, 2,482 village agriculture development groups will be formed, and training sessions will be conducted under the ATMA scheme, with a budget allocation of Rs.2.48 crore.

9) Nammazhvar award for Best Organic Farmers

Starting from the year 2023-2024, the Tamil Nadu Government has been recognizing the contributions of outstanding organic farmers by bestowing upon them the Nammazhvar Award. Continuing this tradition, in 2024-2025, the award will be presented to three exceptional organic farmers, each receiving a citation and a cash prize of Rs. 5 lakh.

10) Additional 20 percent subsidy for Small and Marginal Farmers of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe

Our government, guided by the principle of social justice and the commitment to **"Inclusive development without leaving anyone behind,"** has been steadfast in its noble initiative of providing an additional 20 percent subsidy for Small and Marginal Farmers of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities in high-value schemes implemented by Agriculture and Farmer Welfare Department since the year 2022-23. This will be continued in the year 2024-25 with an allocated budget of Rs.18 crore.

11) Profitable Cotton Cultivation

Tamil Nadu widely recognized as the 'yarn bowl' of India, holds a significant place in the production of cotton as a commercial crop. The "Cotton Cultivation Mission" was implemented at a total outlay of Rs.29.72 crore, aimed at enhancing the income of cotton farmers by producing substantial quantities of long staple and extra long staple cotton and ensuring timely supply to spinning mills. As a result, the cotton area has witnessed a notable increase from 2.76 lakh acres in 2020-2021 to 4.27 lakh acres in 2022-2023. The production has also surged from 2.42 lakh bales to 3.19 lakh bales. During the year 2024-2025, the scheme will be implemented with a financial allocation of Rs 14.20 crore in the state. This further augments cotton production to 5.50 lakh bales.

12) Crop Insurance

To help the farmers recover from loss of income due to unforeseen natural calamities, **Crop Insurance Scheme** is being implemented.

The insurance claim for an amount of Rs.14.55 crore was immediately disbursed to 9,988 farmers of Thoothukudi district for the crop loss that occurred due to incessant rains on 17th and 18th December, 2023.

This scheme will be implemented during 2024-2025 with an allocation of 1,775 crore.

13) Trainings for Agriculture Development

It is important to consider training as investment for human resource development. Agriculture development could be achieved by imparting training to 15,000 farmers, 500 educated youth, 1,600 officers and 500 staff to improve the working efficiency and technical knowledge at a cost of Rs.50 lakhs.

Department of Sugar

The sugar industry is a major agro-based industry that plays a major role in the economic growth of farmers and rural development. In Tamil Nadu, 13 co-operative, 2 public and 15 private sector sugar mills totalling 30 sugar mills are functioning.

For the welfare of sugarcane farmers, to increase sugarcane registration area and production and further to improve the efficiency of sugar mills, the following schemes will be implemented in the year 2024-2025.

14) Special Incentive to farmers who have supplied sugarcane to sugar mills for 2023-2024 crushing season

In response to the demand of all the sugarcane farmers, during the consultative stakeholders meetings held prior to the preparation of the Agriculture Budget, and also to increase the sugarcane cultivation area, production and to ensure additional income to sugarcane farmers, the eligible farmers who have registered and

supplied sugarcane to the sugar mills for the 2023-2024 crushing season will be paid a first time ever Special Incentive (SI) of Rs.215 per MT over and above the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) announced by the Government of India as against the already given Special Incentive of Rs. 195 per MT. Rs.250 crore will be allocated for the benefit of 1.3 lakh sugarcane farmers under this scheme.

15) Sugarcane Cultivation Development Programme

In order to safeguard the welfare of sugarcane farmers and enhance their productivity, an allocation of Rs.7.92 crore from Union and State Government funds will be given towards providing new sugarcane varieties, resistant to pests and diseases, reducing cultivation costs, expanding sugarcane area and increasing sugar recovery.

16) Improving the efficiency of Sugar Mills

Modernized weighbridges in Kallakurichi-1, Chengalrayan, Cheyyar, Tirupattur Co-operative Sugar Mills, Rotating Hydraulic Tippler in Dharmapuri District Co-operative Sugar Mill, Cement concrete cane yard in 10 Co-operative and two public sector sugar mills, Pressmud composting yard in four Co-operative and one public sector sugar mill will be established with an allocation of Rs.12.50 crore from Union and State Government fund.

17) Measures to enhance the efficiency of Sugar Mills

The machineries operating in the sugarcane milling stations will be integrated and automated at a cost of Rs.3.6 crore in Perambalur, Cheyyar, Vellore, Salem, Madurantakam, and Subramania Siva Sugar Mills.

A new rotor shaft assembly for 18 MW power turbine will be procured at a cost of Rs.6.31 crore to avoid the stoppages in Chengalrayan Co-operative Sugar Mills.

Anion and cation exchangers will be installed in water treatment plant at Chengalrayan, Vellore, Cheyyar, Arignar Anna, Perambalur, Dharmapuri and MRK Sugar Mills at a cost of 1.39 crore. This will extend the life of the power turbine and improve the quality of the treated water.

Mill drive power control units will be procured at a cost of Rs. 1.10 crore for MRK and Cheyyar co-operative sugar mills. This prevents the time loss in crushing due to failures of existing drive units.

For improving the efficiency of sugar mill 12.40 crore will be utilised from Sugar Mills fund.

Department of Horticulture and Plantation Crops

”கதிர்படு வயலின் உள்ள கடிகமழ் பொழிலின் உள்ள
முதிர்பல மரத்தின் உள்ள முதிரைகள் புறவின் உள்ள
பதிபடு கொடியின் உள்ள படிவளர் குழியின் உள்ள
மதுவள மலரிற் கொள்ளும் வண்டென மள்ளர் கொள்வார்”

These lines from Kambaramayanam vividly portray the ancient practice of multiple cropping, where farmers cultivated paddy in fields, flowers in gardens, fruits in orchards, dry land crops in rain-fed areas, and various layered climbers and vegetable creepers. To encourage the cultivation of high-income-generating horticultural crops, specific schemes will be implemented.

18) Integrated Horticulture Development in Dryland areas

During the year 2024-2025, Rs.3.64 crore will be allocated to provide subsidy to farmers to take up cultivation of drought tolerant and nutritious fruit crops like Fig, Manila, Tamarind, Amla, Wood apple, Ber, Dragon fruit, etc, creation of water harvesting structures, distribution of mulching sheets to ensure adequate moisture to plants by preventing evaporation. Intercropping in perennial crops will also be encouraged under the scheme to provide additional income to farmers.

