MODEL CHARTER OF THE AGRICULTURAL ARTEL

Adopted by the Second All-Union Congress of Collective Farm Shock Workers and approved by the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on 17 February 1935.

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Adopted by the Second All-Union Congress of Collective Farm Shock Workers and approved by the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on 17 February 1935.

I. PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES

Article 1

The working peasants of a village, stanitsa, settlement, hamlet, kishlak, or aul of _____ District voluntarily unite in an Agricultural Artel in order, through common means of production and organized collective labor, to establish a collective, that is, socialized economy; to secure the complete victory over the kulak, over all exploiters and enemies of the working people; to overcome poverty, ignorance, and the backwardness of small individual farming; to achieve high labor productivity; and thereby to provide a better life for collective farmers.

The collective-farm path, the path of socialism, is the only correct path for working peasants. Members of the Artel undertake to strengthen their Artel, to work honestly, to distribute collective-farm income according to labor performed, to protect public property, to safeguard collective-farm assets, to maintain tractors and machinery, to ensure proper care of horses, and to fulfill the tasks assigned by their workers' and peasants' state, thereby making their collective farm Bolshevik in character and all collective farmers prosperous.

II. LAND

Article 2

All boundaries that formerly separated the land allotments of Artel members are abolished, and all field allotments are merged into a single land area held in collective use by the Artel.

The land occupied by the Artel, like all other land in the USSR, constitutes state property belonging to the whole people. In accordance with the laws of the workers' and peasants' state, it is assigned to the Artel for permanent use in perpetuity and may neither be bought nor sold, nor leased by the Artel.

Each Artel is issued by the District Executive Committee of Soviets a state deed granting permanent use of the land. This deed establishes the exact size and boundaries of the land held by the Artel. Reduction of these lands is not permitted. They may only be enlarged through the addition of unused state lands or surplus lands occupied by individual farmers, provided that strip farming and scattered plots are eliminated.

From the socialized lands there shall be allotted to each collective-farm household a small plot for personal use in the form of a household garden and orchard.

The size of such household land, excluding the land occupied by residential buildings, may range from one-quarter to one-half hectare, and in certain regions up to one hectare, depending upon local conditions established by the People's Commissariats of Agriculture of the Union Republics in

accordance with directives of the People's Commissariat of Agriculture of the USSR.

Article 3

The unified land area of the Artel may under no circumstances be reduced. Former members leaving the Artel may not receive land from the Artel's land holdings. Those departing from the Artel may obtain land only from unused state land reserves.

Artel lands shall be divided into fields in accordance with the approved crop-rotation plan. Under the crop-rotation system, each field-crop brigade shall be permanently assigned a specific tract of land for the duration of the crop-rotation cycle.

In collective farms possessing large livestock enterprises, and where sufficient land exists, specific plots may be assigned to such farms for the cultivation of fodder crops necessary for livestock operations.

III. MEANS OF PRODUCTION

Article 4

The following property shall be socialized:

- all draft animals;
- agricultural implements and equipment (plows, seed drills, harrows, threshers, mowers);
- seed reserves;
- fodder supplies required to maintain socialized livestock;
- farm buildings necessary for collective operations; and

- all enterprises engaged in processing agricultural products.

The following shall not be socialized and shall remain in the personal use of the collective-farm household:

- residential buildings;
- personally owned livestock and poultry;
- outbuildings necessary for maintaining privately owned livestock.

When agricultural equipment is socialized, small implements necessary for work on household plots remain in the personal use of Artel members.

The Board of the Artel may, when necessary, allocate several horses from the socialized stock for the personal needs of members on a fee-paying basis.

The Artel shall organize a mixed commercial livestock farm or, where livestock numbers warrant, several specialized livestock farms.

Article 5

In grain-growing, cotton-growing, sugar-beet, flax, hemp, potato-vegetable, tea, and tobacco regions, each collective-farm household may keep for personal use:

- one cow;
- up to two head of young cattle;
- one breeding sow with offspring, or, where deemed necessary by the collective farm's administration, two breeding sows with offspring;
- up to ten sheep and goats combined;
- an unlimited number of poultry and rabbits; and

- up to twenty beehives.

