



SOME EXPERIENCE OF AN GIANG PROVINCE IN THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING INDUSTRIALIZATION AND MODERNIZATION OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AREAS IN THE PERIOD 2010-2020

Vo Hoang Dongⁱ

An Giang University, VNU-HCM,
Vietnam

Abstract:

Industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas play especial importance to agricultural development, building new rural areas, and improving farmers' lives. Vietnam has a starting point from the backward agricultural economics, wants to build a modern developed economy. So, it is necessary to carry out industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas. This article focuses on researching the actual situation of implementing industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas in An Giang province, Vietnam, period 2010-2020. Then, learning some lessons from experience in the process of industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas in the localities, contributing to supplementing documents, theoretical and practical bases for this process in the next period.

Keywords: industrialization, modernity, agriculture, countryside, An Giang

1. Introduction

The Communist Party of Vietnam determines *“Industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas is one of the most important tasks of industrialization and modernization of the country. The development of industry and services must closely connect, effectively support and efficiently serve the industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas”* (The Communist Party of Vietnam, 2002, p.94). The industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas in the whole nation can only be completed while localities effectively implement the measure for industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas under the leadership of the Local Party Committee. Therefore, the practical research, summarizing experiences in the process of implementing industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas in the localities have profound theoretical and practical significance.

ⁱ Correspondence: email vhdong@agu.edu.vn

2. Research methods

The article uses some basic methods such as: Synthesis of secondary documents; collecting primary documents; using logical and historical methods in documentation collection and analysis of research problems.

3. Research results

3.1. Some guidelines and policies to implement industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas in the period 2010-2020 of An Giang province

The Party Committee and government of An Giang province have promulgated many great policies, inheriting the successful lessons of the early renovation period, to develop the province's agriculture toward the large commodity production, forming specialized cultivation areas, improving productivity and product quality, and associating production with sustainable development and building a new rich, strong and civilized countryside.

The 9th Party Congress of An Giang Provincial Party Committee (October, 2010) determines overall goals for the five years 2010-2015 is that "Promoting industrialization and modernization of agriculture is to create a foundation helping An Giang develop comprehensively by 2015, reaching the national average". (Party Committee of An Giang province, 2010, p.35)

The 10th Congress of An Giang Provincial Party Committee (October 2015) with the view is that "*An Giang is an agricultural province and has commercial strengths, therefore, investment resources for economic development are determined in order of priority as agriculture, trade - services, industry - construction*" and the common goal is to continue "*mobilizing internal and external resources to focus on developing agriculture in depth*". (Party Committee of An Giang province, 2015, p.42-43)

Provincial Party Committee issued Resolution No.05-NQ/TU dated September 15, 2011 on building new countryside in the province. Accordingly, the goal by 2015 is to increase the income of rural residents that should be twice as much as in 2010; to reduce the average poverty rate by 2%/year towards 2015 to 5%; 100% of villages and towns have standard roads to the center; to complete the system of in-field irrigation and transportation to serve 40% of the production land area; to increase the percentage of schools at all levels with facilities gaining national standards that reaches 50%.

Towards an agriculture developing in-depth, comprehensive following the modernity with high competitiveness; The Provincial Party Committee issued Resolution No. 09-NQ/TU dated June 27, 2012 on "Developing hi-tech agriculture in An Giang province in the period 2012 - 2020 with a vision to 2030"; The Provincial Party Committee has also continued to issue the program named 'Action Plan' No. 04-CTr/TU dated July 18, 2016 involving the 'National target' program on building new rural areas for the period 2016-2020; Program No. 08-CTr/TU dated 11/11/2016 on agricultural development in the period 2016-2020, and the orientation to 2025; Action Program No. 09-CTr/TU

dated December 5, 2016 on human resource development to serve the development of key economic sectors of the province in the period 2016-2020 and the orientation to 2025. On the basis of documents of the Provincial Party Committee, the Provincial People's Committee has issued many programs, decisions and a series of specific plans to implement. That is the Program on development of agriculture, farmers and rural areas in An Giang province in the period 2011-2015; Project on exploitation and protection of aquatic resources in An Giang province until 2020; Vocational training project for rural workers in An Giang province up to 2020; Decision No. 396/QD-UBND (March 1, 2013) on the plan to develop high-tech agriculture; Comprehensive planning on agriculture development and rural development in An Giang province up to 2020, and the orientation to 2030; The scheme on restructuring the agricultural sector in An Giang province to 2020; Decision No. 3310/QD-UBND (November 21, 2016) on promulgating the plan to implement the Program named 'national target involving building new rural areas' for the period 2016-2020; Decision No. 1066/QD-UBND (April 5, 2017) on promulgating the plan to implement the action program of the Provincial Party Committee on agricultural development for the period 2016-2020, and the orientation to 2025. In addition, the Provincial People's Committee has issued many mechanisms and policies to achieve the core goal is that: Building a comprehensive and sustainable agriculture development; Improving people's material and spiritual life; Comprehensive renovation of the appearance of rural areas in the new era.