19) Promotion of cultivation of Horticultural Crops

Cultivating horticultural crops in a conducive environment yields distinctively high-quality produce,

resulting in favorable market prices. Notable examples include Kodaikanal Garlic, Ramanathapuram Mundu Chillies, Saathur Samba Chillies, Kolli Hill Pepper, Kanniyakumari Cinnamon, Theni Cardamom, Coimbatore Nutmeg and Cocoa which are widely preferred by consumers. Responding to request by farmers, back-ended subsidy will be extended to those cultivating geo-tagged Mundu chillies.

To encourage increased cultivation of these area-specific horticultural crops, quality planting materials will be provided at a subsidy for which Rs.2.70 crore will be earmarked.

20) Integrated Coconut Development Scheme

The epic *Seevaga Sinthamani* has evocative descriptions of carts carrying coconut, tender coconut, betel leaves, arecanut, sweets and savouries

"மல்லல் அம் தெங்கு இள நீர் பெய் பண்டியும்
மெல் இலைப் பண்டியும் கமுகின் மேதகு
பல் பழுக்காய்க் குலை பெய்த பண்டியும்
ஒல்கு தீம் பண்டம் பெய்து ஒழுகும் பண்டியும்"

and *Puranaanooru* describes the country as the one which is prosperous as the tender coconuts are aplenty by saying that **"தெங்கின் இளநீர் உதிர்க்கும் வளமிகு நன்னாடு".** The importance of coconut can be understood from these pieces of literature.

The area under coconut cultivation will be increased by 10,000 acres along with intercropping by distributing

seven lakh quality coconut seedlings at an outlay of Rs.4.8 crore. Assistance will be given for intercropping with banana upto five year old coconut gardens and nutmeg in well developed coconut gardens at an outlay of Rs. 5.7 crore. To meet the demand for coconut seedlings, assistance will be extended for the establishment of coconut nurseries, upgradation of state coconut nurseries, rejuvenation of old coconut gardens and setting up of unit for conversion of coconut waste into organic manure. To increase the productivity of coconut and to motivate the farmers to adopt improved technologies, demonstrations will be made in farmers' fields and state coconut nurseries at an outlay of Rs.12.50 crore.

To demonstrate that timely application of necessary inputs in right quantities will improve the productivity of coconut, demonstration will be established in 25,000 acres for which a sum of Rs.12 crore will be allocated.

Integrated pest and nutrient management strategies will be demonstrated among coconut farmers to control Kerala Root Wilt disease and Whitefly for which Rs.1.15 crore will be allocated.

Training with demonstration will be conducted for farmers in five state coconut nurseries on timely harvest of coconut, solar drying and oil extraction.

21) Micro Irrigation Scheme

Micro Irrigation Scheme is being implemented to increase the area under cultivation and to increase the production and productivity through judicious use of irrigation water. In the past three years, an area of 6.91 lakh acres has been brought under Micro Irrigation at a cost of Rs.2,114.32 crore benefitting 2.82 lakh farmers. During the year 2024-2025, Micro Irrigation systems will be installed in an area of 2.22 lakh acres at an outlay of Rs. 773.23 crore comprising of Rs.540.73 crore as State Government share and Rs.232.50 crore as Union Government share for the benefit of one lakh farmers. Focus will be given to critical and over exploited firkas in which the ground water is depleting rapidly.

22) Installation of automated irrigation system in farmers field and State Horticulture Farms

Due to challenges in securing labour for agricultural activities, subsidy will be granted for the installation of automated irrigation systems, promoting the precise application of water directly to the plant's root zone as needed. An allocation of Rs.25 crore will be made for this initiative in 2024-2025, to benefit 12,000 farmers.

Moreover, to increase the water use efficiency in State Horticulture Farms, an allocation of Rs.2.50 crore will be made for installing automated irrigation systems in

10 State Horticulture Farms in the initial phase and these farms will also serve as model farms.

23) Horticulture Farm Machinery Expo

Recognizing the essential role of machinery in horticulture crop cultivation and in response to farmers' demands, an expo will be organized to raise awareness about the machineries, tools, and implements used in cultivation practices spanning from land preparation to post-harvest management. This expo aims to benefit farmers, horticulture entrepreneurs and officials. Rs.10 crore will be allocated from Union and State Government funds for the same.

24) Special Scheme for Mukkani Development

"முந்துமுக் கனியின் நானா முதிரையின் முழுத்த நெய்யின்
செந்தயிர்க் கண்டங் கண்டம் இடையிடை செறிந்த சோற்றின்"

In *Kambaramayanam*, the poet Kambar depicts the hospitality of the people by describing sumptuous feasts shared with kith and kin, featuring a delectable spread that includes three fruits - mango, jackfruit, and banana, along with various pulses, ghee, and curd. Recognizing the universal appeal and nutritional value of this triad (Mukkani), special schemes will be implemented to enhance the cultivation area and production, ensuring their availability to all. These initiatives are aimed at not only meeting the preferences of consumers but also at augmenting the income of farmers engaged in the cultivation of mangoes, jackfruits, and bananas.

i) **Mango:**

"கழனி மாஅத்து விளைந்துகு தீம்பழம்
பழன வாளை கதூஉ மூரன்'

These lines from *Kurunthogai* vividly depict the imagery of ripe mango fruits dropping from the mango trees into the pond below, where ribbon fish eagerly consume them.

"அடுமகள் முகந்த அளவா வெண்ணெல்
தொடிமாண் உலக்கைப் பருஉக்குற்று அரிசி
காடி வெள்ளுலைக் கொளீஇ நீழல்
ஓங்குசினை மாவின் தீங்கனி நறும்புளி

These lines from *Puranaanooru* describe the practice of placing rice in a pot with sour water and consuming it alongside a tangy curry made from the pulp of mango fruits hanging from the mango tree, which provides shade with its numerous branches. This suggests that mangoes were utilized in ancient times to add tanginess in culinary preparations.

Mango orchards will be established in 4,630 acres with preferred southern varieties such as Paadiri, Neelum, Bangalora, Rumani, Mulgoa, Banganapalli and in 250 acres with select export varieties like Imam Pasand, Ratnagiri Alphonso and Sindhu. Good Agricultural Practices and Technical advice suited for export will be provided to farmers at every stage from production to marketing.

Along with providing training to farmers on the significance of pruning techniques, subsidies will be extended to assist farmers in rejuvenating 26,540 acres of old mango orchards, transforming them into high-yielding orchards.

Moreover, a package of growth promoters, bio-fertilizers and bio-control agents will be provided to mango farmers at a subsidy for an area of 6,175 acres.

