

Discussion on New Approach to Employment of Graduates in Agricultural and Forestry Universities in a New Situation

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Abstract

With development of the society and economy, the number of university graduates is on a continuous increase and the situation of employment becomes more austere. The great strategic opportunities and gradual advancement of building the new socialist countryside offers a platform for agricultural and forestry universities to serve building of the new countryside, broadens the capacious employment prospect and enables graduates from agricultural and forestry universities to realize their own value in facilitating building of the new socialist countryside.

Keywords: Agricultural and forestry university, Graduate, Building of new socialist countryside

University graduates are precious talent resources of a nation and are important fresh forces for construction of modernization. To do the job of employment for university graduates well is an important measure taken to promote economic development and social harmony. In the past few years, with the rapid expansion of the scale of university graduates, the situation of employment of university students has become more and more austere and has been faced up with unprecedented pressure and challenges. In 2011, there were altogether a total of 6.6 million university graduates all over the country. It is predicted that there will be nearly 7 million university students each year waiting to be employed during the period of the "Twelfth five-year plan" who will become the primary source for employment of the young. (Wang Xin, 2011) In face of this austere situation, how to take positive and effective measures and how to conduct feasible and effective university graduate employment job has become a focus of the government at all levels and of the whole society. This article is going to put forward some new trains of thought on the approach to employment of agricultural and forestry graduates in the current building of the new socialist countryside.

1. An analysis of the social background of difficult employment in agricultural and forestry universities

Agricultural and forestry university has all along been a "cold target" in filling in the college entrance examination application form by examinees of the college entrance examination. In the recent several years, with more and more serious employment situation of the university students as a whole, employment of agricultural and forestry university graduates becomes more and more difficult. According to the survey, there are currently a total of 30.605 million professional technical personnel in all fields across the whole country, including only 0.8 million who are involved in agricultural and forestry industries who account for a mere proportion of 2.6% of the total. Agricultural and scientific personnel account for a proportion of one to ten thousand in the total population, whereas the proportion in developed countries is thirty or forty to ten thousand. At the same time, the employment rate at once of traditional agricultural and scientific graduates in the past few years has always been presenting an obvious descending trend, while 95% of agricultural and forestry graduates who have found a job stay in the urban areas and a large majority of them take a position that has nothing to do with agriculture. On one hand, rural agricultural and forestry personnel are in obvious shortage. On the other hand, agricultural and forestry graduates stay in cities and have no opportunities to go to rural areas. "Unable to go down to rural areas,

unable to be employed and unable to be retained” summarizes the awkward status quo of supply and demand of agricultural and forestry university students ((Yang Deqiu & Yang Suhua, 2005) There are various reasons for occurrence of this phenomenon and of course, there are some particular issues about employment of agricultural and forestry university graduates.

1.1 Inconsistency of the personnel system reform of the country and the graduate employment system reform

As a result of transition of the economic system, adjustment of the industrial structure, layoff of state-owned enterprises to increase the benefit and simplification of government offices and organs, etc., the working staff are laid off and re-distributed, and the employment channels of graduates are narrowed down. However, the newly added employment units, such as, privately-owned enterprises and joint ventures have limited acceptance capacity as the policies and measures are not well coordinated with each other (Hu Rong, 2006). Especially, the nation has not given particular industrial preference to agriculture and forestry, the employment pressure among agricultural and forestry university graduates is more seriously aggravated. In addition, the talent market is, to some extent, affected by management of household register. For example, in order for university graduates to settle down in Shanghai, Beijing, Guangdong and so on, they have to present their Degree Certificate, CET-4 and CET-6 Certificates, the National Computer Level-2 Certificate and so on, or the profession the graduates learn has to be one that is in great want. In economically developed areas, agricultural and forestry students are more imperceptibly refused (Huang Wei, 2006).

1.2 Imbalance of industrial structure development leads to imbalance of demands on talents of all fields

“Coldness” of the majors that graduates learn in the universities will directly affect their employment direction and level after graduation. As for agricultural and forestry university students, on one hand, the relative hysteretic nature of development of agricultural and forestry industries gives rise to sluggishness of the employment positions offered by the society; on the other hand, people’s understanding in agricultural and forestry university graduates is, to some extent, misled. It is still believed that learning the agricultural major is to farm and fertilize as in its traditional sense, and students have no proficient knowledge and skills, unable to be qualified for jobs in other fields. Thus, agricultural and forestry university students are looked upon with less respect when they seek for a job in the talent market and they are refused far away by the employment units.