In agricultural regions with highly developed livestock raising, each household may keep:

- two to three cows plus young stock;
- two to three breeding sows with offspring;
- twenty to twenty-five sheep and goats combined;
- an unlimited number of poultry and rabbits; and
- up to twenty beehives.

In regions of settled or semi-nomadic livestock husbandry, where crop cultivation is of limited importance and livestock raising plays the principal economic role, each household may keep:

- four to five cows plus young stock;
- thirty to forty sheep and goats combined;
- two to three breeding sows with offspring;
- an unlimited number of poultry and rabbits;
- up to twenty beehives; and
- one horse, or one mare used for kumis production, or two camels, or two donkeys, or two mules.

In regions of nomadic livestock husbandry, where agriculture is of almost no significance and livestock husbandry constitutes the dominant economic activity, each household may keep:

- eight to ten cows plus young stock;
- one hundred to one hundred and fifty sheep and goats combined;
- an unlimited number of poultry;
- up to ten horses; and
- five to eight camels.

IV. ACTIVITIES OF THE ARTEL AND ITS ADMINISTRATION

Article 6

The Artel is obligated to conduct its collective economy according to a plan, strictly observing the agricultural production plans established by the organs of the workers' and peasants' government and fulfilling all obligations of the Artel to the state.

The Artel shall faithfully carry out:

- sowing plans;
- fallow cultivation plans;
- inter-row cultivation programs;
- harvesting and threshing plans;
- autumn plowing plans; and
- the state plan for the development of livestock husbandry.

These plans shall be developed with due regard for the particular conditions and characteristics of each collective farm.

The Board and all members of the Artel undertake the following obligations:

(a) Increase Crop Yields

To raise the productivity of collective-farm fields by:

- introducing and observing proper crop rotation;
- deep plowing;
- eliminating weeds;
- expanding and properly cultivating fallow lands;

- carrying out timely and thorough inter-row cultivation of industrial crops;
- timely hilling of cotton;
- applying manure from both collective livestock farms and individual households;
- using mineral fertilizers;
- combating agricultural pests;
- ensuring timely and careful harvesting without losses;
- maintaining and protecting irrigation systems;
- protecting forests;
- planting shelterbelts and windbreaks; and
- strictly observing all agricultural regulations established by local land authorities.

(b) Improve Seed Quality

To select the best seeds for sowing, clean them of impurities, protect them from theft and spoilage, store them carefully in clean and well-ventilated facilities, and expand the use of improved varietal seed stock.

(c) Expand Cultivated Acreage

To increase cultivated land by:

- utilizing all land available to the Artel;
- reclaiming and improving neglected land;
- bringing virgin land under cultivation; and
- carrying out internal land reorganization within the collective farm.

(d) Make Full Use of Collective Resources

To employ fully and collectively:

- all available draft power;

- all implements and agricultural equipment;
- all seed reserves and other means of production belonging to the Artel;

and likewise all tractors, engines, threshers, combines, and other machinery supplied by the workers' and peasants' state through the Machine-Tractor Stations (MTS) to assist collective farms.

The Artel shall also ensure proper maintenance of all socialized livestock and equipment so that collective property remains in good condition.

(e) Develop Livestock Husbandry

To organize livestock farms and, where feasible, horse-breeding farms; to increase herd size; to improve livestock breeds and productivity; and to provide assistance to members who conscientiously participate in collective production by helping them acquire cows and small livestock.

The Artel shall make breeding stock available not only for collective-farm herds but also for livestock privately owned by members, while observing all established veterinary and zootechnical regulations.

(f) Expand Feed Production

To increase the production of fodder, improve meadows and pasturelands, and assist members who work conscientiously in collective production by:

- permitting use of collective-farm pastures wherever possible; and
- when feasible, allocating fodder, credited against labor-days, for livestock privately owned by members.

(g) Develop Other Branches of Production

To promote all other branches of agricultural production appropriate to local natural conditions, as well as handicraft industries suited to regional circumstances.

