

Training of New Professional Farmers in Rural Revitalization: A Reexamination based on Supply and Demand

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Abstract

The rural revitalization strategy is a crucial initiative aimed at promoting the modernization of rural areas, with the cultivation of new professional farmers emerging as a key component in its implementation. This paper conducts an in-depth analysis of the training of new professional farmers from the perspectives of both supply and demand. Addressing issues related to cultivation policies, key players, and training content during the cultivation process, the paper proposes a series of strategies in areas such as top-level design, classification management, cultivation models, content innovation, and supervision mechanisms. In terms of top-level design, the paper emphasizes the importance of defining strategic goals and pathways for cultivation to ensure alignment with the rural revitalization strategy. The strategy combining classification management with precision cultivation aims to implement differentiated training plans that better cater to the specific needs of different regions and rural areas. Reforms in cultivation models and content are advocated to align with the trends in modern agricultural development. Additionally, the establishment of a comprehensive supervision mechanism is recommended to ensure the fairness and transparency of cultivation efforts.

Keywords

Rural Revitalization; New Professional Farmers; Supply; Demand.

1. Introduction

The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China clearly put forward the Rural Revitalization strategy, marking a pivotal initiative to propel the modernization of agriculture and rural areas. The core objective of this strategy is to accelerate the modernization process of agriculture and rural areas by establishing a sound system for integrated urban-rural development[1]. Throughout the implementation of this strategy, a crucial emphasis has been placed on the significance of talent, with education identified as the key to talent rejuvenation. The success of Rural Revitalization is directly linked to the cultivation of the necessary talent, and the cultivation of new professional farmers is recognized as a vital measure to ignite the intrinsic dynamism of rural revitalization[2]. Undergoing transformations from traditional farmers to new farmers and then to professional farmers, the occupational landscape of farmers continues to evolve. This transition should align with the development of agricultural economics[3]. If the cultivation of new professional farmers lacks a clear direction that corresponds to the real needs of agricultural development, the resulting professionals may struggle to meet the requirements of rural revitalization, leading to the wastage of educational and human resources. To address this issue, it is imperative to instill market awareness and gain a deep understanding of the needs of professional farmers, particularly whether the

development of modern agriculture provides a conducive environment for their growth. Only through such insights can we further explore the issues surrounding the content and methods of cultivating professional farmers. By elucidating the direction of cultivation and reinforcing practical components, the training efforts can become more targeted, enabling the newly cultivated professional farmers to better meet the requirements of modern agricultural development. Ultimately, this approach aims to realize the Rural Revitalization strategy.

2. Characteristics and Demands of New Professional Farmers

“New Professional Farmers” are modern rural practitioners with a professional ethos, ecological values, and occupational qualities that honor agriculture[4]. They exhibit the following characteristics: Firstly, they embody the rationality of economic actors[2]. Compared to traditional farmers, new professional farmers possess superior skills, social capital, and economic accumulation, showcasing a contemporary and entrepreneurial spirit that aligns with the demands of agricultural modernization and socialist rural development. They typically engage in agricultural production through self-employment, employment by others, or participation in cooperatives, guided by market demands and a pursuit of maximum returns, demonstrating greater autonomy and innovation in production management. Secondly, rural areas serve as the primary workplace and livelihood source for new professional farmers, fostering a strong sense of belonging, professional identity, and dependence on the rural environment. This connection motivates them to actively contribute to rural development, integrating their professional practices into the overall rural development framework. Thirdly, they are more open-minded. Positioned within the labor division of socialized large-scale production, new professional farmers interact more deeply with both internal and external links of the industry chain. Lastly, from a temporal perspective, the concept of new professional farmers is transitional, and as the integrated urban-rural development pattern takes shape, the “new” characteristics will gradually fade, and these farmers will return to the essence of professional farmers. The core of rural revitalization lies in the cultivation of a substantial number of qualified and high-caliber new professional farmers. This not only serves as the fundamental approach for implementing China’s rural revitalization strategy and achieving agricultural and rural modernization but also addresses the overall low quality of the agricultural workforce[5]. The transition from farmers to new professional farmers involves role changes and is an ongoing process of individual learning and development. In the current environment where China places significant emphasis on agricultural development, the sector is undergoing a critical phase of structural adjustment. Guiding agriculture towards a direction of scale and the emergence of new types of operating entities is an urgent task in current agricultural work. The cultivation of new professional farmers plays a crucial role in the development of agricultural and rural modernization, guiding modern farmers to develop the right awareness, enhance professional skills, establish systematic development systems, and become a backbone force for future agricultural development. By cultivating new professional farmers, it is possible to effectively stimulate the development vitality of rural areas, attract more young labor back to agriculture, and address the shortage of human resources in agricultural development. Simultaneously, this will promote the construction of an agricultural talent pool, laying a solid foundation for the sustained development of agriculture[6]. The training of new professional farmers will elevate their production skills, meet the development needs of farmers through supportive policies and financial funding, enhance production efficiency, make them more competitive in the market economy, and achieve income growth.

