

Coconut Producers' Society

Even though Co-operative movement is deep rooted in many of the coconut growing States, most of the coconut farmers are unorganized even now. As such the efforts taken for increasing the production and productivity of coconut from small and marginal holdings are showing poor results. It is felt that a movement in the nature of Society of small and marginal farmers will help improve both production and productivity. With this objective in view the Board has come forward to encourage the farmers to form Coconut Producers' Societies (CPS). The Board anticipates that these Societies will collectively enter into procuring, processing and marketing activities. The Board is planning to unite the small and marginal farm holders and to register them under the Charitable Societies Act.

Benefits of CPS for farmers.

1. Enables the farmers to practice scientific farming practices.
2. Opportunity to the farmers to be get acquainted with new technologies in production, plant protection, processing and marketing.
3. Opportunity to reduce cost of cultivation through group activities.
4. Making available quality planting material, fertilizer, pesticides etc. at reasonable price.
5. Establishment of small and medium scale nurseries.
6. Financial assistance to establish organic manure units and copra dryers.
7. Better opportunities for marketing.
8. Participation in study tours, exhibitions etc..
9. Procurement, pooling and marketing of tender coconuts.

Prospective future benefits

1. Priority for financial and technical assistance for establishment of coconut processing units.
2. Better facilities for marketing their own products.
3. Opportunity to establish medium scale units through the Federation of Societies.
4. Opportunity to export coconut and coconut products through the Societies, their Federations and Producers' Company.
5. To act as recognized copra/coconut procurement agency at the time of Price Support Scheme Operations of the Government.
6. Opportunity to create Producer Companies wherein the CPS or their federations would be the share holders. These companies can invest in projects requiring high investments using technical and financial assistance of the Board.

Who can be member?

Those farmers who are having at least 10 bearing palms can be a member of the CPS. All coconut farmers eligible as per the said norms should be enrolled as a member of the CPS of his/her area. There can be around 40-100 farmers from a contiguous area. The operational area of each society must be demarcated by natural/ geographic boundaries. The societies would have to be registered under the Charitable Societies Act. The admission fee will be Rs.100 and the annual subscription is Rs.20/-.

The societies should not have any political interests and should function democratically. An executive Committee comprising an elected President and Six Executive Committee members shall govern the Society. Such societies should be registered with the Coconut Development Board. Prior permission from the Board should be obtained for making amendments in the bye laws of the Society.

An application in prescribed form shall be submitted along with the following documents for registration of CPS.

1. True copy of the certificate of the Registration made under the Charitable Societies act.
2. A copy of the bye law and Memorandum of Association of the Society.
3. Minutes of the meeting which took the decision to register the Society with the Coconut Development Board.
4. Details of the members in the prescribed form.
5. Neat & clear self prepared sketch of the operational area of the Society.

Societies found eligible for registration with the Board shall pay Rs.200/- by way of demand draft drawn in favour of the Chairman., Coconut Development Board, Kochi-682 011 payable at Ernakulam/Kochi. The validity of the registration shall be two years. Societies should renew their registration at least one month before expiry of the registration by paying Rs.100/-.

Application for registration as CPS with the Board should be submitted to

The Chairman, Coconut Development Board, Kerabhavan, SRVHS Road, Kochi-682 011

Model Bye-Law of the Coconut Producers' Society

- 1. Name:** The name of the Society shall be ----- Coconut Farmers Welfare Society.
- 2. Jurisdiction:** The area of operation of the Society shall be ward No. --- of ---Panchayat/ Municipality/Corporation in ----- State.
- 3. Head Office:** The Head Office of the Society shall be at ----- (here enter full address)
- 4. Objects:** The objects of the Society shall be;
 - (i) The socio-economic uplift of the coconut farmers residing in the area of operations.

- (ii) To improve the cultural, health, sanitary and educational conditions of the members and their family members and also to undertake appropriate welfare measures for the members of the Society.
- (iii) To under take R&D activities in the coconut based farming and allied activities including participating in exhibitions, foreign study packages in collaborations with the organization working in the relevant area.
- (iv) To disseminate latest technologies in production, protection, processing and marketing of coconut.
- (v) To help adopt the package of practices recommended by the State Department of Agriculture, State Agricultural University and CPCRI.
- (vi) To help improve the productivity of the small growers and augment the income of the growers through processing and marketing and by acting as a link between the Coconut Development Board and the farmer in the Society.
- (vii) To undertake measures for reduction of cost of cultivation and improve the efficiency of input application.
- (viii) To make available quality planting material to the members of the Society.
- (ix) To procure and make available agricultural inputs/ implements to the members at reasonable rates.
- (x) To implement activities aimed at improving quality of nuts and promoting primary level processing.
- (xi) To undertake pooling of production and collective marketing of the produce of the farmers.
- (xii) To undertake measures for coconut based product diversification and value addition.
- (xiii) To maintain cordial relations with Coconut Development Board and other connected agencies.
- (xiv) To mobilize funds through admission fees, subscription fees, credit and make assistance available under various schemes of the Coconut Development Board, State Government and other agencies to be member of the Society.