3.2. Achievements in implementing industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas in the period 2010-2020

With the close leadership and direction of the Provincial Party Committee, the process of implementing industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas in the period 2010-2020 has achieved certain achievements, contributing to changing the appearance of agriculture and the rural side of the province.

The economic structure shifts toward reducing the proportion of the agricultural sector, and increasing the proportion of the service and industrial sectors. In the period 2015-2020, the agricultural sector accounted for 32.86% (decreased by 8.17% compared to the period 2010-2015); the industrial sector accounted for 14.4% (increased by 2.79%); service sector accounted for 49.09% (increased by 5.1%). The province's agricultural growth rate was about 3%/year, in several years such as 2010 this rate was 6,68%, in 2019 it was 4,91%. The structure of the agricultural economy also had a positive shift, which was increasing the proportion of forestry and fishery, reducing the proportion of pure agriculture; improving productivity, quality and efficiency associated with market demand. In the rice variety structure, the proportion of high-quality rice and fragrant rice also increased year by year, accounting for more than 75% of the rice production area by 2020. The area of fruit trees and aquaculture increased steadily in exact goals set out by the Agricultural Restructuring Project (by 2020, the area of fruit trees would be 17.43 thousand hectares, the area for aquaculture would be 3.3 thousand hectares). The

province's total export turnover of agricultural and aquatic products in the period gained 7796 million USD, accounting for 73% of the province's total export turnover.

In industry, the agricultural and aquatic product processing industry still accounted for a large proportion. There were 21 enterprises that are eligible for export business, which had been granted certificates by the Ministry of Industry and Trade. There were 3 factories involving fruit and vegetable processing for export, which had investment capital of 170.4 billion VND, attracting 1,900 employees. There were 29 handicraft villages in the province providing jobs for over 15,661 workers. The number of products achieving OCOP certification having 3 stars to more ones was 49 products (2 five-star products, 4 four-star products, 38 three-star products).

Agricultural production aims to produce efficiently and sustainably large commodities, the "big field" model is replicated and developed. Specializing in rice, vegetable, aquatic products, and livestock farming areas have been established in accordance with the advantages and natural conditions of each region. Those specialized farming area has high productivity, quality and competitive efficiency on the basis of application of advanced scientific and technological achievements, which meet the export and domestic demands. Especially since the Provincial Party Committee enacted the Resolution No. 09 about applying high-tech and restructuring project of the Provincial People's Committee in agriculture, 8 large specialized farming areas have been planned. They are the areas of high quality rice, specialty rice; areas of edible mushrooms, medicinal mushrooms; livestock development areas; aquaculture areas; vegetable areas; ornamental plant areas; orchard and areas for conserving and developing the medicinal plants.

The level of science and technology in agricultural and aquaculture has been gradually improved by using new varieties, biotechnology, and advanced farming methods to improve the productivity and quality of agricultural and aquatic products. The province has also basically mechanized the entire productive land, accelerated the implementation of the program "3 Giam 3 Tang"ⁱⁱ and "1 Phai 5 Giam"ⁱⁱⁱ along with the socialization of rice varieties. Many irrigation projects, which have been completed and put into use, contribute to the restructuring of production, intensification, and increase the crop yield. These projects have ensured the irrigation for more than 80% of rice and crop areas; the system of dykes and reservoirs has been strengthened and upgraded. Strengthening agricultural extension has contributed to bringing farmers closer to science and technology in production. Many effective business models help to reduce poverty. The high-tech application models that bring profits are invested and replicated by the province.

ⁱⁱ "3 Giam 3 Tang": "3 Giam" means reducing the amount of seed sown, reducing the amount of fertilizer, reducing pesticides. "3 Tang" means increased productivity, increased quality, and increased efficiency. (source: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam)

ⁱⁱⁱ "1 Phai 5 Giam": "1 Phai" means using certified seed, while "5 Giam" includes reducing the amount of seed sown, reducing the amount of fertilizer (nitrogen), reducing the use of drugs. plant protection (plant protection), reduce water, and reduce post-harvest losses. (source: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam)

