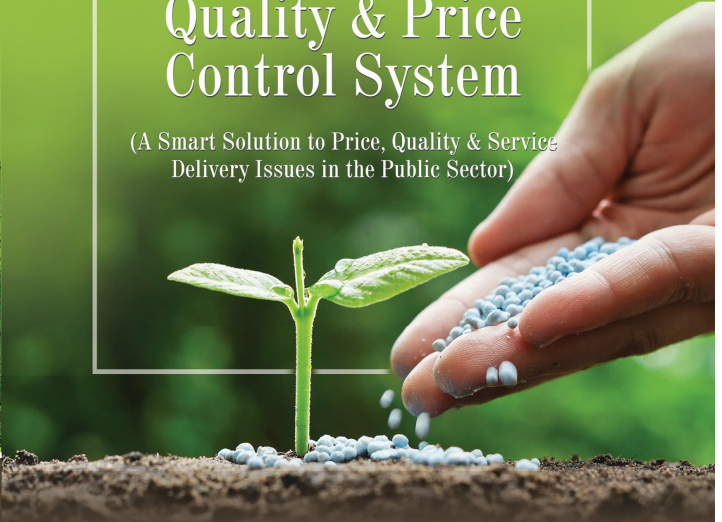


# Zero Cost Quality & Price Control System

(A Smart Solution to Price, Quality & Service  
Delivery Issues in the Public Sector)



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Additional Secretary

**Chief Minister's Task Force  
on Fertilizers and Pesticides**

Agriculture Department  
Government of Punjab

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(II)

## INTRODUCTION

Quality and Prices of Fertilizers and Pesticides has always been an area of concern for the farmers as well as for the Government. With a view to provide quality inputs to the farmers at notified prices, Chief Minister's Task Force on Fertilizers & Pesticides was constituted in the year 1996. Ever since then, this Task Force has played a lead role in provision of quality inputs to the farmers at notified prices.

But the level of satisfaction of the farmers on the quality and prices of these inputs could not rise to the optimum level mainly because of absence of an efficient, effective, responsive and user-friendly complaint redress/quality and price control system. The conventional complaint redress system i.e. writing/composing an application, attaching proofs and a number of photo copies, dispatching through dak/courier consumed a lot of time, energy and resources. The complainant/farmer rarely knew the fate of his complaint.

To fill this gap, a novel system of Quality and Price Control, has been developed. This system has been named as **Zero-Cost Fertilizers & Pesticides Quality and Price Control System**. It is being termed as Zero-Cost because it has been developed by using the available resources and no additional amount has been incurred on it. No hefty amounts have been wasted on hiring of highly paid consultant and purchasing expensive gadgets. This system has yielded unprecedented results in the entire history of Agriculture Department, Punjab.

It can serve as a model system for resolving the issues of quality and prices at the District level. I hope it would prove a very beneficial tool for all stakeholders of the Agriculture Sector.

8 November, 2019

**Ali Arshad**  
0300 4444886

(III)

# 1

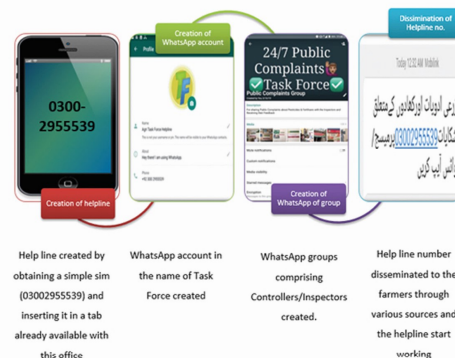
## GENESIS OF THE SYSTEM

On my joining the Agriculture Department a few months back, I observed that there was no central complaint management system for redressing the complaints about quality and prices of the fertilizers and pesticides. There was no system for data recording and methods for its analysis. There were rampant complaints of involvement of the fertilizer and pesticide dealers in overpricing and sale of fake fertilizers and pesticides. Resultantly, the quality and quantity of various crops were being affected. The farmer community had no tool in their hand for speedy disposal of their complaints, hence they largely expressed their dissatisfaction on the measures taken by the Agriculture Department in this regard.



2. Considering the foregoing situation, a serious effort was made to develop a system that may address all the said issues. Various tools of modern technology were taken into account for providing a platform to the farmers. Finally, WhatsApp application was chosen as a platform to develop the Zero-Cost Fertilizers & Pesticides Quality and Price Control System as WhatsApp has become the most

popular tool of communication these days. It is being used in every nook and corner of Pakistan. The following simple method was used for creation of the system.



