DETAILED GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION AND FUNDING OF AGRISNET PROJECTS

1.BACKGROUND:

1.1 The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India has already started implementing e-Governance through various ICT initiatives. The Government of India has decided to launch a Central Sector Scheme titled, ***"Strengthening / Promoting Agricultural Informatics & Communications"*** *of which one component is AGRISNET.*

2. OBJECTIVES:

2.1 The objective of AGRISNET is to provide improved services to the farming community through use of ICT. Since the Scheme is going to be implemented in the projectised mode, the State Governments shall determine the output and deliverables for each project in terms of G2C services. Provision of G2G services would be treated as an intermediate output.

3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:

3.1 The AGRISNET Project will be implemented in a projectised mode, i.e., funds under AGRISNET will be provided to the State/ UT governments or to autonomous bodies identified by the State/Union Territory Governments on the basis of specific project proposals submitted for the prupose.

3.2 The project proposals for funding under AGRISNET will clearly specify the following:

Services and services goals

a) Outputs and deliverables
b) Number of farmers/beneficiaries to be benefited by the improved services
c) Road map and Timeliness, including intermediate milestones
d) Positioning of Empowered Committees
e) Positioning of Mission leader
f) Implementation arrangements and Positioning of Implementation team
g) Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation, including independent evaluation, of the project.
h) Success criteria for assessing project impact
i) Total funds required for the project
j) Funds to be provided by the State government, if any
k) Funds requested from the DAC
l) In-kind contribution to be made by the State government
m) Elaborate mechanism for regular data updation on real time basis
n) Details of existing ICT infrastructure available in the State, which should be fully integrated with the proposal.

3.3 The State Governments shall propose a road map indicating delivery of G2C services and these should also be explicitly stated in the project proposal.

3.4 The State Governments should indicate as to how they intend to deliver the services to the farmers. The delivery points should be identified and indicated in the proposals.

3.5 The improvement of services to the farming community through the use of ICT, and not the services per se, would be considered for funding under AGRISNET.

3.6 The items / activities eligible for funding under AGRISNET will include :

a) *Hardware and system software*
b) *Application software*
c) *Data entry*
d) *Networking*
e) *Training of stakeholders (officials of State Agriculture Department, State Cooperative Department, District Agricultural Officers and Extension workers)*
f) *Other specific activities.*
g) *Essential miscellaneous costs (not to exceed 10% of the total project cost)*

3.7 Data Centre capabilities will be considered at the state levels. The total number of data centres below the state level shall not exceed the total number of districts in the state.

3.8 The cost of 'delivery point' infrastructure will not be considered under this project, since, the Department of IT has a programme to set up 100,000 Community Service Centres by 2007.

3.9 The hardware and software should be so designed that, if needed, it can be extended up to the block level.

3.10 The following hardware/software, avoiding duplication with other existing infrastructure or with other schemes, would be eligible for funding for setting up of data centers at State/District levels:

(i) State AGRISNET Centre

Hardware/Networking Component

- *High Availability Database Server (lower end) +OS (3)*
  (Data base Server, Application Server, Patch/Anti-virus Server)
- *Multi-media Client (P-IV) System + OS (3)*

- *Printer (3)*
- *LAN infrastructure along with Networking interface*
- *Scanner (1)*
- *UPS (1 for servers and 3 for clients) with 30 minutes battery backup*

Software Tools

- *Operating System for Server-(3)/ Operating System for client (3) media + Firewall*
- *Database Software and other access software tools including data security*
- *Office Productivity Tools with multi-lingual support*
- *Development Kit*

(ii) District AGRISNET Node

Hardware/Networking Component

- *High Availability Database Server (lower end) + OS (2)*
  (Database server and application server)
- *Multi-media PC Client System + OS (2)*
  (one for Dist. Agri. Dept. and two line depts. Including cooperation office.)
- *Printer (2)*
- *LAN infrastructure along with network interface*
- *Scanner (1)*
- *UPS (1 for servers + 2 for clients) (with 30 minutes battery backup)*

Software Tools

- *Operating System for Server (2)/ Operating System for Client (2) media + Firewall*
- *Database Software and other access software tools including data security*
- *Office Productivity Tools and Multilingual Support (2)*

(iii) *The PCs and related hardware/software shall be for the use of officers and staff directly connected with the services being covered under the Project and the states shall assess the realistic requirement of the same at state/district level giving details of such officers and staff.*

