

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Department of Horticulture was bifurcated from the Department of Agriculture on 26.09.1979 with headquarters at Dharmapuri. The then headquarters was shifted to Chennai on 16.02.1992 due to administrative reasons. Two agencies namely Tamil Nadu Horticulture Producers' Cooperative Enterprise (TANHOPE) (1994) and Tamil Nadu Horticulture Development Agency (TANHODA) (2004) were formed under this Department. TANHODA was formed as special purpose vehicle to implement all Government of India Schemes. TANHOPE was formed as a facilitation agency for production, processing and marketing of Horticultural produces and to procure all inputs needed for the schemes implemented by the Department of Horticulture.

This Department was formed with the objective of increasing the area, production and productivity of Horticulture crops. For the year 2011-12 the provisional area under Horticultural crops is approximately 11.08 lakh Ha with a production of 202.64 lakh MT. The objectives have expanded to cover market led production, adoption of high technologies like use of high yield / hybrid seeds, shade net nurseries, micro irrigation fertigation, protected cultivation, high density planting which aim at increased production and productivity.

### **Governance today**

It is a fact that for accessing any Government service, a Government office has to be visited and the request has to be given on paper. Secondly, transactions within the Government involve huge paperwork. Thirdly, the procedures adopted by the Government are cumbersome and not in tune with the changing times. This is where e-Government, a tool and its product, e-Governance can profoundly transform the way in which interaction happens between the government and the citizen, as also the interactions within the Government. Thus, it is

not just about improving delivery of services to citizens, businesses and employees; it is also about re-engineering Government processes, making it more efficient, driving down costs and increasing transparency in how Government departments function. This will ultimately enable the transition of our Nation to the status of a developed Nation and our society to an empowered society.

While the private sector in India has adopted global best practices in corporate governance, the governance structure of the Government sector in India still remains as it was decades ago. Apart from computers being used for typing and email purposes, and many departments providing online services, a totally modern style of governance still remains elusive, as we have not gone the whole hog, happy as we have been in bringing in incremental advances. The file is at the heart of every government office in India, as all of them work as per the Tottenham system of administration evolved during the British times.

E-governance has however over the decades steadily evolved from mere computerization of Government departments to initiatives that encapsulate the finer points of governance, such as citizen centricity, service orientation and transparency.

State Governments have also endeavored to use ICT for establishing connectivity, networking, setting up systems for processing information and delivering services. At a micro level this has ranged from IT automation in individual departments, electronic file handling and work flow systems, access to entitlements, public grievance systems, service delivery for high volume routine transactions such as payment of bills and taxes, to meeting poverty alleviations goals through the promotion of entrepreneurial models and provision of market information. Lessons from previous e-governance initiatives have played an important role in shaping the progressive e-governance strategy of the country. Due cognizance has been taken of the notion that to speed up e-governance implementation across the various arms of the government at the

national, state, and local levels, a systematic approach needs to be adopted, guided by a common vision and strategy. This approach has the potential of enabling huge savings in costs through sharing of core and support infrastructure, enabling interoperability through standards, and of presenting a seamless view of government to citizens.

It is not enough for governments to go electronic “or” get networked”. “but they will need to manage complex information flows, grasp new ideas quickly, and spread those ideas throughout the government structure. What counts is not whether everybody uses e-mail but whether people quickly absorb the impact of information and respond to opportunity.

The mantra for e-Governance should be that e-governance should minimize citizen-government office interaction, and maximize citizen-government interaction, that is *citizen should not see the government; rather they should be able to feel the government.*

### **e-Governance initiatives in the Department of Horticulture & Plantation Crops**

The Department is currently engaged in a massive Government Process Re-engineering exercise and has procured hardware, software and connectivity to realize the dream of a fully e-Governed office system that seeks to make office administration an efficient one by the introduction of a “**paperless file management system**”. This computerization and the change management the Department has undertaken should serve as a source of inspirations for all those who dream of ushering in e-administration and e-governance in Government offices.

### **Change Management:**

The shift from a traditional form of governance to an electronic one is challenging with great potential for change and at the same time

fraught with serious consequences. The change should take place without disturbing the system, morale of the staff or attracting a backlash from entrenched interests. The changeover has to be smooth and balanced. Many such initiatives fail because the change management involved is given the go by in the euphoria of having installed a great software.

## **Rationale**

To achieve the above objectives this Department was strengthened with 3841 staff which includes Additional director 1, Joint Directors of Horticulture 6, Deputy Directors of Horticulture 38, Assistant Directors of Horticulture 398, Horticulture Officer 404 and Assistant agricultural officer 1625 and 1233 non-technical staff. Each block is positioned with 1 Assistant Director of Horticulture and 1 Horticulture Officer and 4 Assistant Agricultural Officers. They disseminate the latest technologies in crop production, protection and marketing and distribute the Government subsidies of different schemes. They also do survey and reconciliation of area, and productivity of Horticultural crops with the Department of Statistics. Further they coordinate with the Scientists of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in conducting On Farm Trials and Multi Location Trials. Thus there is a need for close monitoring of projects and schemes which through manual mechanisms has proved to be difficult as Horticulture is also season bound and we need to procure the inputs well in time. Hence, introduction of e-Governance at all levels will usher in an era of quick transparent monitoring and feedback. This will decrease the massive red tape that currently involve and will definitely reduce corruption.

In order to have perfection in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation use of Information Technology has become inevitable and Directorate of Horticulture and Plantation Crops has taken strenuous Information Technology initiatives to achieve the goals of the Department.