3. Analysis of Supply and Demand Contradictions in the Training of New Professional Farmers

3.1. Cultivation Policies

In the cultivation of new professional farmers, there are a series of supply and demand contradictions in the formulation and implementation of cultivation policies. From the perspective of policy supply, firstly, there is a certain detachment from practical issues in the formulation of cultivation policies. Policies have not adequately considered the differences in agricultural development in different regions, resulting in training content that is difficult to align with the local industry chain[7]. This has led to some training programs failing to address the technical and managerial challenges that farmers face in actual production. Secondly, there is information asymmetry in policy implementation, with limited market understanding of cultivation policies. This hampers the ability of potential new professional farmers to fully comprehend the actual market demand, affecting their enthusiasm for participating in cultivation decisions. At the same time, the subsidy standards in policies have not fully taken into account the input-output ratio of new professional farmers in market competition, restricting their enthusiasm for engaging in professional agriculture. From the perspective of market demand, on the one hand, there is a growing demand for new professional farmers in the market. The societal demand for green, organic, and high-quality agricultural products is increasing, requiring new professional farmers to possess advanced agricultural technology and management skills[8]. On the other hand, market demand is diverse, and policies have not provided diversified cultivation plans, resulting in the training of new professional farmers failing to meet the market demand for various agricultural products.

3.2. Cultivation Entities

In the training of new professional farmers, the role of cultivation entities is crucial. Currently, educational entities mainly include cultivation institutions, schools, and agricultural enterprises, but there are still several supply and demand contradictions in this field. From the supply side, firstly, the types and quantity of cultivation institutions are not diversified enough. Currently, the training of new professional farmers is primarily concentrated in traditional vocational schools and training institutions, with insufficient utilization of diverse cultivation entities such as agricultural research institutions and agricultural enterprises. This has resulted in some training programs not fully meeting the demands of new professional farmers in different agricultural fields[9]. Secondly, there are disparities in the teaching staff and training facilities of training institutions. In some regions, training institutions have relatively weak teaching staff and lower facility levels, impacting the quality of cultivation. From the demand side, firstly, the growing demand for diversification of cultivation entities is observed among new professional farmers. They expect to acquire more comprehensive agricultural knowledge and practical experience through different types of cultivation entities. Secondly, due to information asymmetry and disparities in the quality of cultivation entities, farmers face certain difficulties in selecting cultivation entities and struggle to determine which training path is more suitable for themselves.