The Artel shall also:

- preserve and clean existing ponds;
- construct new ponds when practical; and
- establish fish-farming operations within them.

(h) Carry Out Collective Construction

To organize, on a cooperative basis, the construction of:

- agricultural buildings; and
- public-use buildings serving the collective farm community.

(i) Improve Members' Skills and Training

To raise the professional qualifications of members and assist in training:

- brigade leaders;
- tractor operators;
- combine-harvester operators;
- drivers;
- veterinary assistants;
- livestock attendants;
- horse keepers;
- pig breeders;
- cattle tenders;
- shepherds;
- herdsmen; and
- workers for rural laboratories and technical facilities.

(k) Raise Cultural and Living Standards

To improve the cultural level of Artel members by promoting:

- newspapers;
- books;
- radio;
- cinema;
- clubs;
- libraries; and
- reading rooms.

The Artel shall also strive to:

- establish bathhouses and barber shops;
- provide clean and comfortable field camps for seasonal workers;
- improve village streets;
- plant trees along roads, especially fruit trees; and
- assist collective farmers in improving and beautifying their homes.

(l) Promote Women's Participation

To involve women fully in collective production and in the public life of the Artel, advancing capable and experienced women collective farmers into leadership positions.

The Artel shall also seek to relieve women of domestic burdens by establishing:

- nurseries;
- children's playgrounds; and
- similar social facilities.

V. MEMBERSHIP

Article 7

Admission to membership in the Artel shall be decided by the General Meeting of members, which approves the list of new members submitted by the Board.

All working people, both women and men, who have reached the age of sixteen may join the Artel.

Kulaks and persons deprived of voting rights shall not be admitted to membership.

Exceptions

Exceptions to this rule may be made:

(a) for children of disenfranchised persons who, over a number of years, have engaged in socially useful labor and worked conscientiously; and

(b) for former kulaks and members of their families who were exiled for anti-Soviet or anti-collective-farm activities but who, in their places of resettlement, have demonstrated during a period of three years through honest labor and support of Soviet policies that they have reformed.

Individual peasants who sold their horses within the two years preceding admission to the Artel and who possess no seed reserves may be admitted only on condition that they undertake to reimburse, from future earnings and over a period of up to six years, the value of the horse and to provide seed in kind.

Article 8

A member may be expelled from the Artel only by decision of a General Meeting at which not less than two-thirds of the total membership is present.

The minutes of the meeting must record both:

- the number of collective farmers present; and
- the number voting in favor of expulsion.

If the expelled member appeals to the District Executive Committee of Soviets, the matter shall be decided finally by the Presidium of the District Executive Committee in the presence of both:

- the chairman of the Artel's Board; and
- the appellant.

VI. FUNDS AND PROPERTY OF THE ARTEL

Article 9

Persons joining the Artel shall pay a monetary entrance fee of 20 to 40 rubles per household, depending on the economic strength of their farm.

All entrance fees shall be credited to the indivisible fund of the Artel.

Article 10

Of the value of the property socialized upon entry into the Artel, including draft animals, tools, implements, farm buildings, and similar assets, from one-quarter to one-half shall

be credited to the indivisible fund of the Artel. The larger percentage is to be applied to wealthier households.

The remaining value shall be credited as the member's share contribution.

When a member leaves the Artel, the Board shall settle accounts and return the member's share contribution in money. Any land allotment granted to the departing member must be located outside the land area of the Artel. As a rule, settlement is made only at the end of the agricultural year.

Article 11

From the harvest and livestock products obtained by the Artel, the following order of distribution shall apply.

(a) Obligations to the State

The Artel shall:

- fulfill state delivery quotas;
- repay seed loans;
- compensate the Machine-Tractor Station (MTS) in kind under the legally binding contract concluded with it; and
- fulfill obligations arising from state procurement contracts.

(b) Seed and Feed Funds

The Artel shall set aside:

- seed for the next sowing season;
- fodder sufficient for annual livestock needs;

and shall create inviolable reserve seed and fodder funds, renewed annually, amounting to 10-15 percent of annual

requirements as protection against crop failure and livestock-feed shortages.