The countryside was gradually renewed, the relationship between agriculture, processing industry and services was initially formed and mutually influenced each other to develop. Economic, cultural and social infrastructure in rural areas is properly invested with the motto The State and the people work together, which maximally mobilizes all sources for investment and development in order to gradually eliminate the distance between rural and urban areas. The urbanization rate by 2020 reached 36.2%. Education, training and vocational training for rural workers have been paid attention to and achieved, which improves the intellectual level and skills for rural residents. The province's national high school graduation rate ranks in the top 10 in the country, leading in the Mekong Delta region for 3 consecutive years (2017, 2018, 2019). The province has 31 vocational education institutions which on average annually provide vocational training for nearly 25,000 employees, the percentage of trained workers increases from 53.3% in 2016 to 65% in 2020. Many residential areas, residential clusters associated with the dike system and new urban areas were formed. Therefore, people have stable life and conditions to focus on development of production, business, family economy, significantly to changing the face of rural areas. By 2020, there are 3 district-level localities completing the task of building new rural areas (Chau Doc, Long Xuyen, Thoai Son); 60/116 communes reach the new rural commune standards. The total mobilized capital for new rural construction in the period 2010-2020 is 17,477,957 million VND. The province has been implementing the construction of 829 works lists, mainly building infrastructure for agricultural production and local socio-economic development. The material and spiritual life of the people, especially farmers in rural areas, has been gradually improved. Effectively implementing the program of hunger eradication, poverty reduction and creating jobs, so that the poverty rate has decreased to 1.9% in 2020 (3.59% in 2010, 2.5% in 2015). GDP per capita in 2020 is 46,803 million VND (39,274 million VND in 2015).

3.3. Some experiences drawn during the implementation of agricultural industrialization and modernization in An Giang province

Based on the assessment of achievements and limitations in the process of leading the implementation of agricultural industrialization and modernization of the Party Committee of An Giang province in the 2010-2020, the following experiences can be drawn:

Firstly, all guidelines, undertakings and policies on agriculture, farmers and rural areas must always thoroughly grasp the concept of "Dan la goc", derived from the benefits of the people and implemented by the people. They have to arise from the urgent needs of life according to the aspirations of the people.

All guidelines and policies of the Party and State or of each locality that are approved and supported by the people will quickly be realized and successful. The provincial Party Committee soon realized that An Giang is an agricultural province, the majority of the population is farmers. The concept "Dan la goc" is none other than farmers, so in order to develop agriculture, there must be a policy to take care of farmers.

While farmers mostly live in rural areas, the province has identified agriculture as the foundation and the leading front, farmers are the subject of the innovation process and the countryside is a strategic area. Since then, the “Tam nong” policy was born, which was later elevated to the “Ba hoa” strategy to meet the new situation.

As a province with ethnic minorities, the people’s life is mostly difficult, therefore focusing on stabilization, upgradation material life, and conveniently access to basic social services such as (healthcare, education, housing, water for daily life and sanitation, access to information) for ethnic minorities are identified by the Party committees and authorities at all levels as one of the important tasks in directing and administering. The implementation of a series of policies are: Policies on production development and supporting for life; policies on infrastructure construction; policies on training and fostering human resources and vocational training recruitment and preparatory university; policies on directly support for poor and near-poor households from some key programs such as 135th program or 167th program, the Government’s rapid and sustainable poverty reduction program; rural clean water program; solidification of schools and classrooms; solidification of in-field canals;...and mobilizing resources for socialization such as the Fun with ‘Phum Soc’ programs, ATV Shelter, etc.

Secondly, leadership and direction must always firmly grasp and follow the guidelines and policies of the Party and State. At the same time, it is necessary to apply them creatively to the specific conditions of the locality on the basis of firmly grasping the actual situation and correctly identifying potential strengths to set out appropriate policies.

From the guidelines of the Central Committee, the Provincial Party Committee has concreted with programs, plans and schemes associated with the reasonable mechanisms and policies; lead the formulation of plans, objectives and solutions according to each locality and region; direct the inspection, supervision, periodical review in order to detect difficulties and obstacles in the implementation of the processes: “About agriculture, farmers, rural areas” - Plan No. 18-KH/TU (October 14, 2008); “Building a new countryside” - Resolution No. 05-NQ/TU (September 15, 2011); Resolution No. 09-NQ/TU (June 27, 2012) about "Developing hi-tech agriculture in An Giang province from 2012 to 2020 with a vision to 2030"; Action Program No. 04-CTr/TU (July 18, 2016) on the National Target Program about building new rural areas from 2016 to 2020 ; Action Program No. 08-CTr/TU (November 11, 2016) on agricultural development from 2016 to 2020 and orientation to 2025.

Promulgating a series of guidelines and policies on agriculture and rural areas based on flexibly, proactively and creatively applying the guidelines of the central government, has made An Giang effectively exploit the potential and strengths of the province to develop agriculture and rural areas in line with the people's hearts, consent and support. That has given people a deep belief, so that they can make efforts to invest, develop production and business. Therefore, the restructuring of agricultural and rural economy in a positive direction has improved the living standards of the residents.

Third, focus on and rank solving problems of investments, building material and technical foundations, and socio-economic infrastructure in service of agriculture and rural economic growth.