During 2024-2025, the Special Scheme for Mango will be implemented at an outlay of Rs.27.48 crore.

ii) **Banana:** Due to the escalating demand for banana in both domestic and international markets, area expansion of banana will be taken up to cover 5,220 acres to enhance production and productivity. In response to farmers' requests, subsidies will be provided for propping of banana bunches in 3,700 acres to mitigate wind damage. Additionally, banana bunch sleeves will be distributed to cover 4,440 acres, to ensure the production of blemish-free, high-quality banana that can command higher prices in the market.

A Special Scheme for Banana in the fiscal year 2024-2025 will be implemented with a financial outlay of Rs.12.73 crore, sourced from both Central and State funds

iii) **Jackfruit:** Building on the previous year's implementation of Jack Mission in 1,850 acres, a scheme will be implemented in the year 2024-2025 encompassing components like jackfruit area expansion with local varieties and new varieties in 620 acres each. The scheme includes training of farmers, inputs for Integrated Nutrient and Pest Management and establishment of minimal processing unit. An allocation of Rs.1.14 crore will be made under this scheme to support jackfruit cultivation.

25) Rejuvenation of old orchards of temperate fruit crops

Subsidy will be provided to increase the yield of the trees of temperate fruit crops such as pear and plum in Kodaikanal, by rejuvenating the old varieties with new varieties through grafting. The scheme will be implemented in an area of 370 acres at an outlay of Rs.30 lakh.

26) Establishment of New State Horticulture Farm and Parks

i) **Mullai Garden:** Mullai, one of the five lands of Sangam Era, also refers to forests and adjacent lands. To showcase the life and geographical conditions of the Tamil people who inhabited the Mullai land, Mullai Park will be established at Velimalai in Kanyakumari district. The project is

set to be implemented at an estimated cost of Rs. 2 crore.

ii) **Marutham Park:** Marutham represents wetlands and adjoining fields with water resources. In Thanjavur district, in the Cauvery river basin, abundant with fertile fields, the Marutham Park will be established at Thirumalai Samuthiram, with a budget allocation of Rs.2 crore.

iii) **Sun Garden:** Kanyakumari is one of the popular tourist places in Tamil Nadu. If a garden is established between the sun rise point and sun set point, it will attract many visitors. Hence, a Sun Garden will be established near the seashore at an outlay of Rs. 2 crore.

iv) **Hibiscus Nursery Garden:** Hibiscus is used for the production of medicinal, cosmetic, and food products. The tea made from the petals of hibiscus flower helps in reducing blood pressure, stress, cholesterol and body weight. Considering its significance and to popularise hibiscus among public, a Hibiscus Nursery will be established at an outlay of Rs.1 crore at Attur in Chengalpattu district.

v) **State Horticulture Farm, Naduvakurichi:**

In order to produce pedigree, quality planting materials and to distribute them to the farmers in time at reasonable prices, a new State Horticulture

Farm will be established at an outlay of Rs.1 crore in an area of 4 acres at Naduvakurichi Village of Shankarankovil block in Tenkasi District. This farm will act as a model demonstration farm.

vi) **Introduction of New Rose Varieties in Rose Garden, Ooty:**

The Government Rose Garden in Ooty boasts an impressive collection, housing 32,000 rose plants comprising 4,201 varieties, including large, small, and climbing roses. Drawing in an average of 10 lakh tourists annually, this world-renowned Rose Garden is a popular destination for those who appreciate the beauty of various rose varieties. To further enhance the garden's rose collection, the first phase will involve planting 100 new varieties of roses to improve the park to attract more visitors.

27) Promotion of Medicinal plants cultivation

Recognizing the growing appreciation for traditional medicine, and the increased demand for herbal crops, there is a need to promote the cultivation of medicinal plants. In response to the requests from farmers, an allocation of Rs. 5 crore will be made to support the cultivation of medicinal crops such as Gloriosa, Senna, Periwinkle, and Coleus, covering an extent of 1,680 acres.

28) Integrated Cashew Development Programme:

Cashew is currently cultivated in an area spanning 2.07 lakh acres in Tamil Nadu, yielding approximately 43,500 MT of cashew nuts. Despite having processing facilities with a capacity of 4 lakh MT, only 10 per cent of cashew kernels are being produced within the State. To boost both the area and production of cashew, an allocation of Rs.2.36 crore will be made.

In addition, to emphasize the importance of using organic inputs in the production of high-quality cashew nuts, an allocation of Rs.1 crore will be made for laying out demonstrations in 2,470 acres.

29) Promotion of Chilli Cultivation

As per the announcement made last year, Prosopis has been successfully eradicated in an area covering 2,470 acres, and chillies have been cultivated in its place. In the year 2024-2025, the eradication of Prosopis will continue in an additional area of 1,230 acres, and chillies will be cultivated to expand the area under chilli cultivation. This effort is focused on the identified Chilli cluster, which includes Ramanathapuram, Virudhunagar, Sivagangai, and Thoothukudi districts. Further, chilli cultivation will be promoted as a fallow crop, covering an area of 3,700 acres after the harvest of paddy and other cereals. Also, 200 water harvesting structures will be created in Sivagangai and Ramanathapuram districts.

An allocation of Rs.3.67 crore will be made for this scheme.

30) Control of Mealy bug Infestation in Tapioca

Mealy bug infestation in major tapioca growing districts affects the production, thereby affecting the livelihood of farmers. To control the mealybug infestation, an allocation of Rs.1 crore will be made to take up integrated nutrient and pest management in an area of 21,000 acres.

31) Date palm cultivation

In Tamil Nadu, iron rich Date palm cultivation will be expanded in an area of 250 acres at an outlay of Rs. 30 lakh from Union and State Government funds.

32) Fruit fly Management in Guava

In guava, fruit fly infestation is predominant during the harvesting stage leading to loss of yield. In order to control this, pheromone traps will be distributed to cover an area of 10,000 acres for which Rs.50 lakh will be allocated from Union and State Government funds.

33) Promotion of Permanent Pandal Cultivation

The establishment of a permanent pandal is crucial to enhance the production, productivity and quality of pandal vegetables like bitter gourd, snake gourd, ribbed gourd, bottle gourd etc., In the year 2024-2025,

a permanent pandal will be established in 770 acres, at an outlay of Rs.9.40 crore.

34) Promotion of Traditional Vegetables

Recognizing the significance of traditional vegetables, often evoking nostalgic memories of childhood and the comforting meals provided by mothers, it becomes imperative to revive and promote these varieties across all regions of Tamil Nadu. An allocation of Rs.2 crore will be made to facilitate cultivation of traditional vegetables in 2,470 acres.

