

Agriculture Policy in Turkey's Development Plans¹

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Abstract

Agriculture has a critical significance for every country. Growing cereal, vegetable, fruit, animal breeding and fishery are some of the agricultural activities. First of all, it is important to mention that population is fed by agricultural activities. Raw materials are obtained through these activities. Employment is ensured for the citizens and foreign exchange income is ensured by exporting the goods. Per capita income increases through various agricultural activities. The basic goal of agricultural activities is to ensure sufficient and balanced nourishment of citizens. Agricultural policies that are determined according to the realities of Turkey will surely accelerate the development of the country. Agricultural activities should be the basic driving force of national development. Modern production methods in agriculture should be applied. Highly productive seeds should be used. Irrigated farming should be extended. Agricultural diseases and pesticides should be prevented. Marketing should be enhanced. Agriculture based food industries should be established and supported.

Keywords: *Development Plans, Agriculture Policy, Agriculture Activities, Farming, Livestock.*

1. Introduction

Unfortunately, globalization and different types of crises of the modern world bring uncertainties together. Because of this, development plans that are determined and analyzed carefully, help public enterprises and economic actors in the process of decision making besides guiding societies in reaching higher welfare levels. Development plans are written documents that show resources to be used for development, organizations to be planned, and precautions that will be taken besides the relations of these three factors with one another. Performance of the past is accepted as a guide, goals of future are determined and resources for the goals are found. The institution that is responsible for preparing Turkey's development plans is State Planning Organization (SPO), whose new name is the Ministry of Development. Development Plans of Turkey are the basic policies that include long term development goals in economic, social and cultural areas. Ten different development plans including the years 1963 and 2018 are planned for this aim. The basic goals of these plans are to enable Turkish individuals become fortunate and peaceful.

Agriculture is the basic input of economic development, industrialization and social welfare. Public is necessary for guiding, supporting and giving technical services (Gürbüz, 1993:110). States have to support and pay attention to agricultural activities in order to continue the life of citizens. Agriculture directly contributes to gross national product (Bayraç and Yenilmez, 2005:40).

Agriculture policies mean organizations and supporting activities that are planned and practiced under the control of states in order to solve the problems of farmers. Problems of agricultural activities and the ways to solve them are determined through agriculture policies (Güreşçi, 2009:64). Agriculture policies of a nation are firstly determined in development plans. While creating agriculture policies problems of farmers, regional products and sustainable agricultural activities, food security, productivity, marketing and nutritional habits should be taken into consideration. Agricultural policies that are followed in Turkey today are shaped around minimum price support purchase, input subsidy and product based bonus (Yavuz, 2000:9; Öztürk, 2007:118).

¹This article was presented orally in International Congress on Management Economics and Business, 7-9 September 2017, Zonguldak/Turkey

The goal of this study is to draw attention to present problems about agriculture policies in development plans, finding various ways to solve these problems and making recommendations for the sector besides determining necessary significant steps for future. It is impossible to live without agriculture while it is possible to live without cell phones. Future of states lies in agriculture. Necessary steps should be taken in order to prevent food shortage.

2. Development Plans

In this section, agriculture policies in ten development plans including the years between 1963 and 2018 will be summarized.

2.1 The First Five Years Development Plan (1963-1967)

As population increases rapidly, the main focus at this plan period is supporting production input. It is especially mentioned in this program that the portion of agriculture in national income decreased (SPO, 1963:9). In this period, approximately 40% of Turkey's national income is based on agriculture (SPO, 1963:15). It is mentioned that a dramatic agricultural reform is a must (SPO, 1963:27). Agricultural investments that will increase the supply of essential food product will be prioritized (SPO, 1963:46). Precautions such as improving the transportation opportunities and establishing sales cooperatives in order to open agriculture sector to the market economy are included in the goals of this plan (SPO, 1963:46). It is mentioned that irrigation, energy, road, communication, credit and marketing should be increased in order to support agricultural production and making a land reform is necessary (SPO, 1963:60). Agricultural education, agricultural publishing and becoming cooperative are necessary factors for development (SPO, 1963:102). It is stated in this development plan that protecting soil resources from wind erosion is necessary besides developing water resources rapidly (SPO, 1963:174). It is mentioned that livestock meat and exportation should be increased (SPO, 1963:182).

Goals of agriculture policy in this development plan are mentioned below: (SPO, 1963:145-147);

- a) Increasing raw material demand of industry should be supplied by increasing agricultural production.
- b) Input should be subsidized for increasing productivity.
- c) Agricultural arts and handicrafts education will be prioritized by agriculture education and publishing.

