

PRESS RELEASE

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The MAFRA Completes the 6th Basic Plan for Fostering Women Farmers (2026–2030)

Sejong, 10 April 2026 — On 23 March, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) announced its Sixth Five-Year Basic Plan for the Promotion of Women Farmers (2026–2030). The plan aims to protect the rights and interests of women farmers, improve their quality of life, and foster them as professional personnel, thereby contributing to the realisation of healthy rural families and sustainable agricultural and rural development.

This series of basic plans constitutes a mid- to long-term policy roadmap, updated every five years in accordance with the Support for Female Farmers and Fishers Act. It comprehensively encompasses measures to enhance the status of women farmers, expand the foundations for their economic activities, and provide tailored welfare and health support for rural areas

The Sixth Basic Plan sets forth the vision of “establishing the status of women

farmers as respected members of society by promoting their rights and improving their quality of life.”

It shifts policy direction (1) from expansion of formal participation to substantive status enhancement, (2) from an individual programme-focused approach to policy governance establishment, (3) from protection- and welfare-centred support to support for women’s growth as key economic actors, and (4) toward strengthening tailored rural support to address gaps in care and health services.

Four key strategies will be pursued to this end. First, the legal and social status of rural women will be enhanced with the goal of realising a gender-equal rural society. Second, a governance system will be established for policies covering rural women. Third, support will be provided so that women can grow as key economic actors in rural areas. Fourth, tailored welfare and health support programmes will be expanded for rural communities.

1. Enhancement of the legal and social status of rural women and the realisation of a gender-equal rural society

The Ministry will continue to make institutional improvements to strengthen women farmers’ representation. For example, it is reviewing the provision of incentives for farmers registered as joint farm operators (farm owners’ spouses, who are predominantly women farmers). The law will also be amended to increase the proportion of female board members in regional agricultural cooperatives. In addition, as part of the ongoing effort to promote gender-equal rural communities, the Ministry will review women-friendly rural models, monitor community leader election practices, and disseminate best practices.

Furthermore, indicators will be developed to assess the level of gender equality in rural areas, and tailored gender equality education programmes for rural communities will be expanded and improved. Such training will be provided to participants in the MAFRA-run projects, as well as to employers and workers in the agricultural sector generally.

2. Establishment of a governance system for policies on rural women

With the Rural Women Policy Division having been established within the MAFRA on 30 December 2025, the Ministry will strengthen the implementation system for policies on rural women by establishing dedicated departments and securing personnel in local governments. In addition, a performance evaluation system will be introduced to assess local governments' implementation of action plans on policies for women farmers, thereby improving policy effectiveness.

Meanwhile, a policy consultative body for women farmers will be established, bringing together central and local governments and the private sector. The body will regularly discuss key policy issues and incorporate on-the-ground perspectives into policymaking. The functions of the online platform for women farmers will also be enhanced to improve two-way communication through provision of information on policies for women farmers, chatbot counseling, and community bulletin boards. Mobile services will be made available as well.

Furthermore, gender-discriminatory elements in laws and programmes under the MAFRA's jurisdiction will be reviewed. The statistical foundation for policymaking will also be strengthened by expanding the sample size of the

Survey on Women Farmers (Article 8 of the Support for Female Farmers and Fishers Act), improving survey items, and shortening survey intervals.

3. Support for women to grow as key economic actors in rural areas

Flexible work arrangements compatible with farming and caregiving will be identified and expanded, and family farm management agreements will be promoted to lay the groundwork for women farmers' economic independence.

In addition, the Ministry will expand research on, and the development and supply of, women-friendly agricultural machinery and equipment. Government support will also be provided to reduce women farmers' labour burdens through technologies such as wearable assistive devices, thereby further strengthening their farming capacity.

- A total of 27 types of women-friendly agricultural machinery and equipment were developed, and approximately 14,000 units of 25 types were distributed during the period 2020–2024. The Government has set a target of developing additional 25 types during the period 2026–2030 (Rural Development Administration).

In addition, incubation programmes will be operated to support women farmers in processing agricultural products and starting a business. Specialized training in digital technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), will be introduced as well. Policies and training related to distribution, marketing, and eco-friendly agriculture will also be provided so that women farmers can respond effectively to changes in the domestic agricultural supply chain.

The Ministry will also make efforts to foster the next generation of young farmers. To this end, career exploration programmes will be improved to meet

the needs of young women farmers. In addition, an “Integrated Homecoming Day” will be promoted to provide ongoing and broad networking opportunities.

4. Greater support for the welfare and health of rural women

This year, the Ministry will introduce “gap care” services to cover early morning and nighttime childcare during the busiest periods of the farming year, and will develop indicators to measure the social value of community-based activities in rural areas, such as caregiving and meal provision.

Support for specialised health screenings of women farmers will be expanded by raising the eligible age range from 51–70 to 51–80 and increasing the number of beneficiaries from 50,000 to 80,000. Application for these screenings via the NONGUPeZ application (nongupez.go.kr)* will improve user convenience. At the same time, rural workplaces will be made safer for women by improving the prevention and management of heat-related illnesses and expanding sanitation and convenience facilities—such as restrooms—at farming sites.

- NONGUPeZ is an online service, operated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, that allows farmers to remotely manage agricultural administrative tasks via smartphone or PC, including registering or updating farm business information and applying for agricultural subsidies.