(c) Welfare Funds

By decision of the General Meeting, the Artel may establish assistance funds for:

- disabled persons;
- elderly persons;
- members temporarily unable to work;
- needy families of Red Army servicemen;
- children's nurseries; and
- orphans.

Such funds shall not exceed 2 percent of gross production.

(d) Marketed Production

The Artel shall allocate such quantities of produce as are determined by the General Meeting for sale either to the state or on the open market.

(e) Distribution to Members

All remaining harvests and livestock products shall be distributed among members in accordance with the number of labor-days (trudodni) earned by each member.

Article 12

From the monetary income received by the Artel, the following expenditures shall be made.

(a) Taxes and Financial Obligations

The Artel shall, as a first priority:

- pay all taxes prescribed by law;
- make insurance payments; and

- repay monetary loans.

(b) Production Expenses

The Artel shall meet necessary production expenses, including:

- repair of agricultural equipment;
- veterinary treatment of livestock; and
- pest-control measures.

(c) Administrative Expenses

Administrative and operating expenses of the Artel shall be covered, but shall not exceed 2 percent of monetary income.

(d) Cultural and Social Expenditures

Funds may be allocated for:

- training collective-farm personnel;
- organizing nurseries and children's playgrounds;
- installation of radio services; and
- similar cultural and educational needs.

(e) Replenishment of the Indivisible Fund

The indivisible fund shall be replenished to finance:

- purchase of agricultural implements;
- acquisition of livestock;
- purchase of construction materials; and
- payment of outside labor hired for construction work.

Contributions to the indivisible fund shall be:

- 12-15 percent of monetary income in grain-producing regions; and
- 15-20 percent in regions specializing in industrial crops or livestock production.

(f) Distribution of Remaining Monetary Income

All remaining monetary income shall be distributed among members according to the number of labor-days earned.

Financial Administration

All income received by the Artel must be recorded no later than the day of receipt.

A yearly budget shall be prepared covering both income and expenditures. It becomes effective only after approval by the General Meeting.

The Board may spend funds only for purposes included in the approved budget. It may not transfer funds from one budget category to another without authorization from the General Meeting.

Before the harvest outlook is finally known, the Board may spend no more than 70 percent of the production expenditures authorized in the annual budget. The remaining 30 percent shall be held in reserve and may be spent only after the harvest outlook has been determined and the General Meeting has approved such expenditures.

The Artel's available funds shall be kept in its current account at a bank or savings institution. Withdrawals may be made only by order of the Board and require the signatures of both the chairman and the accountant.

VII. ORGANISATION, REMUNERATION, AND LABOUR DISCIPLINE

Article 13

All work in the economy of the Artel shall be performed through the personal labor of its members in accordance with internal regulations adopted by the General Meeting.

The hiring of labor for agricultural work is permitted only in the case of persons possessing specialized qualifications or technical expertise, such as:

- agronomists,
- engineers,
- technicians, and similar specialists.

The hiring of temporary workers is permitted only in exceptional circumstances, when urgent work cannot be completed within the required time by Artel members despite their full utilization, or where construction projects require additional labor.

Article 14

The Board shall organize members of the Artel into production brigades (work teams).

Field-crop brigades shall be established for a term of not less than one complete crop-rotation cycle. Each brigade shall be assigned specific land parcels within the crop-rotation system for the duration of that cycle.

By formal act of assignment, the administration of the collective farm shall allocate to each field brigade all equipment, draft animals, and farm buildings necessary for its work.

Livestock brigades shall be established for terms of not less than three years. They shall be assigned productive livestock, necessary equipment, draft power, and livestock buildings.

Work shall be distributed among members directly by the brigade leader, who is obligated to make the best possible use of every worker. In assigning work, no favoritism, nepotism, or family preference shall be permitted. Instead, assignments shall be based on:

- occupational skill,
- experience,
- physical capacity, and
- the needs of the Artel.

Special consideration shall be given to pregnant and nursing women.

Women shall be relieved from work:

- one month before childbirth; and
- one month after childbirth.

During those two months they shall continue to receive support equal to one-half of their average labor-day earnings.

