

Several Instructions from the CCP Central Committee on Properly Carrying Out the Unified Purchase of Grain

Date: January 2, 1954

After the National Grain Conference, thanks to the efforts of the entire Party, ideological education and mobilization of cadres at all levels have been conducted, along with pilot programs for unified grain purchasing, from which preliminary experience has been gained. These experiences demonstrate that not only can the unified grain purchase task be fulfilled according to plan, but it may even be slightly exceeded.

At present, the work of unified grain purchasing has been rolled out in various localities and is now in direct contact with the broad masses of peasants. This is an extremely tense and arduous stage — a decisive stage for accomplishing the grain purchasing work. The following points are put forward for study and implementation in all regions:

1. Recognizing the Difficulty of Full-Scale Mobilization

The comprehensive rollout of unified grain purchasing among the broad masses of peasants is much more difficult and arduous than simply holding cadre meetings or conducting pilot programs. Greater concentration of energy and strengthened leadership are required — there must be no complacency or relaxation.

Peasants are not the same as cadres; full-scale mobilization is not the same as a pilot. The ideological level of the peasant masses differs greatly from that of cadres, and mobilizing peasants is far more difficult than mobilizing cadres. In pilot programs, we concentrated a large number of capable cadres in one township or village, so work proceeded relatively smoothly. Once work is rolled out across the board, there are fewer cadres, a much wider scope, and more complex problems.

We must not think that because cadre meetings have been held and pilot programs succeeded, no major problems will arise. Grain purchasing affects every peasant's vital interests. Mobilization must involve not only Party members, Youth League members, and activists but the entire peasantry — men, women, young, and old — the whole household must be mobilized.

Unified purchase of grain represents a major change to peasants' long-established habits. Previously they could sell grain whenever they wished, whenever they needed cash; now they are asked to sell all surplus grain at one time. Without good working methods and painstaking persuasion and education, this change is absolutely impossible.

Therefore, it is necessary to consistently employ the method of *mass self-education*, linking propaganda to local conditions and the peasants' vital interests, using concrete examples from their own experience. Cadres must explain:

- The Party's General Line and general tasks for the transitional period.
- That rural socialization means cooperativization, and that mutual-aid and cooperation are for the purpose of developing production and enabling everyone to prosper together, without exploitation.
- That peasants are honorable laborers, and must raise their living standards through labor, not through exploiting others like capitalists and rich peasants.
- That unified purchase and sale of grain is not because of a grain shortage, but to stabilize grain prices and thus all prices — a measure that benefits not only workers and urban

residents, but peasants themselves, including those with enough grain and even those with surplus.

Local facts should be used to show that unified purchase and sale ensures stable grain and commodity prices. Pilot experiences prove that where thorough political work has been done and the majority of peasants persuaded, grain purchasing tasks are completed, peasants are educated about the socialist future, and the socialist transformation of the countryside is advanced — creating better conditions for future agricultural production increases.

Conversely, abandoning political work, carrying it out in a perfunctory manner, or adopting coercive, impatient, or heavy-handed measures creates opposition from the masses and difficulties for the work. In some places, excessive pressure has even driven peasants to death — such incidents must be resolutely corrected and prevented.

2. Linking Grain Purchasing with Production and Cooperation

Unified grain purchasing is a necessary measure to safeguard the national economy and ensure steady rural production. It is also a necessary step toward promoting rural mutual-aid and cooperation.

In the process of purchasing grain, rural production work and the mutual-aid and cooperative movement must be organized in a timely fashion. Many pilot areas have found it effective to start with production and end with production — this practice should be adopted nationwide.

After grain purchasing is completed, a production campaign must be launched immediately to resolve outstanding problems, dispel discontent among better-off peasants, encourage production, educate peasants to use the money earned from grain sales for productive purposes (buying production materials, depositing surplus funds in banks), and avoid waste. Peasants should be encouraged to join mutual-aid and cooperatives voluntarily and to expand production along the lines indicated by the General Line.

3. Setting Realistic Grain Purchase Quotas

It is essential to verify whether the originally assigned purchase quotas are realistic. Our principle is to meet both the needs of the state and the ability of peasants to sell grain, taking into account each household's circumstances.