2.2 The 2nd Five Years Development Plan (1968-1972)

Decreasing the over-dependency of agriculture production on weather conditions is the main goal of this period (SPO, 1968:2). Increasing general level of productivity and production by using modern methods in agriculture sector is necessary (SPO, 1968:9). The most significant factors that enhanced the instability of agricultural prices and production instability in Turkey are unstable and insufficient agricultural organization and the fact that the farmers don't have a strong union (SPO, 1968:43). Organization in terms of production, credit and marketing in agriculture is significant (SPO, 1968:61). Fertilization, irrigation, developing seed and increasing productivity should be enhanced and exporting agricultural products should be supported (SPO, 1968:92). Agriculture based industries should be established and processed agriculture products should be exported (SPO, 1968:120). Social security of workers in the field of agriculture should be ensured (SPO, 1968:209). Cheap input in agriculture sector is significant, so proper marketing organizations should be ensured, efficient loan policy should be practiced and peasants' income level should be increased (SPO, 1968:235). Farmers who have no or small land should be supported in order to have more land and use it efficiently (SPO, 1968:246). Cadastral survey and land registration processes for land reform is significant (SPO, 1968:302). Agricultural public institutions such as public production farms should be developed as model centers (SPO, 1968:308).

2.3 The 3rd Five Years Development Plan (1973-1977)

Dependency of agriculture on weather conditions continued and sufficient agricultural development couldn't still be ensured (SPO, 1972:115). Problems about increasing income, financing and organizing continued (SPO, 1972:210). Increasing the welfare level of farmers in planning agriculture sector, developing technology, meeting the rapidly increasing population's food demand, enhancing nutrition, benefiting from export potential were the basic points in this period (SPO, 1972:208-209). Import in agriculture means that the products couldn't be produced in the country, and there were deficiencies in terms of the stock for breeding and ovary (SPO, 1972:214). In terms of credit facilities, breeding, feed production, oily seed production, fishery, products were being exported increasingly. Technology was a priority (SPO, 1972:216). It was believed in this period that fertilization and using quality seeds would be efficient for development (SPO, 1972:231). Producing feed was highly important in this plan (SPO, 1972:235).

Agriculture techniques such as irrigation, fertilization, using certified seeds, agricultural campaigns, and developed soil cultivation was planned to be introduced to farmers through educations and publications (SPO, 1972:238). Product variety would be ensured in dry lands and the number of soil analysis laboratories that were used for making fertilizers more efficient would be increased (SPO, 1972:239). The main projects that were to be planned in this period were (SPO, 1972:251-256): Developing village breeding, stock projects, milk industry, increasing poultry husbandry, stock raising, and supporting open sea fishery to meet the aquaculture products demand.

2.4 The 4th Five Years Development Plan (1979-1983)

Non-planned growth of cities causes losing fruitful agriculture lands through industrialization and human settlement (SPO, 1978:85). Public organization and support in agriculture sector means especially increasing irrigation practices, subsidized price and loan practices that will develop modern input use and price supports (SPO, 1978:121). Organization of producers requires organization of loan, price and support policies besides increasing and developing technology and marketing (SPO, 1978:226). Irrigation projects were planned to be developed and techniques that save water such as springer irrigation system would be prioritized (SPO, 1978:229). Increasing yield per animal was more significant than increasing the number of animals in this period (SPO, 1978:229). Special projects would be developed and practiced in order to increase the number of merinos sheep; efforts to prevent butchering sheep or calf earlier than the proper period would be continued (SPO, 1978:229). Fish that are proper for inland waters would be determined and growing of them would be supported (SPO, 1978:229). In long term, in terms of economy, it is significant to transform dry agriculture lands into forage, forests, while transforming arable lands such as brier or heaths to vineyards or gardens (SPO, 1978:228). In order to escalate the yield and production in agriculture, investments that extend cultivable lands and prevent soil erosion in the lands that are irrigated by machine or equipments, would be supported and prioritized (SPO, 1978:274). Not using fertile agricultural lands while choosing place for industrial places was especially significant (SPO, 1978:278).

2.5 The 5th Five Years Development Plan (1985–1989)

One of the most significant goals in this period was prioritizing industrial, agricultural and husbandry investments for meeting the demands of the countries in the region (SPO, 1984:32). Agricultural support policy in this period was based on sustaining price and income stability, ensuring marketing ease and increasing production structures that develop fertility (SPO, 1984:37). For fostering agricultural production, nonprice supports such as increasing the opportunities for cheap and sufficient input, agricultural education, organization and technological development opportunities were significant (SPO, 1984:37). Irrigation investment supports were continued and efforts to grow a second product were enhanced (SPO, 1984:39). Creating ovary industry and increasing the number of high yield culture origin animal were other goals. Establishing economic integrated facilities for meat and egg poultry would be encouraged (SPO, 1984:40). Increasing production of clover and sainfoin was seen as a must for developing husbandry (SPO, 1984:52). Supporting industries that produce agricultural machine and equipments was significant (SPO, 1984:54). Producing forage crop was planned to be developed (SPO, 1984:55). Especially greenhouse cultivation was planned to be supported (SPO, 1984:55). Quality improvement of agricultural products, standardization and packaging of them were prioritized (SPO, 1984:55).

