ANNEXURE VI

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIRST WORKING GROUP ON "TAKING CONSUMER MOVEMENT TO RURAL AREAS"

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Rural areas comprise and is dependent mostly on agriculture. It is necessary that villagers are protected from and are provided with definite strength to counteract the exploitation. The main exploitation is in the field of pesticides, seeds, supply of fuel, electricity, fertilizers and agricultural machinery and the problems relating to underweighment. The following suggestions have been made by the Group to overcome the hardships being faced by the villagers and to educate them to have a better life.

Each consumer organisation should make it a point to adopt at least 10 to 20 villages. The Panchayat members and the women workers should be involved in this work. Farmers generally do not get reasonable prices of their crops. the rural masses have to be trained to look after their interest with self-help. As all human beings are consumers in one form or the other, so is the farmer. As such, the villagers are also to be educated about redressal of their grievances.

Cottage industries and handicrafts should be given proper encouragement so that the villagers do not run towards towns/cities for want of sufficient work and income.

Vigilance committees for ensuring that consumer rights are protected should be set up and Government officials should hold regular meetings of the vigilance committees for understanding consumers problems and to take action for speedy and effective redressal.