3. The system took its birth through a sim and an ordinary tab. Help line was established by creating a WhatsApp account in the name of the Task Force; group of controllers/inspectors was created; number of the helpline was disseminated to millions of farmers through various sources; the farmers started sending complaints; these complaints are assigned to the concerned officers for taking action within 24 hours; the officers submit reports within the prescribed time; these reports are verified and further corrective measures are taken, if required.

## 2

### DISSEMINATION OF THE HELP LINE NUMBER

This help line number was communicated to millions of farmers through various sources. The farmers were invited to lodge complaints if they faced overcharging in the sale of Fertilizers or quality issues in fertilizers and pesticides.

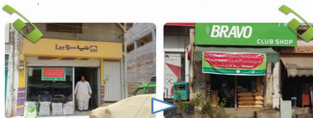
i) Text message was sent to around one million farmers through the system already available with the Department.

زرعی ادویات اور کھادوں سے متعلق شکایات پر 0300-2955539 پر میسج/واٹس ایپ کریں

ii) Around 20 thousand panaflexes/banners, sponsored by various fertilizes/pesticide firms, bearing message of the Help Line, were displayed at Offices of All Commissioners/Deputy Commissioners/Assistant Commissioners, offices of the Directors/DD's/AD's/AO's of the Agriculture Department in the Punjab, all Shops of pesticide and fertilizer dealers in Punjab, all Vegetable, fruit and grain markets in the Punjab, Land Records Management and Information Centers (LRMIS) and other prominent places



Panaflexes displayed on the entrance of offices of commissioners, Deputy Commissioners and Assistant commissioners throughout the Punjab



Panaflexes displayed on the entrance of Grain markets and pesticide and fertilizer shops throughout the Punjab



Panaflexes displayed on the entrance of offices of PLRA, Irrigation and agriculture offices throughout the Punjab



Panaflex displayed on the entrance of offices of Municipal committee and agriculture offices throughout the Punjab

iii) Meetings of the District Sub-Committees of the Task Force and District Advisory Committees in all Districts of the Punjab, farmer gatherings, walks and seminars in all tehsils of the Punjab were held for disseminating the help line number.



iv) Print and Electronic media i-e news, reports and interviews were also used for reaching the public/farmers.





Newspaper



Electronic Media

v) Social media i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Linked in, Instagram, google and WhatsApp were used to disseminate message to the public/farmers.



### 3

## FUNCTIONING OF WHATSAPP GROUPS

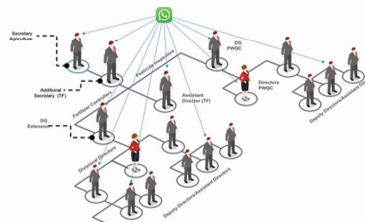
Two main groups i.e. Public Complaints Group and Task Force Activity group have been created for communication of the complaints to the concerned controller/inspector and monitoring of activities of the Team Task Force.

### A - Public Complaints Group

This group has been created for fast communication of the public complaints to the controllers/inspectors and receiving their feedback.

#### Members of the Public Complaints Group

- The members of this group include
- Secretary Agriculture, Punjab
  - Additional Secretary Agriculture (Task Force) Punjab
  - Director General Agriculture (Extension) Punjab
  - Director General Agriculture (PWQCP), Punjab
  - Assistant Director Agriculture (Task Force) Punjab
  - Directors Agriculture Extension and Pest Warning & QCP
  - Deputy Directors Agriculture / Assistant Directors Extension
  - Deputy Directors & Assistant Directors (PW & QCP)



All complaints after registration are shared in this group so that all hierarchy remains updated on all sorts of complaints, accused persons, officer concerned and the problem areas (tehsil/district). And any tier of hierarchy can countercheck, re-verify and take follow up of the complaints.

**a) Kinds of Complaints**

As earlier described in detail, the public/farmers are invited and encouraged to register their complaints in Urdu/English/Punjabi describing the problem and name of the accused with complete address on the issues of:

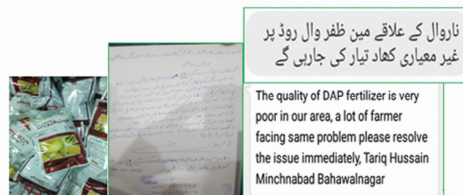
- i) Manufacture or sale of fake/adulterated/substandard/counterfeit pesticides in any area of Punjab;
- ii) Manufacture or sale of fake/adulterated/substandard/counterfeit fertilizers in any area of Punjab;
- iii) Manufacture or sale of fake/adulterated/substandard/counterfeit micronutrients in any area of Punjab;
- iv) Sale of fertilizers on higher prices than on prices notified by the Govt.
- v) Damages caused to crops due to the use of fake/adulterated/substandard/ counterfeit pesticides/fertilizers/micronutrients;
- v) Losses caused due to the use of poor-quality seeds.