2.6 The 6th Five Years Development Plan (1990–1994)

The basic goals of this period were modernizing production methods in agriculture, decreasing dependency on weather conditions, meeting the demands of increasing population and increasing agricultural product export (SPO, 1989:2). Besides increasing agricultural production and price policy, some nonprime supports such as cheap and sufficient input, loan, agricultural education and organization, increasing technological development opportunities were prioritized (SPO, 1989:36). Establishing agricultural product insurance program was a significant goal (SPO, 1989:36). Increasing vegetal and animal production, developing forest and animal product production was significant in this period (SPO, 1989:37). High quality seed varieties were supported (SPO, 1989:37). High quality raw fruit and vegetable production, greenhouse cultivation and floriculture were supported and increased (SPO, 1989:37). Programs about preventing and fighting with plant disease and pests, which are supported by government, would be continued (SPO, 1989:37). Protection, forestation, regeneration, erosion control and forage improvement were prioritized (SPO, 1989:38). In determining agricultural products, support prices, a path that would provide stability in farmer income and guide production was significant (SPO, 1989:48).

Increasing quality of agricultural products, improvement processes, standardization practices would be continued and packaging was important (SPO, 1989:48). Oily seeds and industrial plant production development programs were supported and continued (SPO, 1989:52). Dairy cattle breeding, stock farming, sheep, goat, chicken, bee and silkworm breeding were significant (SPO, 1989:56). Instead of live animal export, processed animal product export was prioritized (SPO, 1989:56). Establishing private forests was encouraged (SPO, 1989:61).

2.7 The 7th Five Years Development Plan (1996–2000)

Using agricultural lands for other purposes, losing agricultural fields because of erosion, nonorganized land ownership and increasing the share of small enterprises because of this, not having sufficient education, research or publishing in the field were the main problems of the period (SPO, 1995:11). 45% of the total employment was in the field of agriculture (SPO, 1995:50). Reclamation of lands, forestation, protection of environment, special employment projects were the significant points (SPO, 1995:54). Share of the agriculture sector in GDP decreased below 15%; while the significance of agriculture in economy decreased, significant part of the population was still dependent on agriculture for making money (SPO, 1995:57). Organization in terms of producers was insufficient (SPO, 1995:58). Cultivation areas for forage crops were still insufficient (SPO, 1995:58). Increasing irrigation fields, increasing the use of high yield seeds and breeding herds, making soil analysis, conscious use of fertilizers, education on agricultural pest control and education of technical staff and farmers were highly prioritized (SPO, 1995:60). Intervention of state on agricultural product prices was aimed to be decreased and direct income support to registered producers was important (SPO, 1995:60). Special significance was given to animal breeding (SPO, 1995:60). Private sector support in terms of seed growing, budding and agricultural control was increased (SPO, 1995:61). Public lands that are proper for forestation were used for having more forests (SPO, 1995:62). Activities for establishing more private forests were supported (SPO, 1995:62). Other goals in this period were increasing production in aquacultural products, improving open sea fishery and developing cold chain in marketing (SPO, 1995:62).

2.8 The 8th Five Year Development Plan (2001–2005)

Supporting industries based on agriculture and animal breeding were continued (SPO, 2000:70). Insufficient agricultural education and publishing activities, unconscious fertilization and pest control, stubble burning, fallowing, incorrect soil cultivation continued to have negative effect on fertilization and production (SPO, 2000:71). Initiatives for forming organized farmers, developing product stock markets, re-establishing public institutions about agriculture were planned to be escalated (SPO, 2000:76). Instead of government intervention in terms of product prices, production guiding according to market demand was prioritized (SPO, 2000:133). Precautions for decreasing production costs and accelerating technological developments were practiced (SPO, 2000:133). Contract production in agricultural industry was planned to be extended (SPO, 2000:133). Regional special programs for determining agricultural production fields were planned to be developed (SPO, 2000:133). Soil database was planned to be formed in order to create soil use plans (SPO, 2000:134). Optimum facility sizes would be determined in terms of smallest parcels that cannot be separated (SPO, 2000:134). Production of animal products was planned to be improved (SPO, 2000:134). Industry based on meat and milk would be generalized throughout nation (SPO, 2000:137). The basic goal of this period was to increase production yield, quality and export of vegetal products (SPO, 2000:135). Production of ecological products would be supported (SPO, 2000:136). Incorporation of producers and establishing of producer unions would be supported (SPO, 2000:137).