35) Creation of Sales Centre at State Horticulture Farms

The materials like planting materials, biofertilizers, vermicompost, biopesticides, farm produce, and value added products, produced in State Horticulture Farms and items needed for homestead garden such as pots, equipment, and accessories will be made readily available to the public through establishment of sales centres in 10 State Horticulture Farms located along the prominent roads at an outlay of Rs.1 crore.

36) Block level Demonstration for Horticultural crops

To encourage the farmers in Kalaignar All Village Integrated Agriculture Development Programme (KAVIADP) villages, one village per block will be selected and a demonstration plot comprising all the components of the schemes implemented by the Department of

Horticulture will be set up in one hectare of a farmer's land. This initiative aims to provide every farmer in the village and block with practical knowledge of technology implementation and encourage the adoption of Horticulture scheme components.

37) Strengthening of Cluster based cultivation through Technical Advice

In order to promote cluster-based cultivation, Jasmine Mission, Jackfruit Mission, Chilli Mission and Curry leaves Mission are being implemented in various districts since 2023-2024. To strengthen these missions, advice on modern hi-tech cultivation will be provided regularly by horticultural experts as per the needs of the farmers.

38) Establishment of Information Centre at Block Offices to provide technical advice to farmers

Information Centres will be established at Block Offices, to provide information related to cultivation techniques to increase production and productivity of crops, new high yielding varieties, market facilities and related Government schemes easily available to the farmers.

39) Production of Moringa during off-season

Even though Moringa is being cultivated in an area of 51,800 acres in Tamil Nadu, the supply of Moringa is low during the months between October and January. Covering the Moringa tree with a polythene sheet will

prevent falling of leaves and flowers thereby ensuring production even during the off-season. This technology will be implemented on pilot basis in a small scale in State Horticulture farms.

Agricultural Engineering Department

40) Agricultural Mechanisation

The *Perumbaanatruppadai* lines,

'பிடிவாய் அன்ன மடிவாய் நாஞ்சில்
உடும்பு முக முழுக்கொழு மூழ்க ஊன்றி

mentions the use of tools in agriculture in ancient times: in these lines there is a clear allusion to the use of the 'plough' to turn the soil.

The Agricultural Mechanisation Programme, implemented on a large scale, is crucial for preventing the agricultural sector from languishing due to shortage of farm labour. To facilitate various agricultural operations such as ploughing, transplanting, weeding, crop management, harvesting, and residue management for different crops cultivated across Tamil Nadu, subsidies will be provided for the distribution of agricultural machinery and implements for the benefit of individual farmers. This includes tractors, rotavators, ridge moulders, paddy transplanters, electric weeders, sprayers, drones, paddy combine harvesters, multicrop threshers, and solar dryers to enhance the shelf life of farm produce.

To empower small and marginal farmers in carrying out farming operations on their limited land holdings, power tillers and power weeders were distributed to 5,000 farmers during the current year. The subsidy for power tillers has been increased from Rs.85,000 to Rs.1,20,000. Additionally, 4,000 power tillers and 4,000 power weeders will be distributed to farmers in the year 2024-2025.

To address challenges such as snake bites during the operation of electric pumpsets at night or during the rainy season, remote motor operators for electric pumpsets will be distributed to 10,000 farmers. This initiative, with a 50 percent subsidy up to a maximum of Rs.7,000, aims to enable farmers to operate and monitor electric pumpsets from anywhere easily without visiting the wells in their fields.

Under Agricultural Mechanisation Programme Rs.170 crore will be allocated during the year 2024-2025 to benefit 26,179 farmers.

41) Custom Hiring Centres for the underprivileged

To address the rising demand for agricultural machinery and encourage the use of advanced and high-cost equipment, private Custom Hiring Centers are being established with subsidy assistance. These centres will benefit farmers, rural entrepreneurs, farmer societies, co-operative societies of farmers and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs). As part of this initiative,

207 Agricultural Machinery Custom Hiring Centres will be established in the year 2024-2025, with a total subsidy amount of Rs.32.90 crore.

To create a link between the private agricultural machinery owners and the farmers, "Private Agricultural Machinery Custom Hiring Mobile App" will be developed at a cost of Rs.50 lakh.

42) Strengthening of Hiring Scheme of Agricultural Engineering Department

Agricultural Engineering Department is providing agricultural implements and machinery on hire to the farmers at Government fixed nominal charges through e-Vaadagai mobile App. Almost 2,700 Agricultural machinery and implements have been made available. In order to strengthen this activity, various steps will be taken during the year 2024-2025.

i. Procurement of 20 Multi Axle Carrier vehicles to transport 85 Bull Dozers,

ii. Construction of Agricultural Machinery sheds in 25 blocks to keep the Agricultural Machinery and equipments safely and to carry out the repairs,

iii. Procurement of 10 Track type paddy combine harvesters, 10 carrier vehicle for transporting the track type paddy combine harvesters,

iv. Procurement of the implements that are in high demand, spare parts for backhoe with front end loaders, cranes and generators,

v. Procurement of set of maintenance equipment to clean the agricultural machinery for operations.

To carry out the above works, an amount of Rs.28.82 crore will be allocated from Union and State Government Fund.

43) Additional subsidy assistance for Small and Marginal farmers for the Purchase of Agricultural Machinery

As per the feedback received from farmers during consultative meetings, to alleviate the challenges faced by small and marginal farmers due to the shortage of farm labourers for timely cultural operations, an additional subsidy of 10 percent will be provided, in addition to the existing 50 percent subsidy, bringing the total subsidy to 60 percent. This subsidy will be extended to small and marginal farmers for the purchase and utilisation of agricultural machinery, including Paddy transplanter. An allocation of Rs.5 crore will be made for this purpose during the year 2024-2025.

44) Paddy Mobile Dryers

The harvested paddy has to be dried to the desired moisture content to make it suitable for procurement, and also to increase its shelf life. Paddy farmers face

hardships during rainy seasons and also due to labour shortages, to dry the harvested paddy. To address this, subsidy assistance will be provided under Agricultural Mechanisation for the distribution of 10 Paddy mobile dryers to individual farmers, Farmers Self Help Groups, Cooperative Societies, Farmer Producer Organizations and Entrepreneurs at an outlay of Rs.90 lakh.

45) Initiatives to popularize Agricultural Machinery

Training will be imparted to farmers on the operation and maintanence of various agricultural machinery through district level melas. Technical manual on operation and maintenance will also be prepared and shared for the use of farmers and field officials.

46) Demonstration of Innovative Agricultural Machinery and Implements

Innovative agricultural machinery and implements will be fabricated at an estimated cost of Rs.30 lakh in Government Tractor workshops which will be demonstrated to the farmers besides hiring them out to the needy farmers at nominal charges.