**b) Processing of Public Complaints**

The public complaints are processed in the following manner:

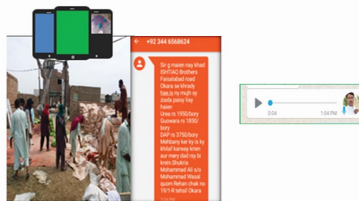
- i) The farmers share their complaints through SMS/WhatsApp/voice message/video message/image of the paper with written complaint in Seraiki/Punjabi/Urdu/English language.



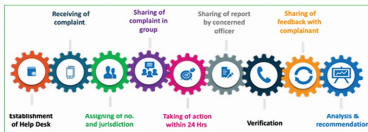
- ii) The following information is considered sufficient to start an action:

- Name and phone number of the complainant
- Brief description of the complaint
- Name of the dealer with address

- iii) If the information provided by the complainant is incomplete, he is requested through message/WhatsApp to provide the complete information.



- iv) If the information provided by the complainant is sufficient to initiate an action, the complaint is copied, marked and edited according to the requirement.
- v) If the information provided by the complainant is sufficient to initiate an action, the complaint is copied, marked and edited according to the requirement.
- vi) The name of the complainant (if requested) is kept secret.
- vii) An identical numeric number (CR 1,2,3...) is immediately assigned to the complaint.
- viii) The complainant is informed about the registration number of his complaint and the action to be taken on it.
- ix) The Duty Officer/ Admin immediately examines the complaint to decide the area of jurisdiction.
- x) If the complaint pertains to the issues originating from the fertilizer/seed side, it is marked to the Deputy Director Agriculture (Extension) of the concerned District.



- xi) If the complaint pertains to the issue originating from the pesticide side, it is marked to the Assistant Director Agriculture (Pest Warning & Quality Control) of the concerned District with the direction to take appropriate action within 24 hours.

- xii) After assigning of an identical number, the complaint is shared in the Public complaint Group with the direction to take appropriate action within 24 hours. Telephone number of the complainant is also provided.
- xiii) A copy of the complaint is also shared in the personal WhatsApp account of the concerned officer.
- xiv) The concerned officer calls the complainant to inform him about initiation of action on his complaint. He takes the complainant to the place of action, if the complainant wishes so.
- xv) If the complaint is resolved within 24 hours, the officer concerned shares a detailed report in the Public complaint Group to this effect.
- xvi) The contents of the report are examined by the Duty Officer/ Admin as well as by the Additional Secretary (Task Force).
- xvii) A verification call to the complainant is made by the Duty Officer, AS (Task Force) or any of the senior officers.
- xviii) If the action taken is satisfactory, the officer is appreciated and the complaint stands resolved.
- xix) If the action taken is not satisfactory, appropriate direction is issued to the concerned officer who resubmits report after following the direction.
- xx) If the complaint is not resolved within 24 hours, reminder is issued by the Duty Officer through a call. In case of further failure to resolve the complaint, a warning is issued by the AS (Task Force) to the concerned officer.

c) **Actions Taken for Resolution of the Complaints**

The following actions are usually taken for resolution of the public complaints:

- i) If the complaint about overcharging in sale of

is proved, fine is imposed considering the amount of overcharging. The dealer is also made to return the overcharged amount to the complainant.

- ii) If the offence of overcharging is repeated by the same dealer, an FIR is lodged.



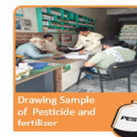
- iii) In case of complaint of manufacturing of counterfeit fertilizers and pesticides a raid is conducted on the premises, all counterfeit product is confiscated, persons are arrested and FIR is lodged.
- iv) The license of the dealer is cancelled.
- v) In case of complaint of sale of expired pesticides, a raid is conducted on the premises, all expired products are confiscated, persons are arrested, and FIR is lodged.
- vi) If the complaint is about the quality of fertilizers and pesticides, samples are drawn and sent to the concerned laboratory for analysis.
- vii) On receiving a report declaring the drawn sample to be fake/adulterated/substandard, an FIR is lodged and the balance quantity of that sample is confiscated.
- viii) In case of loss of crops due to application of fake pesticides, the dealer is made to pay compensation to the complainant/farmer.
- ix) In case of complaint of low germination and loss of crop due to supply of poor-quality seed, the dealer is made to pay compensation to the complainant/farmer.



## B- Task Force Activities Group

The objective of creation of this group is to provide a platform to all controllers/inspectors for sharing their activities conducted other than on Public complaints.