In the process of leading and directing the implementation of industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas, the Provincial Party Committee, the Provincial People's Committee, together with the Party Committees and local governments, always take advantage of the central capital investments, the local and people's budget to focus on investing, building and upgrading material and technological foundations, and socio-economic infrastructure in service of agriculture and rural economic growth. The transport system of national highways and provincial roads, rural roads, and rural bridges have been invested in upgrading, which contributes to trade promotions and production, and makes it convenient for people's travel. Irrigation systems, dykes, and reservoirs have been built and upgraded to serve the two mountainous districts that are Tri Ton and Tinh Bien. The Northern and Southern Vam Nao flood control system has greatly contributed to the province's key rice and vegetable cultivation zones and helped people have stable and long-term residences on residential clusters where people overcome floods. Upgrading oil pumping stations to electric vehicle charging stations is meaningful to be proactive in irrigation. Besides focusing on investment in irrigation, the province also invests in developing and upgrading the electrical network, which brings electricity to 100% of communes, wards, and towns in the province. This is one of the achievements with great significance in terms of politics, economy, culture, society, security, and national defense. Moreover, they make the countryside more and more prosperous, create conditions for rural economic development, serve agricultural production, and improve the material and spiritual life of people.

The province focuses on investing in research and application of scientific and technological advances to agricultural production. A number of research topics and projects have been deployed and applied widely and effectively, which contributes to improving productivity and quality of agricultural products. Besides, the Provincial Biotechnology Center has been established in order to implement the agricultural restructuring project and Resolution 09 of the Provincial Party Committee on high technology applied agriculture.

In addition, the province also implements the Government's Decrees on policies to encourage enterprises to focus on agriculture and rural areas such as Decree 57/2018/ND-CP, Decree 98/2018/ND-CP on policies to encourage cooperation and linkage in agricultural production, and consumption of agricultural products. The province has strengthened promotion, invited investors in the agricultural sector, supported nearly 40 enterprises to deploy production linkages through about 20 cooperatives and 10 cooperative groups.

Fourth, the provincial leaders and agricultural sector are perceptive to apply new scientific and technological advances into agricultural production. Also, staff are

enthusiastic and active in transferring science and technology to farmers who are curious and willing to receptive.

An Giang is one of the localities that “takes a shortcut and takes the lead” in researching and applying scientific and technological advances to production, selecting and creating varieties of plants and animals in terms of high yield, quality, efficiency and development prospects. Scientific and technological resources that are invested in research in the field of agricultural production, account for a large proportion (approximately 80% of the budget for science and technology). As a result, many technological solutions in agricultural production and aquaculture have been widely deployed to farmers and effectively implemented by farmers such as improving rice quality program, agricultural extension program; integrated pest control IPM program, rural construction, and development program, “1 Phai 5 Giam” program, “3 Giam 3 Tang” program, deploying rice production according to SRP, GlobalGAP, and VietGAP standards, fish farming according to export standards such as ASC or BAP, application of scientific and technological advances in soil preparation and irrigation, mechanization and electrification in rice production, artificial reproduction of fish such as pangasius, trout, bream, climbing fish, dolphin or sea perch, improving and developing models of all-male giant freshwater prawn farming, and raising frogs and eels in tanks.

Identifying the application of high technology in agricultural production and processing to build a comprehensively developed agriculture towards modernity, large commodity production, high productivity, high quality, efficiency, productivity, and high competitiveness. The Provincial Party Committee issued Resolution No. 09 on “Developing hi-tech agriculture in An Giang province in the period of 2012-2020, with a vision to 2030”. Applying high technology to agricultural production can limit the waste of land and water resources due to the superiority of these technologies such as biotechnology, gene technology, organic fertilizer production technology, and production automation. As a result, it saves production costs, including water, fertilizers, and pesticides. Also, it contributes to environmental protection, increases the productivity of crops and livestock, and creates competitiveness in price, quality, and brand-name products on the market.

4. Conclusion

An Giang is one of the provinces in the Key Economic Zone of the Mekong Delta, where have favorable natural conditions for agricultural development and rural construction in the direction of industrialization and modernization. Therefore, conducting industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas is a necessary condition and a strategy in the process of socio-economic development of an agricultural province like An Giang. In the period of 2010-2020, the Party Committee and the government of An Giang province have thoroughly grasped and creatively applied the Party's guidances to the real situation of the locality, proposed guidance and measures to lead the effective implementation in the process of industrialization and modernization

of agriculture and rural areas. The experience gained in the process of implementing industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas is the basis for An Giang to propose appropriate guidance and policies for the next period.

Conflict of interest statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interests.

About the Author

Vo Hoang Dong is working at An Giang University - Ho Chi Minh City National University, Vietnam. Current and former research interests are in the fields of political science and history.

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