

# Improving agricultural marketing infrastructure

In many developing Asia-Pacific countries, agricultural marketing infrastructure (AMI) is generally inadequate and inefficient. Further development and expansion of AMI is difficult for these resource-constrained countries. The alternative is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of existing AMI through better management. Agricultural markets, if appropriately located, sized, and managed, are basic instruments for promoting competition and improving public health and food control quality, thereby lowering and stabilizing consumer prices, reducing post harvest losses, and preventing urban congestion and pollution.

Recognizing the need to improve AMI in member countries, the APO organized a seminar on “Development of Efficient Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure” in Delhi, 11–17 November, to review the current status of the development and management of AMI, initiatives undertaken to improve it, and possible ways to enhance further its efficiency and effectiveness. It was hosted by the Government of India and implemented by the National Productivity Council of India and the Indian Ministry of Agriculture. Fifteen representatives from 11 APO member countries took part.

Deliberations in the seminar dealt with the following topics: 1) Marketing infrastructure development in Asia and the Pacific—issues and challenges; 2) Participatory approaches for the development and management of efficient agricultural marketing infrastructure; 3) Marketing information sys-



*Participants visiting Azadpur Fruit and Vegetable Market*

tems for efficient marketing of agricultural/food products—issues and options; 4) Modernizing operations of agricultural wholesale markets: a case study of Azadpur Market, Delhi; 5) Development and management of AMI: experience of India; and 6) Achieving safety and reliability in food for better marketing and consumer satisfaction: experience of Japan.

Participants were taken to visit the Azadpur Fruit and Vegetable Market in Delhi, one of the largest in Asia, where they were able to observe the auction of apples, pomegranates, and oranges. 🍎