- i) The Controllers/ Inspectors share the details of raids conducted by them on dealer shops, factories or other premises on some information of malpractices. Passing of appreciation remarks by the Senior Officers encourage them to do more hard work besides promoting healthy competition amongst them.
- ii) Drawing of samples of fertilizers and pesticides is an important duty of controllers/inspectors. They daily share the details of the samples drawn. Everybody remains aware of the activities of the others that inspires them to be active and do similar activities.
- iii) Pest scouting is an important





activity for timely control of pests and diseases. Pest survey teams share the results of their pest scouting in this group. It serves as an alert for others and helps in adopting a proactive plan for pest control. It also gives an overall picture of the pest situation in the province.

iv) Farmer seminars/meetings/gatherings are a regular and mandatory feature. The controllers/inspectors keep sharing such activities in this group. It helps the Senior Officers evaluate the performance of the field officers and issue directions to low performing officers. It also stimulates other officers to conduct such activities in the area of their jurisdiction.



v) Press/media coverage of the activities of the field teams is also shared here and is appreciated by the Senior Officers. It triggers a healthy competition amongst the field officers and all wish their activities be reported in the media. It serves two purposes; acts as a morale booster of the team as well as creates awareness amongst the public about the role of the agriculture department. It also plays role in image building of the Department/ Government.



vi) Awareness Walks are conducted on some special topic like creating awareness about controlling whitefly, use of balanced fertilizers and pesticides and advisory services.

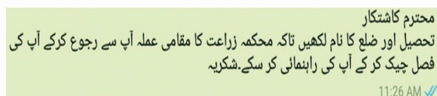


## 4 DEVELOPMENT OF TEMPLATES

A sizeable number of messages are received in the system on a daily basis. All of these diverse messages require a different type of response depending upon their nature. Sometimes these messages lack complete information to initiate an action, sometimes they require feedback on the complaint and some other time they need some guidance/information. The composing of a new message each time makes the working slow and bothersome. Most common messages therefore were identified and templates were developed accordingly for a prompt response.

### 1. Template for Complaints Lacking Information About Area:

No action can be initiated without knowing the area of the complaint. It is quite often that farmers send complaints without mentioning the tehsil and district concerned. This template has been developed to guide the farmers to provide complete address for initiation of action.



### 2. Template for Providing Complete Information for Legal Action:

Initially, it was observed that in most of the cases the farmers were facing difficulty in providing actionable information. Sometimes they were missing one information and sometimes the other. The following template was developed for their guidance.

محترم کاشتکار  
 1. آپ اپنا مکمل نام اور پتہ  
 2. اور ڈیلر کا مکمل پتہ  
 3. اپنا مسئلہ  
 4. اپنا فون نمبر لکھ کر ایک ہی میسج کریں تاکہ آپ کا مسئلہ حل کیا جا سکے۔ شکریہ  
 4:25 PM ✓

### 3. Template for Providing Information About the Working of The Task Force:

A number of queries were being received about the functioning of the task force. This simple and very short template was developed for responding to all such queries.

محترم کاشتکار بھائیو!  
 یہ ناسک فورس مہنگی اور جعلی کھادوں /  
 زرعی ادویات کے کنٹرول کے لیے کام کرتی ہے۔  
 شکریہ  
 3:50 PM

### 4. Template Providing Information About Registration of Complainant:

This template is sent to the complainant as an acknowledgement that his complaint has been registered. It also provides registration number and the information that he will be contacted shortly by the concerned officer.

محترم کاشتکار  
 آپ کی شکایت کا رجسٹریشن نمبر 306 ہے۔  
 محکمہ زراعت کا عملہ آپ سے رابطہ کر کے  
 کارروائی کرے گا۔ شکریہ  
 3:52 PM



## 5

### FOLLOW UP

Regular follow up is mandatory for successful running of a system. Some special formats have been designed for follow up and analysis of the data in this system. The report is generated from all concerned offices of Punjab Agri. Departments and compiled in the Secretariat on the prescribed format. This data is updated on computer on a daily basis. If the complaint is not found to be resolved within 24 hours, a reminder to the concerned officer is issued in the group. If the complaint is not resolved in the next 24 hours of the issuance of the reminder, an explanation note is served upon the delinquent officer. Further delay renders the Officer liable to be proceeded against PEEDA Act, 2006.

#### FOLLOW UP OF PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

CR. NO. & DATE	DETAILS OF THE COMPLAINT	REFERENCE DETAILS	DETAILS OF ACTION/ REPORT	FOLLOW UP DETAILS
321	Name: M. Imran	Date: 08.10.19	Date: 08.10.19	Reminder:
08.10.19	District: Muzaffargarh	Officer: DD(Ext)	Action: Compensation	N.A.
	Complaint: Low germination of maize seed	Tehsil: Muzaffargarh	paid	N.A.
			Feedback: Satisfied	PEEDA: N.A.