Demonstrations will be conducted on innovative agricultural engineering technologies in coordination with various research, private and Government institutions during 2024-2025 to promote and create awareness about these technologies among farmers and recommend

the technologies under the Government of India schemes to provide subsidy assistance.

47) Solar Powered Fencing for protection of crops

”ஏரினும் நன்றால் எருவிடுதல் கட்டபின்
நீரினும் நன்றதன் காப்பு’ says Thiruvalluvar.

Farmers face a significant threat from animal damage to their crops even when they strive to grow their crops amidst many challenges like drought, rain, flood and pest attacks. In an effort to mitigate crop damage while avoiding harm to both animals and humans amid the rise in animal-human conflicts, solarpowered fencing systems will be installed in farmers' fields during the 2024-2025 period. This initiative will cover a length of 75,000 metres of solar fence with an allocation of Rs. 2 crore.

48) Creation and Maintenance of Water Harvesting Structures

To alleviate the water deficit in agriculture across Tamil Nadu, which previously thrived on the creation of ponds, efforts will be made in the 2024-2025 period. This involves constructing 100 new rainwater harvesting structures in various watersheds and taking up maintenance work on 500 existing water harvesting structures. The aim is to harvest rainwater, recharge groundwater, and enhance the carrying capacity of existing structures. This initiative will be carried out at a cost of Rs.2.75 crore.

49) Desilting of 'C' and 'D' channels in Delta Districts

The desilting of "C" and "D" channels in the Cauvery, Vennar, and Grand Anaicut sub-basins of seven districts including Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Nagapattinam, Mayiladuthurai, Cuddalore, Ariyalur, and Trichy, will be carried out in the third phase, continuing the efforts from the previous two years. This desilting operation will cover a length of 2,235 kilometres and will be executed with an allocation of Rs.10 crore, benefiting an area of 1,57,000 acres during 2024-2025.

50) Creation of Awareness on Rain Water Harvesting methods among farmers

Agricultural Engineering Department, in co-ordination with Krishi Vigyan Kendras will create awareness among farmers in every district, on the importance and maintenance of Rain water harvesting methods like Summer ploughing, Farm pond, Check dam etc., through Pamphlets, Audio and Video Clippings, Radio news, Field Demonstrations, Seminars, Village Level Farmers Camp, Grama Sabha meetings, Exposure visits etc.

Department of Agricultural Marketing and Agri Business

Several measures including dissemination of technologies for reduction of post harvest losses, providing capacity building trainings, market linkage, fair

and transparent trade in Regulated Markets, Uzhavar Sandhais, eNAM, online trading etc., are being implemented to ensure that farmers are fully benefited from the fruits of their hard work.

51) Provision of Mobile Dryers

Appropriate moisture content has to be maintained in food grains for its increased shelf life and storage. To facilitate this, mobile dryers will be purchased and made available in Regulated Markets of 10 districts viz., Tiruvannnamalai, Dharmapuri, Villupuram, Cuddalore, Ranipet, Tiruvallur, Thanjavur, Nagapattinam, Thiruvarur, Theni at an estimated cost of Rs.2.5 crore.

52) Turmeric Polisher

Erode is a major market centre for turmeric in the country. The shelf life and quality of turmeric is enhanced by post-harvest processing like boiling and polishing. Hence, for the benefit of turmeric farmers and Farmer Producer Companies, five turmeric polishers and eight turmeric boilers will be provided in Regulated markets of Erode, Kallakurichi and Dharmapuri Districts at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.12 crore.

53) Creating common branding, packaging facilities for value added products.

Common branding will be created to facilitate the farmers, Farmer Producer Companies and entrepreneurs to add value to their produce on par with the companies.

By this, they can market their value added produce effectively and get increased income. Common infrastructure facilities for branding and packaging will be established at Chennai and Coimbatore at a cost of Rs. 4.10 crore from Union and State Government funds.

54) Jackfruit Value Addition Centre at Panruti, Cuddalore District

Jackfruit holds the second place among the three major fruits (Mango, Jack and Banana) and is rich in nutrients required for maintaining good health. There is huge potential for producing value-added products from jackfruit. Hence, to produce and export various value-added products of jackfruit, a value addition centre with necessary infrastructure facilities will be established at Panruti at a cost of Rs.16.13 crore from the Union and State Government funds.

55) Technology cum Market Promotion Centre for Millets in Perambalur District

To improve the livelihood of Maize and Millet growing farmers, a Technology cum Market Promotion Centre with necessary infrastructure will be established in Perambalur District at a cost of Rs.4 crore. In this centre, capacity building trainings on value addition technologies in Millets and Maize will be imparted to farmers, Self Help Groups, Farmer Interest Groups and Farmer Producer Companies.

56) Renovation of infrastructure facilities in Regulated Markets

Renovation of Infrastructure facilities in 100 Regulated Markets in Tamil Nadu is in progress at an outlay of Rs. 47.30 crore during the current year. Further, infrastructure in 100 Regulated Markets will be renovated at a cost of Rs.50 crore during the year 2024-2025.

57) Geographical Indication for Agricultural Products

Marketing of Geographically Indicated products increases its demand and export opportunities. Hence, Geographical Indication is being obtained for the unique and native agricultural products of our State.In the past three years, application for Geographical Indication tag has been filed for 25 agricultural products. Likewise, during 2024-2025, Geographical Indication tag will be obtained for 10 Agricultural Products viz., Sathayamangalam Red Banana (Erode), Kolli Hills Pepper (Namakkal), Meenambur Seeraga Samba (Ranipet), Ayyampalayam Nettai Thennai (Dindigul), Urigam Puli (Krishnagiri), Bhuvanagiri Mithi Pagarkai (Cuddalore), Sencholam (Salem, Karur), Tirunelveli senna Leaf (Tirunelveli), Odaipatti Seedless Grapes (Theni), Gloriosa Superba (Senkanthal seed-Karur, Dindigul, Tiruppur) at a cost of Rs.30 lakh.

58) Promoting APEDA trained farmers as Exporters

Responding to the widespread demand from farmers in various districts, a scheme will be launched to select 100 farmers who have undergone training in APEDA and are involved in cultivating Mango, Coconut, Millets, Moringa, Turmeric, Small Onion, and Cucumber. These farmers will be supported in becoming full-time exporters by providing Rs.15,000 per farmer for obtaining the necessary export-related certificates. This initiative will be implemented at a cost of Rs.15 lakh from the State Fund.

59) Integrating the sale of agricultural produce with e-commerce platforms.

New market avenues will be created by connecting the producers and consumers through online sale of farmers' products in collaboration with e-commerce platforms. This will generate additional revenue to producers and offer consumers access to quality products at reasonable prices.

