

**China Voice: Rule of law a must to promote rural development**—By editor Luan

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**The Current Problems faced by Rural Areas**

- The countryside is a weak link in China's striving for the rule of law.
- China's agricultural and rural reforms involve various interest groups and very complicated relations.
- Development of the agriculture sector faces bottlenecks
- Millions of farmers still earn much less than those employed in other sectors.
- Farmers' property rights are not well protected by the law during land expropriation in some areas.
- Natural resources and the environment are being damaged due to lack of legal restrictions or loose supervision.
- There are large population and disparities in levels of development in rural areas.

**Reforms to be Made in Rural Areas**

- More efforts need to be made to:
  - establish new-style agricultural management,
  - accelerate reforms of rural collective property rights,
  - push forward pilot reforms of the rural land system,
  - fine-tune the rural financial system, and
  - deepen forestry reforms.
  - promote rural democracy to ensure the country's 650 million rural residents can participate more frequently and directly in the management of their villages.

**Rule of Law a Must to Promote Rural Development**

- The necessity of the rule of law:
  - The legal system is a must to ensure reform measures are carried out smoothly.
  - To modernize agriculture, land use and farming procedures must be improved.
  - Strict enforcement of law is needed to prevent corruption in village head elections.
  - Any absence of rule of law in dealing with these problems is likely to cause protests as well as standoffs between villagers and local governments, thus damaging the stability of rural areas.
- The measures to realize law of rule in rural areas:
  - Accelerate law-making;
    - ✧ Regulations that are proved effective should be established as laws
    - ✧ those not suitable for rural reforms should be revised and terminated in time.
  - Pilot programs should also be encouraged to accumulate experience for applying laws to the entire countryside.

<sup>1</sup> Source: [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2015-02/02/c\\_133965194.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2015-02/02/c_133965194.htm)