This requires repeated surveys, calculations, and democratic appraisal by the masses to set purchase quotas that are realistic and acceptable to the majority. Because economic conditions vary, the proportion of grain purchased relative to total output must not and cannot be exactly the same everywhere.

Recent reports indicate that rural surplus grain is larger than previously estimated, including old grain in storage. While tasks may be exceeded, they must not be pushed beyond reasonable limits. It is advisable to leave some surplus grain with peasants — this avoids errors, allows for local market adjustment, and reduces the burden on state storage facilities.

4. Avoid Creating Hostility Between Cooperative and Individual Farmers

While educating peasants on the limitations of small-scale farming, we must not create the impression that individual farming is prohibited or create antagonism between cooperative members and independent farmers.

Better-off peasants with surplus grain should be encouraged to sell, and should understand that not selling is wrong, and selling to private merchants is worse — but this must not create the impression that having surplus grain is dishonorable or that poverty is honorable.

A good example comes from Laozhuangzi Village, Zunhua County, Hebei Province, which put forward the slogan:

"It is honorable to produce grain through labor and have surplus grain; it is even more honorable to sell surplus grain to the state and support construction. Idleness is dishonorable and must be reformed; loafers have no future. Those short of grain should work hard and strive to produce more."

This "grain for glory" movement should be promoted.

5. On the Treatment of Rich Peasants

Throughout the transitional period, the Party's policy toward rich peasants is to gradually restrict and eventually eliminate their exploitation.

In current grain purchasing work and propaganda about the General Line, it is necessary to educate peasants about the "two roads" and make a clear ideological distinction between poor/middle peasants and rich peasants.

Within the Party, rich peasant ideology must be opposed, and Party members must not engage in exploitative behavior. But in society, rich peasant exploitation cannot yet be eliminated all at once, nor is it appropriate to raise a blanket slogan of "opposing rich peasants."

The main grain purchasing targets are middle and well-to-do middle peasants. Pilot studies show that grain sold by rich peasant's accounts for only a very small share of total purchased grain. It is absolutely impermissible to treat middle peasants with surplus grain as rich peasants.

Appropriate struggle must be waged against hoarding and sabotage by rich peasants, otherwise middle peasants will waver and unity with them cannot be consolidated. But the struggle must be rational, involving reasoned persuasion and calculation, and punishment of only a few particularly disruptive elements in accordance with law — not the kind of struggle waged against landlords during land reform.

Excessive or indiscriminate attacks on rich peasants frighten and alienate the middle peasants, undermining production enthusiasm and unity. The policy of *consolidating unity with hired, poor, and middle peasants* must be emphasized throughout grain purchasing, using the method of praising the advanced, winning over the middle, and influencing the backward.

Bad elements — whether inside or outside the Party — who persistently and openly resist the unified grain purchase policy should only be punished when the vast majority of the masses have already been persuaded, mobilized, and have delivered their grain, and when such elements are completely isolated and arousing public indignation.

Before taking action, it is essential to determine:

- whether those refusing to sell are poor, middle, or rich peasants,
- whether their motive is precautionary storage or speculative hoarding,
- whether they are simply holding grain or secretly selling to private merchants.

Different cases must be handled differently. No action should be taken without a clear understanding of the facts.

6. On Storage, Transport, and Distribution of Grain

All Party committees must have a clear understanding of how much grain is produced, how much population exists, how much can be purchased, how much must be retained locally, and how much can be transported out.

After grain is collected, aside from the quantities shipped according to higher-level directives, the rest should be stored in district warehouses, with small warehouses established in grain-deficit villages to reassure peasants and avoid unnecessary repeated transportation.

In addition, avoid inappropriate or excessive emphasis on "saving grain" among peasants. Do not mechanically impose grain-saving measures. In some places, peasants have been prohibited from raising pigs, chickens, ducks, or producing vermicelli and preserved duck — causing resentment and unemployment for handicraft workers. Such one-sided emphasis on grain saving, while neglecting the needs of the entire rural economy, is incorrect.

Only in disaster areas or areas severely short of grain should appropriate measures for grain saving be imposed.