1.3 Inappropriate employment attitude of graduates

High expectancy for the salary among university graduates is an important element for difficult employment of university graduates. University graduates do not select those employing units except for big cities, large organs, large universities and large-scale enterprises and they wish to seek for a job position in those employing units that have good reputation, good working environment, good salary and treatment and have the opportunity to go abroad. However, it is exactly those remote middle-sized and small cities as well as middle-sized and small grass-root units at present that are in actual need of agricultural and forestry university graduates. Then, the situation of “A watched flower never blooms, while a carelessly planted willow grows into shade” appears in the employing units and among graduates. There are some employing units that they want to go to but they can’t and there are some employing units that they are able to go to but they are unwilling to. The phenomenon appears that “there is an employment not to be selected and there is no employment to be selected”.

2. Building the new countryside offers a platform for agricultural and forestry university graduates

China is a great agricultural nation. Agriculture is a basic industry which relates to the national economy and the people’s livelihood and also a traditional industry that has relatively fragile foundation. Without modernization of agriculture, there will be no modernization of China. In October 2005, it was pointed out in “Suggestions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China to working out the 11th “Five-Year Plan”, “It is a significant historical task in the process of modernization of China to build a new socialist countryside”. We have to persist in starting out from reality of all areas according to the requirements of “development of production, well-off of living, civilization of customs, clean and tidy village appearance and democratic management”, respect willpower of farmers and propel building of the new socialist countryside in a solid and stable way. Building of the new socialist countryside is to balance urban and rural development and realize the concretization of the policy of “industry compensating agriculture and urban areas supporting rural areas” at the critical stage when we build a well-off society in an all-around way and under the new circumstance when the overall economic development of China has entered a stage and the concept of human orientation and construction of a harmonious society is deeply rooted. At present, China is vigorously propelling building of the new socialist countryside, which not only offers a solid platform and opportunity for agricultural and forestry university graduates to realize their own value, but also facilitates agricultural productivity and rural grass-root construction.

2.1 Building of the new socialist countryside vigorously facilitates transformation of the mode of production in rural areas and adjustment of rural industrial structure

Building of the new socialist countryside should be an organic combination of land, labor, capital and knowledge management. Farmers provide land and labor, agricultural investors or the country provide capital and university graduates and agricultural management personnel provide knowledge and management. Scientific knowledge is the lightspot in building of the new socialist countryside, which is not only reflected in production and operation, but is also reflected in innovation of farmers' life and countryside culture. Undertaking of agricultural and forestry university graduates in rural areas helps to extensively promote the production and operation model of "company + base + peasant household", helps to develop, promote and apply new varieties, new technique and new technology and helps to play advantages of technology and information, offers technology of production and market information for peasant households and leads farmers to find a job in the market and build up the family fortunes.

2.2 Building of the new socialist countryside greatly strengthens basic education in rural areas and farmers' scientific and cultural quality

University students are established in building of the new socialist countryside, which not only enriches the teachers' strength in rural education and makes more people receive education, which further improves their cultural quality, but also enhances farmers' level in farming in a scientific way with the modern agricultural and scientific knowledge training that "one can understand at a glance, can comprehend and use upon learning and can become rich upon using". At the same time, we can organize scientific major households by taking themselves as an example in conducting training activities to get close to farmers, production and rural areas and to enable farmers to be likely to get close to and really experience the sweet taste of becoming rich in a scientific way and stimulate their enthusiasm in learning science and using science. Thus, it can be found that, agricultural and forestry university students serve the building of new socialist countryside and bring new fashion, new culture and new living style to rural areas, which helps to abolish rural unhealthy, unscientific and backward customs and habits, create rural civilization and living means, enrich the spiritual world of farmers and create characteristic socialist rural culture.

2.3 Agricultural and forestry university graduates seek for a position in the grass-root positions, which helps to improve the structure of rural grass-root cadre team

Considering the current survey, the structure of the rural grass-root cadre team is not completely reasonable in that the age structure is generally old and the knowledge structure is generally low. In order to change this fragile situation and in order to resolve the "three rural" issue, Jiangsu Province took the lead in 1995 in recruiting university students to hold the position of rural grass-root cadre. In July 2005, the General Office of the Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council promulgated "Opinions about Leading and Encouraging University Graduates for Employment in Grass-root Units". In February 2006, the eight ministries and commissions of Organization Department of the CPC Central Committee, Ministry of Personnel and Ministry of Education issued a notice and jointly organized university graduates to teach in rural areas, support agriculture, support rural medical care and alleviate rural poverty. After that, the work of "village official" among university students entered a large-scale experimental stage. In March 2008, Organization Department of the CPC Central Committee, together with Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, held a symposium about recruiting university graduates to hold a position in rural villages and arranged the work of recruiting university graduates to hold a position in rural villages. The job of "village officials" among university students entered an overall development period. Employment of this measure to push university graduates to the positions of village leading group not only has set up a platform for university graduates to give advice and suggestions for village-level organizations, successfully offer coordination service and put their talents to good use, but also cultivates reserve service for enriching the team of township and village cadres.