3.3. Cultivation Content

Starting from the perspective of supply and demand, the cultivation content of new professional farmers needs to be scientifically designed based on market demand and agricultural development trends to meet the requirements of agricultural modernization. The current supply and demand contradictions in cultivation content mainly involve the updating, practicality, and market orientation of training programs. On the supply side, firstly, there is a singular focus in training content. Some training institutions provide relatively monotonous cultivation content, primarily centered around traditional agricultural knowledge and skills,

failing to comprehensively cover the needs of modern agricultural development, such as new agricultural management and rural e-commerce. Secondly, there is a lag in technological updates. Some training content fails to be updated in a timely manner, not keeping pace with the iteration and upgrading of agricultural technology. This results in reduced effectiveness of training, as new professional farmers may not acquire the latest agricultural production technologies[10]. On the demand side, on the one hand, there is a failure to meet the individual needs of different farmers. Current cultivation programs are relatively standardized, lacking targeted designs for training times, locations, and content, limiting the flexibility of training. On the other hand, there is a lack of emphasis on the practical application of training content. While cultivation programs focus on imparting theoretical knowledge, they often neglect the development of practical skills in farmers' actual operations. This leads to new professional farmers having certain shortcomings in practical aspects of agricultural production.

4. Cultivation Strategies for the Supply and Demand Market of New Professional Farmers

4.1. Improve the Precision Identification System, Classify and Target Training

Firstly, establish a comprehensive assessment mechanism. Design a comprehensive assessment system covering farmers' existing skill levels, educational backgrounds, personal interests, and potential for adapting to modern agriculture. This helps gain a comprehensive understanding of farmers' overall qualities, providing targeted guidance for subsequent training programs. Secondly, incorporate precise assessments of farmers' actual needs into the identification system. By investigating the market demand for new agricultural operators, identify the pain points and needs of agricultural development in the farmers' region to more accurately formulate cultivation plans. Thirdly, design training programs with layered classification[11]. Based on the assessment results, categorize new professional farmers into different levels and categories. Tailor training programs for different levels and categories of new professional farmers, including basic training, advanced training, and innovation and entrepreneurship training, to meet the growth needs of different levels of new professional farmers. Fourthly, integrate resources to build an intelligent management system. Utilize modern information technology to construct an intelligent farmer information management system. By integrating resources from various levels of government, training institutions, research institutions, and enterprises, establish a dynamically updated farmer database to achieve real-time monitoring and management of information related to new professional farmers. Lastly, establish a dynamic adjustment mechanism. Set up a regular assessment and dynamic adjustment mechanism to flexibly adjust cultivation plans based on market changes and farmers' growth conditions. Ensure that training plans always align with market demand, meeting the growth and development needs of new professional farmers at different stages.

4.2. Selecting Educational and Training Institutions to Ensure the Quality of Learning Content

Firstly, it is crucial to establish clear evaluation standards. Evaluation standards should cover multiple aspects, including the quality of teaching staff, teaching facilities, training course design, and the historical training achievements of the institution. Evaluation criteria should include an investigation into the background of teaching staff to ensure that the teaching team possesses rich agricultural knowledge and practical experience; an inspection of teaching facilities to ensure the provision of advanced practical environments for cultivating the practical operational skills of students; a evaluation of the scientific and practical nature of training courses to ensure close alignment with market demand; and an examination of historical training achievements to understand the actual outcomes of the training institution

as an important basis for assessing training effectiveness. Secondly, conducting regular assessments is an effective means of ensuring the quality of learning content. Regular assessments can be conducted semi-annually or annually, with a professional assessment team conducting in-depth inspections of training institutions. During assessments, attention should be paid to the frequency of course updates to ensure that training institutions adjust course content promptly to keep up with the latest developments in agricultural technology. Finally, introducing third-party evaluation institutions is a key step in ensuring the objectivity of evaluations. Third-party evaluation institutions can provide independent assessments of training institutions through on-site inspections, surveys of student feedback, and other methods. This evaluation should focus on the institution's ability to meet the needs of new professional farmers, providing the government and students with more objective and neutral information. At the same time, establishing a student feedback mechanism encourages students to provide their actual experiences and suggestions regarding the training institution, helping to promptly understand training quality and providing a strong basis for improvement[12].