5. Membership

The coconut growers residing within the area of operations of the Society having not less than 10 yielding coconut palms subject to the following conditions:

- (a) Members should have completed 18 years of age and shall become eligible for entering into agreements.
- (b) Members should remit prescribed admission fee and make timely payment of annual subscription fee.
- (c) Shall follow the rules and regulations of the Society.
- (d) Shall not enter into any such activity that is adverse to the objectives of the Society, as per the Bye-Law.
- (e) Shall be willing to supply his produce to the Society in the event of arranging necessary marketing facilities by the Society.
- (f) Only one member from a family is eligible to take the membership of the Society.
- (g) Shall be willing to supply his coconuts, as tender coconut, dehusked coconut, copra etc. as the Society demands

The membership shall automatically cease to such members who fail to adhere to any of the above conditions. Any member, who has no liability to the Society, is eligible to withdraw from the membership at any point of time. Such members are not eligible to get any refund of the fees paid to the Society.

The farmers interested to take membership shall apply in the prescribed application form along with an admission fee of Rs.100/- and an annual subscription of Rs.20/-. The annual subscription fee shall be remitted in advance before April to the Society.

6. Fund

Funds for the Society shall be mobilized in the following pattern:

- (1) Admission fee
- (2) Annual subscription fee
- (3) Donation from Co-operative Societies, Private Banks, etc.
- (4) Funds can also be mobilized from non-members/Banks/other financial institutions/exchanges/CDB/donations/deposits, loans, etc.

7. General Body

The ultimate authority for all matters relating to the administration of the Society shall be the General Body, which shall meet at least once in a year. Seven days' notice shall be given for every General Body meeting. The first General Body shall be held within three months of the registration date of the Society and preferably all the members shall be present. Subsequent General Body shall be held annually within three months of the completion of the financial year. The quorum of such General Body shall be one third of the total membership or 20 members whichever is less. In order to review the working of the Society and also to finalize future activities and programmes a separate General Body shall be held once in three months. General Body can also be convened in an emergency, or as a special case or on a written request of one third of the members for dealing matters of emergent nature.

8. Powers of General Body

The ultimate authority of the society shall be vested with the General Body. The General body can take action on all items which are included in this Bye-Law. The General Body, can elect from the members, a President and an Executive Committee. The President shall be an active member. The term of the President shall be three years. The term of the elected Executive Committee shall also be three years. If the Society is recognized by the Coconut Development Board, the Coconut Development Board may, if felt necessary, nominate an official of the Board to the Executive Committee. General body can remove the elected President or Executive Committee Members before their prescribed term of office, at a meeting specially held for that purpose, for deception, grave misconduct etc. if 2/3 majority passes a resolution to that effect. Members whose annual subscription fee is due are not entitled to be elected to the Executive Committee or to the post of President.

General Body is authorized to approve the annual Working Committee Report and the audited statements of accounts after scrutiny. The first years' auditing can be done by an auditor appointed by the Executive Committee and subsequent years' auditing to be done by an auditor appointed by the General Body. The Coconut Development Board may, if necessary, also nominate an auditor who can be formally appointed by the General Body. The General Body is empowered to approve the budget with or without amendment. The General Body shall render necessary advice on the policy matters or even suggest disciplinary action as deemed necessary, for the future prospects and smooth functioning of the Society. The General Body may direct the President or Executive Committee to take appropriate action for the protection of the interests of the Society and its members. The President and the Executive Committee members shall be responsible for implementation of the resolution of the General Body and shall be liable for losses arising due to non-compliance and delay in implementation of such resolutions.

9. Election

A special General Body Meeting shall be held on every third year before March 31st to elect the new President and the Executive Committee.

10. Year of the Society

The year of the Society shall be 1st April to 31st March of the succeeding calendar year.