2.9 The 9th Development Plan (2007–2013)

Arrangements for making production in line with the demands (such as making alternative products instead of excess supply products such as sugar or tobacco) in scope of agricultural reform process were made (SPO, 2006:18). Direct income for farmers was ensured by creating farmer register system (SPO, 2006:19). Agriculture sales cooperatives and unions were reformed and privatized (SPO, 2006:19). The portion of agricultural employment in total employment decreased from 36% (in 2000) to 29% (in 2005) (SPO, 2006:31). Small scaled and multi-part agricultural businesses used to cause low productivity (SPO, 2006:31). It was still necessary to take extra precautions in terms of land consolidation, drainage, land conservation, pond, groundwater and surface water irrigation investments (SPO, 2006:31). Organic agriculture production was rapidly increasing in this period (SPO, 2006:31). Acceleration of land consolidation studies, strengthening of producer organizations, making education and publishing activities more efficient were the basic goals of the period (SPO, 2006:49).

2.10 The 10th Development Plan (2014–2018)

In the last ten years period, productivity increase in vegetal production and animal breeding has been obtained. Certified seed and breeding animal investments, rural development supports and mechanization investments have been efficient in this achievement (Ministry of Development, 2013:99). Agriculture sales markets, licensed warehousing, product mastership stock markets are organized and rearranged (Ministry of Development, 2013:99). In terms of establishing gene banks, developing new product varieties and creating agricultural technoparks significant progress has been obtained (Ministry of Development, 2013:99). It is expected in this period that annual growth rate of the sector will be 3%, total employment ratio will be 22% (Ministry of Development, 2013:100). Legal and organizational arrangements about establishing efficient working agriculture markets will be made (Ministry of Development, 2013:100). Scope of agriculture insurances will be extended. Agricultural supports will be production based. Certified production methods will be significant and product organizations will reach markets easily. Information and communication technologies in terms of agricultural education will be used more efficiently. Developing products that have high added value will be prioritized. Agriculture and food oriented technoparks will be established. Breeding cattle and lamb for meat will be increased (Ministry of Development, 2013:101). Product variety, branding, competition in international market will be ensured in the field of aquaculture (Ministry of Development, 2013:102). Biological variation that is significant in agriculture, forestry, food and pharmaceutical industry will be determined, necessary steps will be taken in order to protect, use and develop them (Ministry of Development, 2013:137). Soil and water resources will be prioritized in order to use them as efficiently as possible. Land consolidation and land improvement processes are significant. Modern irrigation systems that ensure strong irrigation infrastructure, fight with erosion and water saving should be used more efficiently (Ministry of Development, 2013:138).

3. Main Problems of Turkish Agriculture

Main problems of Turkish agriculture can be summarized as below;

-Urbanization, resulting from fast growing population, increases the pressure on environment and natural resources. Soil, water, forage and forests are being destroyed increasingly every single day. Climate change, forest fires, desertification and water shortage are the main problems in terms of environment all around the world. Protection of agricultural lands is crucial.

- Agricultural production costs should be decreased.
- Fluctuations in agricultural product production cause increase in food prices.
- Agricultural product importation increases in terms of amount and value.
- Agriculture is mostly made in small villages and hamlets (more than seven thousand villages and hamlets). Small scale production problems chronically continue in agricultural organizations. Husbandry organizations are also small scaled. In order to have productive and efficient agriculture organizations, a specific soil amount is necessary. Multiple owners own agricultural lands (Acar&Bulut, 2010:11).
- Farmers' welfare level is low, their education is not sufficient and production techniques aren't developed (Takım&Esen, 2011:241).
- The profession of agriculture is used less as a way to earn living (Gültekin, 2012:56), the same problem is existent in the field of farming.
- Forage crop production demand cannot be satisfied.
- Protection and rehabilitation activities of meadows and forages are insufficient.
- Farmers in Turkey cannot be organized under the roof of a cooperative, which is a significant problem.
- Agricultural education and broadcasts in radio and televisions are insufficient.
- Government support purchase prices of products such as hazelnut, wheat and tobacco are mostly below production costs. Purchase prices don't support and protect labor.
- Modern agriculture technologies aren't used sufficiently in the country.
- Production of vegetable and fruits is made in a long period and needs to be protected from harsh natural and seasonal conditions.
- Cold storage organizations isn't developed sufficiently (Bayraç&Yenilmez, 2005:35).

