

Robust economic growth in XPCC for 2010

By SHAO WEI

URUMQI — The economic development of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC) has been steady in the first half of 2010, with a GDP of 20.39 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 13.1 percent.

The XPCC, founded in 1954, has administrative authority over several medium-sized cities, divisions and regimental farms all across Xinjiang.

The primary industry's GDP reached 2.12 billion yuan, an increase of 11.1 percent year on year.

In secondary industries, it was 8.84 billion yuan, an increase of 22 percent, while in tertiary industries it was 9.43 billion yuan, or a 6.5 percent increase.

XPCC's State-owned enterprises showed profits of 1.15 billion yuan in all.

Agriculture

In spite of the heavy snow fall and floods last winter and spring, XPCC's agricultural development showed good growth in the first half of 2010.

The amount of land used for spring crops was 1.05 million hectares, an increase of 0.7 percent from 2009.

The area planted in cotton was 467,513 hectares, an increase of 0.4 percent.

The area planted in grain was 266,960 hectares, or 9 percent less, with the amount of land in wheat 50.3 percent smaller than last year, at 57,333 hectares.

The summer grain output was 1.02 million tons, a decrease of 17.5 percent.

Beet production saw a year-on-year increase of 27.2 percent, tomatoes, 10.9 percent, and peppers, 24 percent.

In the first half of 2010, saw the number of the XPCC's livestock grow 13.1 percent year-on-year, or 11 percentage points higher than that for 2009 because of preferential policies.

Milk output was up 10.2 percent, eggs, 4.7 percent, and wool 20.7 percent.

Fruit production also improved, with 49,333 hectares of new orchards, 40,000 hectares of jujubes, and 6,667 hectares of grapes.

Techniques

XPCC improved its modern agriculture technology.

Cotton covered a 406,667-hectare area, or 87 percent of the total cotton growing area. Mechanized cotton covered 193,333 hectares, or 41 percent of the total XPCC area.

There were 1,251 livestock breeding areas with considerable scale of 32,000 households involved.

The livestock breeding reached 66 percent of the total breeding target in the first of 2010.

The total greenhouse area for vegetables covered 4,333 hectares.

XPCC was able to use policies that supported agriculture and benefited farmers, so that farmers got 210 million yuan in subsidies in all



A glance of the Tianye Group of XPCC, a major contributor of local GDP.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE INFORMATION OFFICE OF XPCC

for the first half of 2010.

Industry

In the first half of 2010, the increased industrial value of XPCC reached 6.82 billion yuan, for a year-on-year increase of 20.6 percent.

This was characterized by the following developments:

First, production and marketing was good. In the second quarter, industrial production fluctuations decreased, and the rate of production and sales, from April to June, was steady at around 98 percent compared with some time period.

XPCC enterprises transported 1.3 million tons of cargo out of Xinjiang, a 17.9 percent increase year-on-year.

Second, XPCC's profits were up. In the first half, industrial enterprises had profits of 1.12 billion yuan, an increase of 489 million yuan from the same 2009 period.

Seventeen XPCC industries

saw a big increase in economic profits by 212 million yuan, textiles, 188 million yuan, and electric power, 114 million yuan.

Third, output of key products saw a big increase.

The production of ketchup, sugar, viscose, and four other items increased more than 50 percent. Coal, coke, cotton, cement, and three other items were up more than 20 percent.

Fourth, dominant industries did well.

Industries like foodstuff, beverages, textiles, clothing, energy, and construction had an added-value output worth 4.06 billion yuan. They accounted for 84 percent of XPCC's total added value.

Trade, tourism

In the first half, total imports and exports amounted to \$2.48 billion, an increase of 22.2 percent over the same 2009 period.

Ketchup, vegetable and fruit showed robust growth.

The transport industry also developed rapidly.

The tourism industry also saw its growth recover, in the first half. The "Tulip Festival" in Wujiaqu, and the "Army Reclamation Cultural Festival" in Shihezi were high points in tourism.

Investment

In the first half, fixed assets investment in XPCC was worth 13.08 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 52.1 percent.

Fixed assets investment mainly involved three things.

First, investment in industries was up sharply, reaching 7.77 billion yuan, or 1.33 times the 2009 figure, thanks to a number of key projects.

Second, there was plenty of funding for construction projects.

Funds for this area in the

first half of 2010 reached 15.5 billion yuan, an increase of 40.3 percent.

Third, work on key projects made progress. The first phase construction of a coal-fired electrical plant was completed. Ninety-eight percent of the construction of the Xinjiang Tianye Group's PVC project was finished.

In addition, there was a cement production project in Wusu, an Yilite coke production project, and a textile project of Tiansheng Co Ltd.

Livelihood

XPCC had various preferential policies to help laid-off workers and jobless people.

By the end of June, some 34,000 new jobs were created, meeting 67.9 percent of the year's target figure.

There were 22,000 surplus rural laborers transferred, or 88 percent of the year's target.

Incomes of XPCC's city

dwellers, farmers and herdsmen increased, with disposable incomes of urban residents, from January to June, reaching 7,367 yuan per capita, and increase of 10.7 percent year on year.

Per capita incomes of farmers and herdsmen reached 2,032 yuan, up 9.6 percent. Social security coverage and other forms of insurance continued to expand.

All parts of XPCC had basic public health coverage and infectious disease prevention and control programs were started.

Culture, radio, and TV also developed rapidly, and work on a project to build 2,000 recreation and sports centers on farms began.

In addition, by the end of May, XPCC began looking at building kindergartens and nursing homes for children and the elderly on farms.



A sharp comparison of desert and "green land" built by the hardworking people of XPCC.

50 years of modernizing agriculture

By MAO WEIHUA AND SHAO WEI

URUMQI — The total agricultural production of the XPCC, in 2009, was worth 43.4 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 7 percent.

