

Three main strategies have been developed to achieve these broad goals:

1. To become more efficient in its economic development efforts by improving and utilizing human and natural resources, science and technology, management and administration.
2. Address the income disparities in the regional areas by improving the efficiency in rural and urban management.
3. To diversify production and marketing structures in conjunction with market demand and the availability of resources. This strategy is in response to the decline in the role of the major agricultural commodities. The Sixth Plan is promoting 161 agricultural commodities and 38 industrial commodities. Incentives and investment promotion plans have been implemented to attract investors to move to the new economic zones outside of Bangkok.

Due to fluctuating prices and uncertain conditions in the markets for agricultural products and limited farmland, Thailand has been forced to develop a new strategy for agricultural development to maintain its rapid growth. The Sixth Five-Year Plan is to diversify production from traditional export commodities to non-traditional agricultural crops with import-substitution, export and industry development. The government has encouraged private sector involvement in production, processing, marketing and trade of non-traditional agricultural commodities with minimal government intervention.

The government is following a restructuring of the domestic production system so that the risks which arise from market instability in traditional exports, such as maize, tapioca and rubber are reduced. Priority has been awarded to marketing and restructuring the production system in manufacturing and processing of agro-industrial products.

The strategy is concerned with production that responds to foreign market demands and product quality. This strategy will be continued in the 7th NESDP (1992-1996), where agro-industry will continue to receive high priority.

The focus of the 7th Plan will be on domestic issues as the economy begins to slow down, such as the environment, jobs, education, health, transportation, infrastructure and income distribution. Development priorities will be to decentralize from Bangkok to improve the domestic market and facilitate a more stable manufacturing base.

As the agricultural labour force declines and migrates to the industrial sector, the agricultural sector production pattern will change from small, labour intensive farming to mechanized farming on larger plots of land.

The fundamental adjustment necessary for continued growth remains the reduction of the emphasis on primary agricultural activity, focussing on the expanding role of the manufacturing industries to generate employment and export income.