4.3. Establishing a Scientific Cultivation Mechanism and Agricultural Access Mechanism

Firstly, formulate standards for cultivation plans. Develop scientifically reasonable standards for cultivation plans, clearly defining the goals, processes, and evaluation systems of cultivation. The goals of cultivation plans should closely align with the practical needs of local agricultural development, taking into account requirements in areas such as new agricultural management, technology application, and marketing. The detailed planning of the training process should include different stages such as recruitment, training, and assessment, ensuring that each step has clear tasks and objectives. In the recruitment stage, collaboration with local agricultural cooperatives, village committees, and other organizations can be established to jointly determine training candidates and conduct preliminary competency assessments. During the training stage, course content should be designed for different levels of trainees, emphasizing the integration of theory and practice to enhance the operational skills of new professional farmers. The assessment stage requires the establishment of a multidimensional evaluation mechanism, including skills testing, evaluation of agricultural project implementation, and observation of market performance, to comprehensively understand the training outcomes of new professional farmers. Secondly, establish an agricultural access mechanism. Implement a strict admission procedure, including qualification reviews, interviews, and skills tests, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the actual situation of new professional farmers. To enhance the authority of admission standards, local agricultural experts, representatives from government departments, and other professionals can be invited to participate in their formulation. Thirdly, establish a dynamic adjustment mechanism for the admission mechanism. Admission standards should have a certain degree of flexibility, allowing for dynamic adjustments based on the actual situation of agricultural development. A regular evaluation mechanism can be established to periodically review admission standards. Adjustments can be made in a timely manner according to factors such as the development of agricultural technology and changes in market demand, ensuring that admission standards remain up-to-date.

4.4. Improve the Supervision and Management System to Enhance the Effectiveness of Vocational Education

Firstly, to ensure the fairness and transparency of the cultivation work, a dedicated supervisory body should be established to comprehensively supervise and evaluate every aspect of the cultivation process. The establishment of such a body not only helps standardize the advancement of cultivation work but also effectively prevents the occurrence of misconduct. The supervisory body should possess professional background and experience to ensure the

authority and scientific nature of its evaluations[13]. Secondly, government oversight in cultivation work is also crucial. The government should increase investment and enhance personnel training to ensure the efficient operation of the supervision system. This includes personnel training and professional support for the supervisory body to elevate its level of supervision and evaluation. At the same time, the government needs to focus on building an information platform for the supervision system to more efficiently collect and analyze cultivation data, providing a scientific basis for supervisory decisions. Finally, conducting satisfaction surveys is a powerful tool to enhance the effectiveness of vocational education. Regularly conducting satisfaction surveys on the cultivation of new professional farmers, understanding farmers' evaluations of the cultivation work, helps the government gain deeper insights into the actual effects of cultivation. Satisfaction surveys can cover various aspects, including cultivation content, training methods, and the quality of teaching staff, providing direct references for the government to improve cultivation strategies. The government can appoint an independent third-party organization to conduct the surveys to ensure the objectivity and authenticity of the evaluation results.

5. Conclusion

This paper revolves around the rural revitalization strategy and, based on the perspective of supply and demand, explores the significance and existing issues in cultivating new professional farmers. It emphasizes strengthening cultivation programs through market orientation and practical approaches to drive agricultural and rural modernization. However, the study still has some limitations. Firstly, it could consider a more detailed analysis of the differences in cultivating new professional farmers in different regions and agricultural sectors to comprehensively understand the regional and sectoral characteristics of supply and demand. Secondly, in-depth investigations into the specific operational mechanisms of cultivation institutions and the implementation of policies can reveal potential problems and bottlenecks. On the demand side, more detailed demand surveys would provide more specific references for the personalized design of cultivation plans. A deeper understanding of the specific needs of different farmers for cultivation content would help formulate more flexible and practical cultivation programs. On the supply side, researching issues and challenges in policy implementation can provide more practical policy recommendations for the government, representing another direction for future research. Through these in-depth explorations, we can better promote the cultivation of new professional farmers and provide more concrete and actionable guidance for the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy.

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