

Proceedings of the Director, Department of Economics and Statistics, Thiruvananthapuram.

(Present: Sreekumar B.)

Sub:- DES Kerala – EARAS – Reduction in Cluster Area - 10 acre to 5 acre - Agricultural Year 2025-26 onwards – Orders issued.

Ref :- 1. Kerala State Strategic Statistical Plan, March 2011
2. Report of Expert Committee for Agricultural Statistics July 2017.
3. Circular No. DES/2701/2023-A1(EARAS) dated 07.07.2023 of this Office.
4. Minutes of the meeting of Kerala State Statistical Commission held on 19.03.2024.
5. Minutes of the meeting of Kerala State Statistical Commission held on 18.07.2024
6. Minutes of the meeting of Kerala State Statistical Commission held on 10.01.2025.
7. Minutes of the meeting of Kerala State Statistical Commission held on 17.02.2025.

Order No: DES/1483/2024-A1(EARAS) Dated: 20-04-2025

As part of the India Statistical Strengthening Project (ISSP), the Department of Economics & Statistics had prepared State Strategic Statistical Plan (SSSP) in which 20 Key Statistical Activities were taken care of. In the SSSP report, among various issues contemplated under Crop Area and Production Statistics, it was mentioned that identification of cluster of Survey Numbers in the field on the basis of Litho Map is often very difficult for the Investigators as there are no

physical boundaries existing as marked in map and a large area of 10 acre has to be surveyed. In order to discuss and dwell into the issues confronting Crop Area and Production Statistics, as a follow up of ISSP, an Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Sri. M. Neelakantan, Additional Director General (Rtd.), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) was constituted. The committee had undertaken elaborate exercises and submitted the report with a host of recommendations. The committee recommended methodological changes without losing reliability of estimates generated through the sampling techniques adopted so that workload of an Investigator can also be reduced.

As a follow up of ISSP, Kerala State Statistical Commission (KSSC) was formed. The current KSSC is chaired by Sri. P.C. Mohanan, former Acting Chairman of National Statistical Commission (NSC) & Additional Director General (Rtd.), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI). In the meetings of KSSC, many issues related to strengthening of State Statistical System (SSS) including recommendations of various Expert Committees constituted as a follow up of ISSP, have been discussed and recommended for action. As per the reference 3rd cited, method of cluster formation was changed scientifically in such a manner that it will help the field Investigators to form clusters very easily without losing the concept of the survey. In the meeting of KSSC held on 19.03.2024, the Director presented change in the method of cluster formation and also apprised that steps are being taken to reduce the area of enumeration by conducting a pilot study 5 acre as sample in zones on 10 acre to ascertain whether there is any significant difference in the estimates, if the area of cluster were reduced. In the subsequent meeting of the KSSC

held on 18.07.2024, Director informed that a study was conducted in 28 CD Blocks, 13 Municipalities and one Corporation in the State to assess the impact of reducing the cluster area from 10 acre to 5 acre by taking data collected during the Agricultural Year 2022-23. It was reported that another pilot study in the same number of Blocks, Municipalities and one Corporation, but different geographical locations will be conducted by taking data collected during the Agricultural Year 2023-24. The Director assured to present the results of both the studies in the next meeting of KSSC. The meeting concurred that if the results are found to be positive, then the Director can implement the decision of reducing the cluster area from 10 acre to 5 acre.

Historically, cluster area of the EARAS scheme was initially set at 5 acre before being raised to 7.5 acre and later to 10 acre. A review of old records did not reveal any documented reasons for increasing the cluster area. Hence the Department conducted pilot studies. In the meeting of KSSC held on 10.01.2025, the Director presented results of the two pilot studies conducted by taking the data of 2022-23 and 2023-24. The analysis revealed that, for most of the crops, the estimates from the two cluster sizes differed only slightly. It is to be noted that variation is much less in 2023-24 data than that of 2022-23, owing to the change in the method of forming clusters in that year. While reducing the number of clusters as recommended by the Neelakantan Committee remains under consideration, the immediate priority for the Department of Economics & Statistics is to reduce the cluster area, as it would significantly alleviate the workload of Investigators. The matter again came up for discussion in the meeting of KSSC held on 17.02.2025. The meeting opined that the estimates for the 5 acre area were largely comparable to those for the 10 acre area. The meeting resolved to reduce the cluster area from 10 acre to 5 acre unanimously.

The Departmental Technical Committee met on 15.03.2025 discussed the matter in detail and decided to implement reduction in the cluster area from 10 acre to 5 acre w.e.f the Agricultural Year 2025-26. Hence, it is ordered that the area of each cluster will be reduced from the existing 10 acre to 5 acre without loss of reliability and veracity of estimates computed w.e.f the next Agricultural Year (2025-26) onwards.

DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors of all districts.

- Copy to:
- 1. Advisor, ASI Division, Ministry of Agriculture Farmers Welfare, New Delhi (With CL)
 2. Deputy Director General, National Statistics Office, Faridabad (With CL)
 3. Deputy Director General, National Statistics Office, Regional Office, Poonkulam, Thiruvananthapuram. (With CL)
 4. Secretary, Kerala State Statistical Commission
 5. CA to Director
 6. CA to Additional Directors
 7. Deputy Director, Computer Division (for publishing on the Departmental Website)
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