3.11 Prior to completion of SRS, only the following will be eligible under different heads:-

- *One PC for offices between State and District levels which are directly involved in services being provided under the project.*
- *Ceiling for training would be calculated on the basis of average 5 trainees per PC (other than those linked to servers), the average cost of training being Rs. 3,000 per trainee.*
- *Cost of data entry will not exceed the amount calculated at the rate of Rs. 1 lakh per district.*
- *At State level, maximum 10 PCs in addition to those provided with Servers, for use by officials directly involved in services being provided under the project.*
- *Maximum two PCs for District Agriculture Officers in addition to those provided with Servers for use by officials directly involved in services being provided under the project.*
- *Maximum one PC for other District level offices (e.g. of other Departments) directly involved in services being provided under the project.*

3.12 The State government shall provide physical site for the project and bear the initial and recurring cost for the physical (civil) infrastructure such as premises, site preparation, furniture, etc. The State government shall also provide manpower and utilities for implementing the project.

3.13 The states shall commit to maintaining the infrastructure created under the project with their own funds after the initial warranty period is over. Initial warranty for the hardware shall be for a maximum period of three year. Infrastructure for this purpose would include hardware, software, data created and other content developed. Any up-gradation of the infrastructure will have to be done by the State government at its own cost.

3.14 The state government will commit to integrate other national / state level agriculture portals / applications with AGRISNET project.

3.15 The project proposal shall also indicate State's participation in terms of sharing of costs and any other commitments proposed to be made by the State government.

3.16 The proposal will make a clear commitment that no project fund will be utilized for creation of posts or towards meeting salary / wages of staff.

3.17 The States/UTs would be free to choose any agency – public, private, NGO etc. for implementation of AGRISNET projects. The agency implementing the projects shall follow the procedures for procurement of hardware / software applicable to it, which in respect of Government Departments will mean following the GFRs.

However, the order placed by the procuring agency shall necessarily specify the time period within which the selected vendor shall have to supply hardware. This time period shall not exceed three months. After the expiry of the specified period, the order placed with the vendor shall automatically stand cancelled and the procurement process shall start afresh. The tender documents shall suitably include this condition.

The tender document shall also include the condition that prices to be paid for hardware would be that prevailing at the time of delivery of supplies and not at the time orders were placed, in case there has been decline in prices since placement of the order.

3.18 IT Division would evolve suitable mechanism to have regular monitoring and independent evaluation of AGRISNET Project.

4. NETWORKING STRATEGY:

4.1 The network connectivity required for the project from the Centre to the NIC Units in the States will be provided by the NIC at its own cost. Similarly, the network connectivity from the State NIC Units to the District NIC units will also be provided by the NIC at its own cost. Also, since AGRISNET projects are to be integrated with SWAN, the cost of vertical connectivity such as from state to district level or district level to below district level will not be eligible under AGRISNET.

4.2 For the present, networking cost would not be considered for funding, pending further elaboration of these Guidelines.

4.3 AGRISNET will be closed user Group on NICNET/SWAN. The project shall be integrated with SWAN. The duplication with SWAN shall be avoided. DIT will prioritize SWAN projects in various states and will line them up before the implementation of AGRISNET to facilitate this integration.

4.4 The State Department of Agriculture are required to have AGRISNET proposals vetted by the State Department of IT before the same are submitted to the DAC for consideration.

5. GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING PROJECT PROPOSALS:

5.1 To implement the projectised approach, a Committee has been set up in the DAC to develop the guidelines for preparation and subsequent approval of projects. The constitution of this Committee is as given below:-

(i)	*Additional Secretary*	*-*	*Chairperson*
(ii)	*Joint Secretary (IT)*	*-*	*Member*
(iii)	*Director (Finance), DAC*	*-*	*Member*

(iv)	*A Representative from the Deptt. of IT not below the level of Director*	*-*	*Member*
(v)	*A representative of DG, NIC not below the rank of DDG*	*-*	*Member*
(vi)	*Director (IT)*	*-*	*Member Secretary*

6. MISSION LEADER FOR AGRISNET:-

Joint secretary (IT Division), Department of Agriculture & Cooperation in the Ministry of Agriculture has been designated as Mission Leader for AGRISNET Project in the Department.

7. PROJECT OUTLAY:-

7.1 The total approved allocation for the Project for the duration of Tenth Plan is Rs. 49.47 crore which would be given to the States as grants-in-aid in the year 2005-06 and 2006-07. Financial assistance will also be provided to States for preparation of project proposal for funding under AGRISNET. However, such assistance will be limited to maximum Rs. 5.00 lakh per State/ UT.

7.2 The AGRISNET project would be considered on first come first served basis.

7.3 The project funds would be released in two annual installments subject to fulfillment of the prescribed procedure.

7.4 The States/UTs will be required to submit monthly physical and financial progress reports to Government of India regarding implementation of the projects.