Article 15

Agricultural work in the Artel shall be organized on a piece-rate basis.

For every category of agricultural work, the Board shall establish work norms and labor-day ratings, subject to approval by the General Meeting of collective farmers.

Work norms shall be set at a level attainable by a conscientious worker, taking into account:

- the condition of draft animals,
- machinery,
- equipment, and
- soil conditions.

Every task shall be assigned a value in labor-days according to:

- the qualification required,
- complexity,
- difficulty, and
- importance of the work to the Artel.

Examples include:

- plowing one hectare,
- sowing one hectare,
- cultivating one hectare of cotton,
- threshing one metric ton of grain,
- harvesting one centner of sugar beets,
- pulling one hectare of flax,
- retting one hectare of flax,
- producing a liter of milk,
- and similar agricultural operations.

At least once each week, the brigade leader shall calculate the work performed by each member and record the corresponding number of labor-days in the worker's labor book.

The Board shall publish monthly lists showing the number of labor-days earned by every member during the preceding month.

Annual totals of work and income must be certified not only by the accountant but also by both:

- the brigade leader; and
- the chairman of the Artel.

A list showing the number of labor-days credited to each member shall be publicly displayed no later than two weeks before the General Meeting that approves the distribution of income.

Incentive Payments

Where a field brigade, through superior work, produces yields above the collective-farm average from its assigned land, or where a livestock brigade achieves:

- higher milk yields,
- better livestock condition,
- superior preservation of young animals,

the Board may award bonus income credits:

- up to 10 percent of labor-days earned for all brigade members;
- up to 15 percent for outstanding shock workers within the brigade;
- up to 20 percent for brigade leaders and livestock-farm managers.

Deductions for Poor Performance

Where a field brigade obtains below-average yields because of poor performance, or where a livestock brigade produces below-average results in milk production, livestock condition, or preservation of young animals, the Board may deduct up to 10 percent of the labor-days earned by all members of that brigade.

Income of the Artel shall be distributed exclusively according to the number of labor-days earned by each member.

Article 16

A member may receive cash advances during the year in an amount not exceeding 50 percent of the earnings due for work performed.

Advances in kind shall be issued beginning with the grain-threshing season from the 10-15 percent of harvested grain set aside for internal collective-farm needs.

In collective farms specializing in industrial crops, monetary advances need not await completion of deliveries to the state. As products such as:

- cotton,
- flax,
- hemp,
- sugar beets,
- tea,
- tobacco,

and similar products are delivered, members shall receive payments at least once weekly equal to 60 percent of the money received by the Artel for the delivered products.

Article 17

Every member of the Artel is obligated to:

- safeguard collective-farm property;
- safeguard state-owned machines working on collective-farm land;
- work honestly;

- obey the Charter;
- obey decisions of the General Meeting and the Board;
- observe internal regulations;
- conscientiously carry out assignments given by the Board and brigade leaders; and
- strictly maintain labor discipline.

For negligent management of collective property, unjustified absence from work, poor-quality work, or other violations of labor discipline and the Charter, the Board may impose penalties, including:

- requiring defective work to be redone without labor-day credit;
- warnings;
- reprimands;
- public criticism before the General Meeting;
- placement on the "black board" (public list of offenders);
- fines of up to five labor-days;
- transfer to lower work assignments; and
- temporary suspension from work.

Where all corrective and disciplinary measures prove ineffective, the Board may submit to the General Meeting a proposal to expel the offender from the Artel. Expulsion shall be carried out according to the procedure established in Article 8 of this Charter.

Article 18

Any theft of collective-farm or state property, or any deliberate damage to the property, livestock, or machinery of the Artel or the Machine-Tractor Stations, shall be regarded by the Artel as

a betrayal of the common cause of the collective farm and as assistance to the enemies of the people.

Persons guilty of such criminal acts undermining the foundations of the collective-farm system shall be turned over to the courts for punishment to the fullest extent of the laws of the workers' and peasants' state.

VIII. ADMINISTRATIPN OF THE AFFAIRS OR THE ARTEL

Article 19

The affairs of the Artel shall be administered by the General Meeting of Members of the Artel, and in the intervals between General Meetings by the Board elected by the General Meeting.