4. SUGGESTIONS for TURKISH AGRICULTURE

Suggestions for developing Turkish agriculture are summarized below:

- Farmers should be united under a cooperative in order to be organized properly.
- Modern technologies in agricultural production should be used more around the country.
- Industries for processing agriculture, sea and animal products should be prioritized and supported.
- Retired individuals should be directed towards agriculture, husbandry, poultry farming, silk worm breeding and apiculture.
- As agricultural activities depend on specific seasons, farmers should be educated according to their fields and directed towards learning traditional handicrafts.
- The young should be employed and supported in order to be farmers, in order to deal with animal husbandry and agriculture.
- Turkish radio and television association should create a new channel for agriculture (TRT Tarım TV).
- Agriculture should be accepted as a primary sector in development. Social policy practices should be formed on the basis of the understanding that farmers are the public groups that should be protected the most.
- Agricultural lands shouldn't be used as construction lands. Factories can be established everywhere but potatoes can't grow everywhere.
- Underground water should be used more efficiently, water-wells should be established in order to use them (Takim&Esen, 2011:53). Irrigation investments should be accelerated, necessary precautions should be taken in order to prevent drought, irrigated farming should be supported and developed.
- As land consolidation is an instrument for agricultural production organization, the processes for land consolidation should be completed all around the country.
- Soil analysis should be made more often; animal manure should be used more than artificial fertilizers.
- Price fluctuation resulting from agricultural production features should be prevented.
- Certified agricultural soil use should be supported.
- Pigs and bears that destroy cultivation areas should be prevented.
- Pesticides and diseases that harm agricultural lands should be prevented through biological methods.
- Ecological agriculture should be supported; greenhouse cultivation should be supported and developed.
- Lands all around the country should be separated and protected for their agricultural features; programs should be made according to the features of each agricultural area (Takim & Esen, 2011:48).
- The number of animals that have high meat and milk quality should be increased.
- Contract production model should be increased (Agriculture Strategy, 2006-2010).
- Farmers and fruit nurseries that are highly qualified should be formed and supported.
- More cold storage depot facilities should be established.
- Sales prices of agricultural pesticides and animal diseases should be subsidized.
- Investments for fertilizer, agricultural instruments, machines and agricultural pesticides should be supported.
- The basic goal of agriculture should be producing that can be sold. Especially supply deficit agricultural products should be produced more and products that have high added value should be supported.
- The number of agriculture stock markets and wholesales markets should be increased (Bayraç & Yenilmez, 2005:41), standards for producer markets should be set.
- Inputs such as package, marketing, storing, fertilizers, agricultural insurance, machine, seed, irrigation, and technical information that are necessary for farmers should be ensured under proper conditions.
- Arid lands should be reclaimed; forestation and fighting with erosion should be significant. Forestation projects that especially include trees which grow fast should be prioritized.
- Spates resulting from excessive precipitation should be prevented.
- Sea fishing, fresh-water fishing and culture fishing should be developed.
- Canning activities should be protected and sustained (Takim & Esen, 2011:53), fruit nursery in Turkey should become a significant competitive international market member.
- There is a significant international market potential in Middle East, Northern Africa and Near East because of the increasing population in these regions. So, in order to be able to use Turkish agricultural products efficiently in foreign markets, foreign trade should be supported.

5. Result

The price of the product sold by farmers is lower than the inputs they buy. The costs in production process are high. Various and reliable ways to enhance market conditions of agricultural products should be sought. Farmers should be supported and directed towards growing various products. Directing production in agriculture, protecting and developing soil and water resources, taking precautions for ensuring animal health are significant parts of government's duties. Agricultural activities should be categorized as a sector that has special significance. The number of people relying on agriculture to make money in Turkey is higher than the countries in the European Union. As mentioned by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founder of the Turkish Republic, "Countrymen are the Lords of the public"; this significant sentence should be prioritized. Problems of farmers and people who deal with animal husbandry should be solved and they should be content with what they get. Financial resources should be increased as fast as possible in order to ensure this. Financial supports have always been significant. Practices that are determined in Turkey's development plans in order to increase agricultural production, are on point. Financial and human resources that are necessary for reaching the determined goals should be ensured and the process should be closely followed. Turkey has the potential to produce agricultural products more than today as it has significant amount of water and soil resources besides proper climate conditions. Agricultural policies that are practiced correctly are a significant key to develop the country. Agriculture should be taken more seriously and be prioritized in order to create a content, peaceful and independent Turkey. Turkey should become a more advanced and developed agricultural country.

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