11. Administration

The management of the Society vests in the President of the Society and the Executive Committee Members. The Society shall maintain a register in the office recording the details of the members and their coconut holdings, which shall be produced for inspection in the office time. Society's Memorandum of Association, Rules and Regulations, Sub Rules if any, shall be kept in the office and made available for inspection. The Executive Committee shall govern the Society as per the envisaged objectives and policies and rules and regulations modified from time to time. The quorum of the Executive Committee shall be minimum four Executive Committee Members. The Committee shall meet at least once in a month or whenever need arises. Representatives from the Coconut Development Board, financial institutions, processing societies, Cooperative Coconut Marketing Society and other experts may be invited as special invitees. The Executive Committee shall elect a Vice President from the elected Executive Committee Members. The services of the Vice President and the President are gratuitous. Every member shall have only one vote. All issues before the General Body shall be decided by a majority of vote. The President shall have a casting vote. The Executive Committee Members who have no liabilities to the Society can resign at any time. However, the date from which the Executive Committee accepts the resignation shall be the date on which the resignation will come into effect.

A member, who is absenting himself continuously for three meetings of the Executive Committee without the prior approval of the President, shall cease to be a member. The vacancy that arises in the Executive Committee can be filled in by co-opting members.

The Society, which is recognized by the Coconut Development Board, shall abide by the directions of the Coconut Development Board.

12. Powers of the Executive Committee

(1) In compliance with the decisions of the Executive Committee, the President shall be authorized to effect all transactions and utilize the resources for achieving the aims and objectives of the Society. The Executive Committee can confer on the President any power, which is required for the day to day activities of the Society.

(2) Presenting the statements and returns as prescribed under the Act and Rules, the list of Members of the Society and the Governing Body and other information to the Registrar.

(3) To convene the First General Body within three months of the registration of the Society and thereafter once in three months.

(4) To submit the audited annual accounts and annual reports for consideration and approval of the General Body, on or before 30th April.

(5) To enlist new members as per the Rules and Regulations.

(6) To procure and supply required agriculture inputs and to market their produce by pooling together the scattered produces.

(7) To submit the annual report before the General Body after scrutiny and with proper recommendation of the Executive Committee.

(8) To present the budget for the working of the Society before the General Body.

(9) To organize agricultural development advisory programmes that are useful to the farmers.

(10) To approve monthly receipts and income accounts of the Society after scrutiny by the Executive Committee.

(11) To prepare the annual accounts depicting receipts and payments, income and expenditure and balance sheet for auditing after each financial year.

(12) To open an account with any Nationalized or Cooperative Bank and authorize two persons from among the Members of the Executive Committee viz. President/ Vice-President or other Members of the Executive Committee to do the bank transactions.

(13) To ensure proper utilization of funds.

13. Powers of the President

(1) The President shall preside over all Meetings of the General Body and Executive Committee. In the event of equality of votes, he shall exercise the casting vote.

(2) He is authorized to approve the incidental expenses within the approved budget, which, shall be got ratified in the subsequent meetings of the Executive Committee and the Governing Body.

(3) The management and other activities of the Society shall be under the control of the President, in accordance with the decisions of the Executive Committee.

(4) The policy matters of the Society shall be submitted to the approval of the Executive Committee with the recommendation of the President.

(5) The President shall interface with the public, Government agencies and other organizations.

(6) The President shall take the initiative for maintaining cordial relationship with Coconut Development Board, processing industries, financial institutions, etc.

(7) The President shall also exercise other powers with a view to achieving other objectives as envisaged by the Governing Body.

(8) The President is entitled to keep cash in hand not exceeding Rs.1,000/- for meeting unforeseen incidental expenses.

14. Powers of the Vice President

In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall exercise all powers of the President in accordance with the direction of the Executive Committee.

15. Delegation of Powers

The President can, with the consent of the Executive Committee, authorize any of the Committee Members to exercise any of the powers and responsibilities vested in him.

16. Miscellaneous

(1) The Society shall maintain a separate Development Fund, with a view to ensuring the economic security and future development of the Society, which shall be operated only with the consent of the Coconut Development Board.

(2) All transactions on behalf of the Society shall be in the name of the President.

(3) The Society shall maintain a welfare fund for undertaking any welfare activities including, farming, farm level processing and allied activities and may frame appropriate scheme from time to time for implementations.

(4) For those items which are not mentioned in the Bye-Law, the Society can evolve Rules and Regulations as per the Society Registration Act and Rules. However, for those items which are already mentioned in this Bye-Law and those which are contrary to the Society Registration Act and Rules, the framing of Rules and Regulations shall be only in accordance with the Society Act and Rules.