Article 20

The General Meeting shall be the supreme governing authority of the Artel.

The General Meeting shall:

(a) Elect Officials

Elect:

- the Chairman of the Artel;
- the Board of the Artel; and
- the Audit Commission.

The Audit Commission shall be subject to approval by the District Executive Committee of Soviets.

(b) Membership Decisions

Admit new members and expel members from the Artel.

(c) Economic Planning

Approve:

- the annual production plan;
- the income-and-expenditure budget;
- the construction plan;
- labor norms; and
- labor-day work ratings.

(d) Machine-Tractor Station Agreements

Approve contracts concluded with the Machine-Tractor Station (MTS).

(e) Reports and Accountability

Approve the annual report of the Board, accompanied by the mandatory opinion of the Audit Commission, as well as reports concerning major agricultural campaigns.

(f) Funds and Labor-Day Distribution

Determine:

- the size of the various funds of the Artel; and
- the quantity of products and money to be distributed per labor-day.

(g) Internal Regulations

Approve the internal rules governing the Artel.

No decision of the Board concerning any of the matters listed above shall be valid unless approved by the General Meeting.

Quorum and Voting

The General Meeting shall be valid with the attendance of at least one-half of the total membership for ordinary business.

For decisions involving:

- election of the Chairman or Board,
- expulsion of members, or
- determination of the size of the various funds,

attendance of at least two-thirds of the entire membership shall be required.

Decisions shall be adopted by a majority vote through open voting.

Article 21

For the conduct of the affairs of the Artel, the General Meeting shall elect a Board for a term of two years. The Board shall consist of five to nine members, depending upon the size of the Artel.

The Board shall serve as the executive organ of the Artel and shall be accountable to the General Meeting for:

- the operation of the Artel; and
- fulfillment of the Artel's obligations to the state.

Article 22

For the day-to-day management of the Artel and its brigades, and for the supervision of implementation of Board decisions, the General Meeting shall elect a Chairman of the Artel. The Chairman shall simultaneously serve as Chairman of the Board.

The Chairman is required to convene meetings of the Board at least twice each month for the discussion of current affairs and the adoption of necessary decisions.

To assist the Chairman, the Board shall elect a Deputy Chairman from among its members upon nomination by the Chairman.

The Deputy Chairman shall perform all duties in accordance with the directions of the Chairman.

Article 23

Brigade leaders and managers of livestock farms shall be appointed by the Board of the Artel for terms of not less than two years.

Article 24

For bookkeeping and the accounting of property, the Board shall either appoint a member of the Artel or employ an accountant.

The accountant shall maintain accounts and records in the prescribed form and shall be entirely subordinate to the Board and to the Chairman of the Artel.

The accountant shall possess no independent authority to:

- dispose of Artel funds;
- issue advances; or
- distribute products from the Artel's funds.

Such powers shall belong exclusively to:

- the Board; and
- the Chairman of the Artel.

All expenditure documents must bear, in addition to the accountant's signature, the signature of either:

- the Chairman; or
- the Deputy Chairman.

Article 25

The Audit Commission shall examine the entire economic and financial activity of the Board. It shall verify:

- whether all monetary and material receipts have been properly entered into the accounts of the Artel;
- whether the procedures established by the Charter for expenditures are being observed;
- whether the property of the Artel is adequately safeguarded;
- whether thefts or misappropriations of property or funds have occurred;
- how the Artel fulfills its obligations to the state;
- how it meets its own debts; and
- how it collects debts owed to the Artel.

The Audit Commission shall also carefully examine all settlements between the Artel and its members, identifying:

- any inaccurate accounting;
- any improper crediting of labor-days;
- any delays in labor-day settlements; and
- any other violations of the interests of the Artel or its members.

The Audit Commission shall conduct audits four times each year.

When the Board presents its annual report to the General Meeting, the Audit Commission shall immediately thereafter present its own findings and conclusions. The audit report shall be approved by the General Meeting.

In all its activities, the Audit Commission shall be accountable directly to the General Meeting of members of the Artel.