The added value output amounted to 20.5 billion yuan, an increase of 7 percent.

Per capita net income of farmers and herdsmen of the XPCC reached 7,668 yuan, a 13.3-percent increase, year-on-year.

By the end of 2009, the XPCC had 1.04 million hectares of arable land, 30,000 hectares of forested area, and 2.4 million hectares of pastures.

It also had 125 reservoirs and 10.75 billion cubic meters of surface water. The underground water was figured at 1.63 billion cu m.

By the end of 2009, the XPCC had 412,800 people working in agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, the food and beverage sector, and fisheries, or a decrease of two percent from 2008.

In 2007, the State Council asked the XPCC to set up a water-saving irrigation base, agricultural mechanization base, and a modern agriculture base as national models.

So, the XPCC established goals for these promotion and demonstration areas. It plans to change from an economy

dominated by agriculture to one dominated by industry by the end of 12th Five-Year Plan period (2011-2015).

By that time, the income from livestock, gardening, vegetable and fruit industries will account for 50 percent of the total value of agricultural production.

The processing rate of agricultural products will increase to 60 percent from the current 20 percent.

Cotton output is expected to top 1 million tons at the end of 2015 and to account for one-sixth of China's total cotton output.

The grain production capacity is expected to reach more than 3.5 million tons.

The XPCC's contribution to modern agricultural science and technology is expected to reach 70 percent to the modernizing agriculture, ranking at the top in the nation.

Farm mechanization will have reached 92 percent of the XPCC's farmland by the end of 2015.

Per capita net income of farmers and herdsmen is expected to reach 10,000 yuan in 2015, an average increase of nearly 10 percent from 2010 to 2015.

The XPCC has tried to modernize its agriculture, and its water-saving methods are a good example of its work.

Growing rice on dry land

is not easy, especially with drip irrigation system, but the XPCC's Xinjiang Tianye Group has performed miracles in this, with a bumper harvest this month.

The company has a park with 27 hectares of dry ground for a rice paddy, crisscrossed with pipes that irrigate the crops automatically.

"Average rice output per hectare is 11,085 kg, while the amount of water for irrigation is 60 percent less than in traditional rice growing," said Guo Qingren, the Tianye Group's chairman.

This environmental theme park is the epitome of efficient irrigation technology. Previously, it was used just for cotton, but is now being used for other crops grown by the XPCC, such as corn and red jujubes.

Development path

The XPCC, which founded in 1954, had 175 farms in 14 divisions and a population of 2.57 million living and working in the land area administrated by the organization, at the end of 2009.

The majority of its farms are located on the edge of deserts or border areas where water is in scarce supply, so it has been determined to popularize a more efficient use of irrigation in its reclamation farms, since 1980s.

Forestation holds back the encroaching desert

By SHAO WEI

SHIHEZI, Xinjiang — The Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC), known as Bingtuan, is a quasi-military, governmental organization in the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region.

After the State started its western development program in 1999, the XPCC has tried to be an "ecological warrior" and increased forestation on 242,000 hectares in the Gobi desert.

As the Xinjiang Tianye Group, a flagship enterprise of the XPCC, and the city of Shihezi, the birthplace of the XPCC, were designated part of a national circular economy pilot project.

The recycled use of industrial solid waste in 2010 increases by 30 percentage points over 1999, and the recycling of industrial waste water increases by 25 percentage points.

Environmental protection has improved both the working and living conditions of XPCC.

In its early days, under a principle of "not competing for benefits with the local people", the XPCC worked on water conservation and reclaimed wasteland along the northern and southern edges of the Tianshan Mountains under adverse conditions.

The group has 88 stock breeding farms on the rim of the Taklimakan and Gurbantungut deserts, 58 farms scattered along 2,000 km of borders with Tajikistan, Russia, and other countries, as well as others in the Gobi Desert, putting it on the frontline against the encroaching sand.

Over the past decade, the XPCC has had a principle of "development in protection and protection in development" and has combined resource development and protection, environmental construction and economic development, and ecosystems in an optimal way.

The organization concentrated on building farm-shelter forestation in a series of projects in the Taklimakan Desert and Junggar Basin.

The production and construction corporation also took part key State- and provincial-level water conservation projects, rebuilt 97 reservoirs, and completed work on 20 large-scale irrigation projects to build a solid foundation for environmental improvements and sustainable development.

Through 10 years of efforts, the XPCC has established a green belt that covers 134 farms and more than 80 percent of its farmland in demonstrating its mission — "not only a warrior at the borders, but also one for environmental protection".

The Taklimakan is China's largest desert and the world's second largest. In the past, Taklimakan was only two kilometers from the Kumtag Desert.

But, XPCC's shelterbelts, running for hundreds of kilometers, have stopped the possible joining of the two deserts and have had a significant effect on the local climate and environment.

In 2003, after half a century

of droughts, a wetland area in the Gurbantungut Desert began to reappear.

The Gurbantungut, in Xinjiang, is China's second largest desert.

The wetland covers more than 100 sq km, stretching from Manas Lake in the south to the heart of the desert, and joining eight small lakes.

Some animals and plants that had disappeared, such as the rose willow, Mongolian gazelle, and wolves, can be seen there again.

Manas Lake used to cover a more than 1,000-sq-km area when it flooded, but the lower reaches dried out in the 1960s because of the encroaching people and farmland.

The XPCC has made an effort to revive the area by transferring more than 1 billion cubic meters of water via channels to Manas Lake each year.

The wetland and improved ecology has benefited the cities of Urumqi, Karamay and Shihezi, where sand storms come less frequently.



Shihezi, a key city in Xinjiang, enjoys rapid development and is a prime example of the construction effort of XPCC.