

CHAPTER- 9

HORTICULTURE

9.1 India's diverse climate ensures availability of all varieties of fresh fruits & vegetables. India is one of the potential suppliers in the global organic market. Various categories of organic food products are exported under NPOP and NOP certification. India has witnessed voluminous increase in horticulture production over the last few years. Significant progress has been made in area expansion resulting in higher production. Apart from the health improvements, the production of vegetables improves the economy of a country as these are very good source of income and employment. The scenario of horticultural crops in India has become very encouraging. The percentage share of horticulture output in agriculture has become more than 30%. Under the purview of agriculture and allied activities, the share of plan outlay for horticulture which was 3.9% during Ninth Five Year Plan, has increased to 4.6% during the Twelfth Plan.

9.2 It is a matter of satisfaction, we are second largest producer of vegetables and fruits and our presence in global market is significant . The different types of fruits are exported to the outside world. The development achieved in the horticulture sector is indicative of the fact that there is growing demand for horticulture produce. The past experience have been rewarding for enhanced output from the investment. Availability of timely robust information in this sector will certainly improve the socioeconomic conditions of Indian citizens by providing self-reliance besides environmental protection. India is one of the potential suppliers in the global organic market. Various categories of organic food products are exported under NPOP and NOP certification. India has retained its status as the second largest producer of fruits in the world. The country is first in the production of fruits like mango, banana, sapota, pomegranate and anole. Vegetables are an important crop in horticulture sector.

9.3 Potentialities exist for cultivation of flowering plants. In addition to the beautification of the local landscape, great scope exists for export of flowers; and floriculture is important for bee-keeping industry which too provides an alternate source of income to the Indian farmers.

9.4 Government Initiatives: Keeping in view the importance of Horticulture sector, the Government of India has launched a centrally sponsored scheme called the **National Horticulture Mission (NHM) in 2005-06**. The objectives of the Mission were to enhance Horticulture production and improve Nutritional security and income support to farm households and others through area based regionally differentiated strategies. Crops such as fruits, spices, flowers, medicinal and aromatic plants, plantation crops of cashew and cocoa were included for area expansion whereas vegetables were covered through seed production cultivation, integrated Nutrient management, integrated pest management and organic farming.

9.5 Various Institutes like **Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI)**, Horticulture Wing in **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)**, **Indian Institute for Horticulture Research**, Bangalore, Agricultural universities etc have been continuously striving to improve the quality of the horticultural products as well as to increase their productivity.

9.6 Challenges before Horticulture Sector : The horticulture sector in India is characterized by small, segregated farms with low per-hectare yields and huge post-harvest losses, owing to outdated practices. Government is also taking steps to reduce food processing bottlenecks by augmenting processing and storage capabilities and making finance available.

9.7 Sources of Horticulture Data: Various components of Horticulture are dealt by different Departments/ Ministries. **Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare** brings out District wise production data for horticulture crops besides a Publication called **Handbook of Horticulture Statistics**. **The National Horticulture Board (NHB)** compiles and publishes annual data base for horticulture sector (**National Horticulture Database**) in respect of all the states and the crops. The publication contains data on exports of horticulture produce besides production area , production and yield of horticulture crops.**Various Boards like Rubber Board, Coffeee Board etc compile their own statistics.Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO)** maintains the information on area under cultivation of horticultural products, production & productivity for various countries in the world.

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