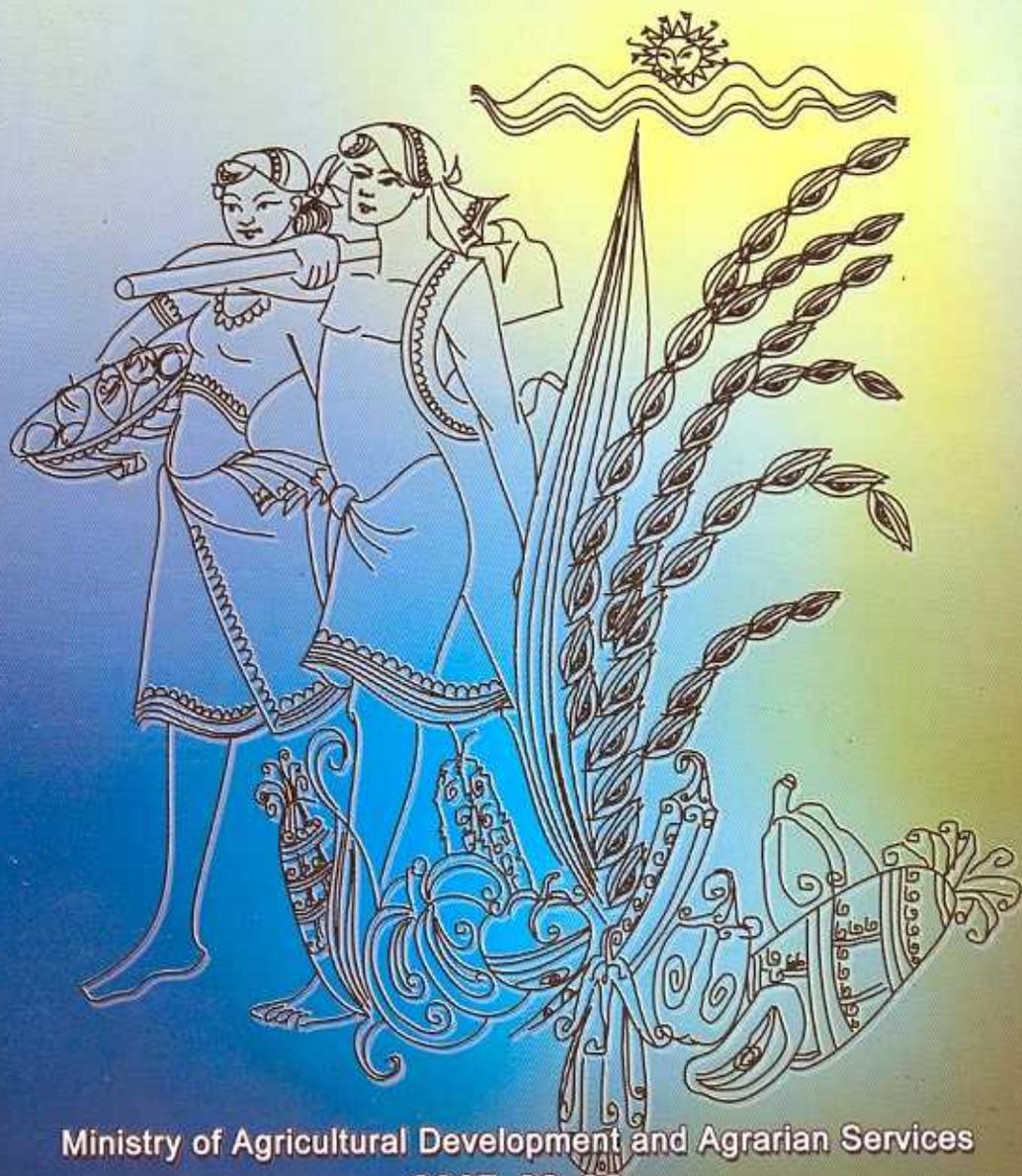


National Agricultural policy



Ministry of Agricultural Development and Agrarian Services

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Introduction

The agricultural sector is the cornerstone in Sri Lanka's economy with more than 70% of the population living in rural areas depending on agriculture for their livelihoods. Currently this sector contributes to about 18% of the GDP and 30% of the employment. The agricultural productivity has remained relatively stable, except for rice which has reached near self-sufficiency in the recent years. This explains at least in part why poverty is proving to be recalcitrant at levels of 25-30% of the population, with large majority of the poor living in the rural areas. The low productivity of the agricultural sector also contributes to 23% of household incomes as against 60% by non farm activities. The agricultural sector was also not geared to absorb the rural unemployed compared to the other sectors of the economy. It is necessary to reverse this trend and improve the agricultural sector to meet the aspirations of the people, particularly that of the farming community. Therefore, the importance attached to the agricultural sector development by the government is to meet these formidable challenges by accelerating its growth in order to bring about socio-economic prosperity to the people of this country.

The agricultural sector will continue to play an important role in the application of strategies targeted towards a planned socio-economic development of the country. Rapid growth of the agricultural sector, particularly the domestic food production, floriculture and export crop sectors is essential to achieve self reliance at national level, ensure food security and to bring about equity in the distribution of income and wealth for alleviating of poverty.

This document presents the National Agricultural Policy Statements for the Food, Floriculture and Export Agricultural Crop sectors, with the aim of solving many problems and facilitating their rapid growth. The objectives stipulated in the policies therein have been designed to meet the basic needs of the farming community in terms of food and nutrition security, enhanced employment opportunities and incomes, through the adoption of technically feasible, socially acceptable, economically viable and environmentally friendly agricultural production technologies, marketing and related strategies.

National policies relating to other sectors of agriculture, plantations, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture, forestry and land use have been formulated by the concerned ministries.

Goals and Objectives

- 1) Increase domestic agricultural production to ensure food and nutrition security of the nation.
- 2) Enhance agricultural productivity and ensure sustainable growth.
- 3) Maximize benefits and minimize adverse effects of globalization on domestic and export agriculture.
- 4) Adopt productive farming systems and improved agro-technologies with a view to reduce the unit cost of production and increase profits.
- 5) Adoption of technologies in farming that are environmentally friendly and harmless to health.
- 6) Promote agro-based industries and increase employment opportunities.
- 7) Enhance the income and the living standard of farming community.

17. Home Gardening

17.1 Promote home gardening and urban agriculture to enhance household nutrition and income.

17.2 Promote women's participation in home gardening.