60) Initiatives for improvement of Agri Trade

Several measures will be implemented to empower farmers in determining the prices for their produce. To facilitate improved trade, the existing stock of farmers' produce and the requirements of traders will be linked with regulated markets through social networking groups to ensure fair pricing for the farmers' produce. In order to boost farmers' income, village campaigns will be conducted in two villages per block, totaling

770 campaigns per month. These campaigns aim to raise awareness about post-harvest technologies, marketing strategies, grading, value addition, and export procedures. The goal is to create awareness in all villages within a two-year timeframe.

61) Facilitating Farm Gate Trade

In Tamil Nadu, out of 284 Regulated Markets, 157 Regulated Markets have been integrated with electronic National Agriculture Market (eNAM) enabling trade. So far, 8,300 MT of agricultural produce valued at Rs.40 crore have been traded at Farm Gate Trade. During 2024-2025, Farm Gate Trade will be intensified to trade agri produce worth Rs.60 crore ensuring that the farmers receive a fair price.

62) Increase the Pledge loan limit to farmers

To avoid distress sale during harvest season glut, pledge loan is issued to farmers for the produce stored in the Regulated Market godowns. The pledge loan limit for the farmers will be hiked to Rs.5 lakh from Rs.3 lakh.

63) Warehouse Development Regulatory Authority (WDRA) accreditation for Storage Godowns

e- Negotiable Warehouse Receipts system has been implemented in the 150 godowns of Regulated Markets. During 2024-2025, additional 100 godowns will be accredited with Warehousing Development and

Regulatory Authority (WDRA) to facilitate availing of pledge loan from nationalised banks.

64) Support to Agri Tech Startups

Agri-tech based Startups will be identified and provided with subsidies based on their objectives, sustainability and business plan. An amount of Rs.10 crore will be allocated from State Fund for the support to Agri Tech startups.

65) Agricultural Exhibition

Following the great response received uniformly from Farmers, Farmer Producer Companies, Entrepreneurs, students and general public for the Agri Business Expo at Chennai and Velan Sangamam at Trichy which were held during 2023-24, it is proposed to conduct three Agri Expos during 2024-2025 at a cost of Rs.9 crore.

Department of Seed Certification and Organic Certification

The Name of this Department in Tamil i.e., விதைச்சான்று மற்றும் அங்ககச் சான்றுத்துறை will be renamed as "**விதைச்சான்றளிப்பு மற்றும் உயிர்மச் சான்றளிப்புத்துறை**".

66) The Seed Certification and Organic Certification Department will carry out activities such as ,

- Establishment of Integrated Seed Certification and Organic Certification Complex at Karur and Tiruvallur Districts.
- Setting up of an automated third generation DNA marker-based technology embedded fingerprinting laboratory at Coimbatore.
- Providing incentives to farmers who have registered and achieved organic status under the National Programme for Organic Production to promote organic certification in Tamil Nadu.
- Obtaining NABL (National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories) certification for six seed testing laboratories viz., Dharmapuri, Kanchipuram, Madurai, Tirunelveli, Thanjavur and Trichy.
- Providing 100 per cent subsidy assistance for testing residual toxins in organic produce meant for exports to enable the farmers to ensure the quality and nature of toxic substances present in the produce. All the above mentioned schemes will be implemented at an outlay of Rs.9 crore during the year 2024-2025.

Apart from this, a new enrolment system will be introduced to avoid duplicate or different entries of leading branded seeds in the market and to ensure the quality of seeds to the farmers. The quality of seedlings and planting materials produced in private nurseries will be ensured as per the Seeds Act. Measures will be taken to ensure availability of quality hybrid maize seeds to farmers through Seeds Act.

Tamil Nadu Watershed Development Agency

67) Under Watershed Development Programme, Natural Resource Management works, Production System works and Livelihood Support works will be taken up in 25 blocks of seven districts namely Perambalur, Thoothukudi, Krishnagiri, Ramanathapuram, Dharmapuri, Dindigul and Virudhunagar covering 275 Micro Watersheds during the year 2024-2025 at an outlay of Rs.43 crore with Union and State Government funds.

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University

68) Developing protocols for drone spraying of inputs in Horticultural crops for smart delivery

Protocol for precision spraying of agricultural inputs for horticultural crops by drones will be developed. Training and demonstration programmes will be conducted to generate employment opportunities for rural youth.

69) Development of Low Glycemic Index Rice varieties for diabetic patients

Research activities will be carried out to improve traditional rice varieties with low glycemic index and high nutritional value and to develop rice varieties suitable for direct seeding through rapid breeding techniques.

70) Mechanisation in Turmeric, Tapioca and Onion cultivation

Feasibility testing, production of machines and demonstrations will be carried out for complete mechanisation in turmeric, tapioca and onion cultivation in Tamil Nadu.

71) Research program for new varieties in Tuberose, Chrysanthemum and Rose

Research programmes to develop new varieties in tuberose, chrysanthemum and rose with improved productivity and profitability through new genetical methods will be carried out.

An amount of Rs.5.44 crore from the State fund will be allocated for the implementation of these schemes.

72) Tamil Nadu Food Processing and Agri Export Promotion Corporation (TNAPEx)

Loans amounting to Rs.627.65 crore have been sanctioned to 10,548 producer groups and individuals, while a subsidy of Rs.196.89 crore has been disbursed under the food processing scheme. I take pride in announcing that our state has been ranked first in the

country and received an award for its overall performance under this scheme.

The schemes like

i. Establishment of value added food product manufacturing business incubation facilities at the primary processing centers in Dharmapuri, Dindigul and Nilgiris districts in order to enhance their utilization,

ii. Creation of infrastructure facilities for extracting economically valuable export oriented compounds from Agricultural produce and biomass in the agro-industrial corridor at Thanjavur.

iii. To test and certify the food products on export oriented purpose, food quality testing laboratories will be established at Coimbatore, Madurai, Trichy and Vellore.

iv. Creation of value chain for Rice, Mango, Banana, Guava, Tomato, Chilli and marine Fish products including the activities like input distribution, production, post harvest management, processing, marketing, consumption and management.

All the above schemes will be implemented at an outlay of Rs. 72 crore by the Tamil Nadu

Agro-Processing and Export Development Corporation during the year 2024-2025.

73) Co-operation, Food and Consumer Protection

i) Co-operative Crop loan

In the year 2022-2023, an unprecedented amount of crop loan of Rs.13,442 crore was disbursed to 17.44 lakh farmers. In the year 2023-24, so far, Rs.13,600 crore has been disbursed as crop loan to 16.19 lakh farmers, against the target of Rs.16,500 crore. For the year 2024-2025, Rs.16,500 crore is fixed as target for crop loan disbursement.

