

e-Marketing of agricultural products

The Internet has changed the world. In line with other sectors, retail businesses have taken up e-marketing, or Internet marketing, expanding outreach to customers beyond their conventional shopping districts. A global market is now accessible to any business with a Web site. Agroindustry is no exception. However, because agricultural products are perishable, numerous considerations for effective marketing are required. Proper handling and packaging, timely delivery, storage conditions, and knowledge of Internet operations and marketing are crucial. Farms in Asia tend to be small in scale, and exposure to information and communication technology (ICT) and education may be limited. The promotion of agroproduct e-commerce in the region necessitates the active involvement of the public and/or private sector to develop infrastructure and provide information and ICT training.

“The Korean government concluded that without governmental support at the initial stage, agroproduct e-commerce would not successfully take off,” explained Dr. Junghoon Moon, Assistant Professor, Department of Management Science, Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, at an APO training course on e-Marketing held in Seoul, March 15–19. “Agroproduct e-commerce,” he told the group, “eliminates middlemen’s fees. It means more profit for farmers and lower prices for consumers.”

The five-day course was attended by representatives of small- and medium-scale agribusiness enterprises, farmers’ associations, and governments from 13 member countries, encompassing the basic principles and current practices in the marketing of agricultural products via the Internet, as well as the design of Web pages and online-based promotional materials. Speakers described the concepts and principles of e-commerce, e-business, and e-marketing, and their applications to agribusiness. Workshops and hands-on training were included, and after three days of classroom discussion, field studies provided participants with a first-hand look at the advanced use of ICT in the Republic of Korea’s agribusiness sector.



Learning marketing strategies at Garak Market

The group visited Seoul’s Garak Wholesale Produce Market, a popular trade center for fresh fruit and vegetables, and watched demonstrations of e-auctioning. They continued to the Agricultural and Marine Cyber Exchange Center, seeing in real time how e-marketing can be effectively utilized by the farming community.

“It was an excellent program by the Korean team,” confirmed Principal Consultant Shaik Abdul Kahder, SAK Consultants and Associates, India, the chief resource speaker in the course. “It was a demonstration of their commitment to e-marketing for agribusiness and showcased significant accomplishments to date. All the course participants contributed and shared their countries’ experience, and it was a great learning opportunity for me as well.” 🌀