3. Countermeasures taken for employment of agricultural and forestry university graduates

3.1 To make track and survey on graduates and to enhance the competitive strength of graduates

Agricultural and forestry universities and colleges ought to take an initiative in conducting a follow-up survey on graduates. On one hand, they may adjust the professional structure, curriculum setting and talent cultivation mode according to the current social and economic development needs and the tendency of scientific and technical development. On the other hand, they may adjust the scale of recruitment of students according to the opinions of the employing units and demands of the market and ought to reduce the quantity of students recruited and even stop recruiting students for those universities and majors that have a low employment ratio of

graduates that is caused by low teaching quality and unreasonable professional setting. Through the above series of measures, we can enhance the teaching quality of agricultural and forestry universities, improve the competitive strength of university graduates and enable the talents they cultivate to better adapt to the actual demand of the society (Xiao Zhiliang, 2006)

3.2 To break through influences of the traditional concepts and to set up a new concept for employment of agricultural and forestry university graduates

We ought to strengthen guidance on employment of university graduates and set up a new concept of employment. For the time being, we have to especially reinforce consciousness of agricultural and forestry university graduates in three aspects. First is the consciousness of competition. Second is the consciousness of service in the grass-root units. Third is the consciousness of independent entrepreneurship on the basis of self selection of employment.

First, the competence of competition is essential to the graduates, for it is the ability of an individual. With this competence, he knows what he needs and follows not what others say. He has a clear idea of the situation and has the right methodology to deal with it. He knows where he goes.

Second, transfer of the employment concentration of university students is a necessary trend of education and social development. The purpose of the higher education in China is to cultivate and foster constructors and successors for socialist modernization. For the talents that are cultivated by institutions of higher learning to serve for the first line of production in the grass-root units is an objective need of the society. Nevertheless, at present, rural economy and culture are relatively backward. Thus, after university students go down to the grass-root units, both of their working and living conditions are in great difficulty, which, to some extent, may even affect functioning of their role. This is a realistic issue that should arouse enough attention.

Third, undertaking of university students in grass-root units is also an important approach for them to realize their own value. As agricultural and forestry university graduates, they should not only seek for an opportunity of employment, but should also take an initiative in creating an opportunity of employment. There is relatively a small number of agricultural and forestry university graduates who are involved in agricultural development and investment. So long as they learn something useful in the university, there is a great hope for them to conduct successful undertaking (Yang Deqiu & Yang Suhua, 2005). In the past several years, there appeared many reports about the fact that quite a large number of university students give up an opportunity in government service and to go to rural areas to undertake farming, stock farming and fabrication plant and go to state-run units for scientific research and participate in production and operation to realize their value. Undertaking in the grass-root units can also realize self-value and is of more challenges and creativity. Thus, it is a mode for university students to transfer knowledge into productivity to employ multiple means and to undertake in the grass-root units, but not acting against their will under the great pressure of employment, let alone a waste of talents. Especially, graduates from agricultural and forestry universities who are majoring in gardening, animal raising and aquaculture ought to combine the knowledge they have learnt together with the practice of occupation so as to transfer the knowledge into realistic productivity and to create more value. As a matter of fact, there are quite a lot of university students who have proved with their success experiences that this is a practicable path. They have not only acquired considerable benefits personally, but have also transmitted scientific knowledge, which directly or indirectly has stimulated the village farmers to become rich and wealth (Wang Yida & et al., 2002; Di Chuanhua & et al, 2007).

3.3 To strengthen standardized management of the market of exchange of human talents and to set up an employment market with the subject of the university and a graduates supply and demand information system on a nationwide network

For universities, they ought to keep stable contact in a long run with the personnel department in all local areas and municipal cities as well as technology transfer and technical service departments of agricultural scientific research units. The universities can adopt various modes of correspondence of letters, interview and invitation to strengthen communication with these departments and units, enable the profession setting, level of talent cultivation and scale of recruitment of students more suitable with actual demands of the society and thus forms a perfect social environment for employment of graduates. At the time when universities consolidate the major battlefield and the major channel of employment for graduates, we should also attach great importance to opening a new employment approach, adopt various means to keep extensive contact with all fields in the society, invite state-owned and private enterprises and education and scientific research units inside and outside the province to go to the university to recruit and employ graduates through the social relationships established by the graduates employment guidance center, all faculties and the vast majority of teachers, with the expectation to

set up a relatively wide and stable graduate demand network and further expand employment space for graduates.

In one word, employment of agricultural and forestry university students is a complicated social systematic project, which requires organic unification, mutual coordination and close collaboration of the government, the employing unit and agricultural and forestry university. Only if the whole society makes efforts together, can we guarantee sufficient employment of university students and further promote stable, healthy and coordinated development of social economy.

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