During the year 2023-2024, working capital loan of Rs.1,900 crore has been disbursed against the target of Rs.2,300 crore so far, for Goat rearing, Dairying, Poultry and Fisheries activities.

For the year 2024-2025, an allocation of Rs.700 crore has been made to provide interest subsidy for crop loan and Rs.200 crore to provide interest subsidy for working capital loan for Goat rearing, Dairying, Poultry and Fisheries activities.

Also, a scheme to digitize Cooperative Banks, specifically Primary Agricultural Co-operative Credit Societies, has been initiated with an allocation of Rs.141 crore. This initiative aims to digitize the credit disbursement system, which will reduce the time needed

for loan disbursement and enhance transparency in the process.

ii) Multi Purpose Service Centre

Efforts are underway to broaden the scope of Primary Agricultural Co-operative Credit Societies (PACCSs) by incorporating various services such as Agricultural Service Centres, Rural Marts, Processing Units, and Storage Godowns, transforming them into Multi-Purpose Service Centres for the advantage of rural communities. A significant financial commitment has been made to this initiative, with Rs.457 crore sanctioned and Rs.341 crore already disbursed as loans to 2,609 PACCSs under 4,757 schemes. Moreover, 1,380 agricultural machinery have been acquired through PACCSs, supported by the interest subsidy from the Agricultural Infrastructure Fund (AIF) scheme. These machines are integrated with the e-Vaadagai (Uzhavan app), allowing farmers to benefit from accessing machinery at reduced hiring charges.

iii) e- Banking Services

In a pioneering move within the country, cooperative banks have introduced the Unified Payment Interface (UPI), marking a significant milestone. Additionally, electronic banking services, including UPI and NEFT, are now utilized by over one crore customers, facilitating an average of 30 lakh transactions valued

at approximately Rs.17,000 crore every month in cooperative banks.

iv) Direct Paddy procurement:

To further increase the rice processing capacity six new modernized rice mills will be commissioned by the government with private contribution. To protect the paddy grains at the direct paddy procurement stations from natural calamities, paddy storage structures have been constructed in 18 places at a cost of Rs.238 crore. Also, 55 direct paddy procurement stations with a capacity of 250 metric tons are being set up under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

In the year 2024-2025, an amount of Rs.10,500 crore has been allocated for food subsidy to ensure food security. Furthermore, Rs.500 crore will be allocated as incentive for the Tamil Nadu government's paddy procurement.

74) Water Resources Department

Water Resources Department is executing schemes such as construction of Barrages, Regulators, check dams, formation of new canals, Tanks, etc., and inter linking of rivers within the State and providing appropriate ground water recharge structures with the aim to augment water resources to improve irrigation.

As per the directions of the Hon'ble Chief Minister, budget provision is made in the Budget Estimate and desilting works are carried out before the onset of the South West monsoon. Through this intervention, delivery of Cauvery water to the tail end areas is ensured. In 2024-2025, it is proposed to take up 919 desilting works at a cost of Rs.110 Crore to desilt 5338 km length of rivers, canals and channels in the Cauvery delta districts.

75) Animal Husbandry

Milk production can be increased by increasing the fodder crop production and providing health services to livestock. In the years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, incentive has been provided to farmers to encourage intercropping of fodder in gardens and orchards, governing an area of 2,000 acres. Owing to the success of the scheme, it is planned to continue the scheme during the year 2024-2025 with an allocation of Rs.2 crore from state fund to cover 5,000 acres of gardens and orchards with fodder intercropping.

76) Fisheries

To encourage inland fishers and fulfill the demand for freshwater fish in the domestic markets, a total of Rs.4.60 crore will be provided as subsidy to implement projects like construction of new grow out fish ponds, input subsidy for fresh water aquaculture,fish culture by Bio-floc technology and fish culture by Re-circulatory

Aquaculture System and establishment of fish feed mill. By implementing these schemes, the income of fishermen will increase significantly and inland fish production will also increase.

77) Rural Development

i) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

In the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, natural resources management works such as check dams, farm ponds, water recharge pits, stone bunds etc. are carried out along with works such as drought proofing, land development, minor irrigation development, renovation of traditional water bodies etc. for improvement of ground water and soil moisture.

To facilitate smooth movement of agricultural produce and ensure connectivity between the farmers in the villages and the markets, single Layer WBM Roads are also being taken up for unconnected habitations of Scheduled Tribes in hilly areas.

During the year 2024-2025, two lakh works including farm ponds, water recharge shafts, sunken ponds, percolation ponds, recharge wells, new ponds, earthern bunds, stone bunds will be carried out at a cost of Rs.7,000 crore.

ii) Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women

The role of women is crucial in all agriculture related works starting from sowing. Therefore, during the year 2024-2025, 60 coconut nurseries will be established in coordination with Horticulture Department through interested and trained women self help groups at a cost of Rs.2.40 crore. The coconut seedlings produced in these nurseries will be supplied to Horticulture Department for distribution under schemes.

Also, since seed is the main input for agricultural production, Rs.2 crore will be allocated for the establishment of 100 seed production clusters in pulses and oilseed crops. Agriculture Department will give necessary training and parental seed materials to women SHGs and procure the seeds produced by these Women SHGs by giving production incentive and distribute the seeds to farmers through Agricultural Extension Centres. Necessary training and foundation seeds will be provided by the Department of Agriculture and the seeds produced by the women self-help groups will be procured by the Department of Agriculture by granting subsidy and distributed to the farmers through the Agricultural Extension Centers.

78) Energy Department

Recognizing the advantages of irrigated agriculture, the provision of free electricity for agricultural irrigation

stands as a testament to the noble aim of encouraging farmers to enhance production through the utilization of groundwater, ultimately contributing to food security. To date, approximately 23.51 lakh three-phase free power connections have been extended to farmers. In alignment with this initiative, the Government is committed to compensating the Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation Limited (TANGEDCO) with a payment of around Rs.7,280 crore.

79) Revenue and Disaster Management

i. The Catalytic Assistance for Drought Mitigation programme will be implemented from 2024-2025 in 110 Villages of 55 Blocks in seven districts namely Dharmapuri, Tiruppur, Pudukkottai, Sivagangai, Virudhunagar Ramanathapuram and Thoothukudi at an estimated cost of Rs.110.59 crore.

ii. “Digital Azmoish (Digital Crop Survey) is being done in Tamil Nadu to enumerate crops cultivated in Agricultural lands. By using the data captured in Digital Azmoish, e-Adangal will be issued online to the farmers from the year 2024-2025 onwards.

80) Development of Palm Products

Palmyra Development Mission

In view of the decline in the number of palm trees in Tamil Nadu, the Government has been implementing

the Palm Development Mission for the last three years to increase the number of palm trees. Under this scheme, 47 lakh palm seeds were planted and also training and equipment were given to 950 beneficiaries to produce quality palm jaggery, palm candy and value-added products and 350 women were provided training and equipment for making palm leaf products.

During 2024-2025, 10 lakh palm seeds will be planted through Horticulture Department to promote palm cultivation. Further, in order to improve the livelihood of the palm workers, 200 palm workers will be trained to make quality palm jaggery, palm candy and other value-added products. 100 women will be trained to make palm leaf products and all the trained persons will be provided with necessary equipment. This scheme will be implemented at an outlay of Rs.1.14 crore.

During 2024-2025, an amount of **Rs.42,281.8784 Crore** has been allocated in the demand under Agriculture & other related departments like Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Dairy Development, Water resources, Rural Development, Food, Co-operation, Revenue, Forest, Sericulture. (Annexure1).

Hon'ble Speaker sir,

A verse in Puranaanooru describes the benovelence of farmers as follows:

"வரகும்தினையும்உள்ளவைஎல்லாம்
இரவல்மாக்கள்உணக்கொளத்தீர்ந்தெனக்
குறித்துமாறுஎதிர்ப்பைபெறாஅமையின்
குரல்உணங்குவிதைத்தினைஉரல்வாய்ப்பெய்து

Translated it means:

Farmers, known for their generosity, go to the extent of cooking and serving the millet reserved as seed for sowing. So also our Government stands as a guardian of the welfare of these noble farmers, who display magnanimity despite their own financial constraints.

வானோக்கிவாழும் உலகெல்லாம் மன்னவன்
கோல்நோக்கிவாழுங் குடி.

(Tirukkural-542)

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our Honorable Chief Minister, who has exemplified good governance in the interest of our farmers. The great poet Thiruvalluvar has given us an apt simile which states that as the world looks up to the sky for rain, so also the people look up to the government for good governance. I am immensely honoured by this golden opportunity to present this fourth exclusive budget for Agriculture for Tamil Nadu, a budget which aims at safeguarding the welfare of our farmers:

“அடிசில் வைகல் ஆயிரம் அறப்புறமும் ஆயிரம்
கொடியனார் செய் கோலமும் வைகல்தோறுஆயிரம்
மடிவுஇல் கம்மியர்களோடும் மங்கலமும் ஆயிரம்
ஒடிவுஇலை வேறுஆயிரம் ஓம்புவாரின் ஓம்பலே

.....(சீவகசிந்தாமணி 76)

In keeping with the alluring words of Thiruthakkadevar, the author of "Seevagasinthamani," which depicts a vision of prosperity, where every day, the towns flourish with a thousand varieties of food, supported by thousands of choultries, animated by thousands of industrious individuals engaged in skilled work, a vibrancy that leads to thousands of marriages, safeguarded by thousands of vigilant guards preventing crime, this fourth Agriculture Budget envisions an ambitious plan. It aims to eradicate hunger and poverty among the people, ensure food security, provide nutritious sustenance, enhance livelihoods, manage natural resources wisely, protect the environment, and achieve inclusive growth. Through these efforts, under the esteemed guidance of our Honorable Chief Minister, the contributions of the Agriculture and Farmers Welfare department will be furthered.

In the upcoming years, additional budget allocations will be made for the announced schemes, considering the financial circumstances. I confidently assert that this significant Fourth exclusive budget for Agriculture will

serve to connect all the stakeholders associated with Agriculture.

I express my heartfelt thanks to Thiru. Shiv Das Meena, I.A.S., Chief Secretary of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. T. Udayachandran, I.A.S., Principal Secretary to Government, Finance Department, Selvi. Apoorva, I.A.S., Agricultural Production Commissioner & Principal Secretary to Government and all Heads of Departments for their unwavering support rendered in preparing this Fourth Agriculture budget loaded with new schemes as done in the last three years.

வாழ்க தமிழ்! வாழ்க தமிழ்நாடு!

வளர்க வேளாண்மை!

நன்றி! வணக்கம்.

ANNEXURE – I
Outlay under Capital and Revenue under Agriculture & Allied Sectors During 2024-2025

Rupees in Thousands

S. No.	Name	BE 2023-24	BE 2024-25		
		Total	Capital	Revenue	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1	Agriculture	10,772,03,13	111,92,54	11,082,54,93	11,194,47,47
2	Horticulture and Plantation Crops	1,395,21,44	6	1,621,60,26	1,621,60,32
3	Agricultural Engineering	855,53,75	7,22,67	707,31,60	714,54,27
4	Agricultural Marketing and Agri Business	277,71,46	10,48,86	199,41,48	209,90,34
5	Tamil Nadu Agricultural University	616,68,93	15,00,00	649,31,89	664,31,89
6	Seed Certification and Organic Certification	61,99,12	0	70,77,50	70,77,50
7	Sugar Department	253,52,52	0	254,06,20	254,06,20
8	Animal Husbandry	1,062,32,02	47,69,85	1,040,52,78	1,088,22,63
9	Dairy Development	122,66,87	542,00,03	39,91,78	581,91,81
10	Fisheries & Fishermen Welfare (Inland Fisheries)	1,356,61,54	606,27,76	714,69,09	1,320,96,85
11	Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University	374,10,95	0	346,14,64	346,14,64
12	Tamil Nadu Fisheries University, Nagapattinam	52,83,17	0	48,99,29	48,99,29
13	Co-Operation (Crop Loan)	350,00,00	0	700,00,00	700,00,00
14	Civil Supplies Department (DPC Procurement)	10,501,74,96	1,14,00	10,500,00,00	10,501,14,00
15	Rural Development & Panchayat (MGNREGS, Rural Road, NRML and AGAMT)	4,891,62,52	3,421,05,00	4,185,80,06	7,606,85,06
16	Food Processing (MSME)	176,06,17	0	177,79,43	177,79,43
17	Sericulture	90,59,90	0	111,12,28	111,12,28

S. No.	Name	BE 2023-24	BE 2024-25		
		Total	Capital	Revenue	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
18	Forestry (Agro Forestry/ Man- animal Conflict)	1,087,19,81	456,77,25	651,16,30	1,107,93,55
19	Revenue (SDRF/ Crop Damage/ Uzhavar Pathukappu Thittam)	369,50,52	0	379,36,67	379,36,67
20	Canal Restoration - Major Works	4,236,47,28	3,581,73,64	0	3,581,73,64
	Total	**38,904,46,06**	**8,801,31,66**	**33,480,56,18**	**42,281,87,84**