

Need to ensure focused attention for harnessing available potential through scaling up ongoing interventions- Shir Radha Mohan Singh

Horticulture becomes a key driver for economic development in many States: Shri Singh

India currently producing about 286 million tonnes of horticulture produce from an area of about 24.4 million hectare: Shri Singh

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Establishment of crop based Centre of Excellence being encouraged in each State: Shri Singh

Shri Radha Mohan Singh addresses Inter-Session Meeting of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee on Horticulture Development and Cold Chain

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The Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Radha Mohan Singh has said that there is tremendous potential for development of the horticulture sector and there is need to ensure focused attention for harnessing available potential through scaling up ongoing interventions. Shri Singh stated this today during the inter-session meeting of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, in New Delhi. The strategy for making Horticulture sector a key driver in transforming India's agrarian landscape by ensuring convergence between research institutions, state horticulture missions, livelihood programmes and entrepreneurship was also discussed during the meeting.

Shri Singh said that this session not only deliberate on the achievements and challenges facing the horticulture sector, including Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) but also discuss The Horticulture sector in our country refers to a wide variety of crops, including fruits, vegetables, tuber crops, mushroom, ornamental plants including cut flowers, spices, plantation crops, medicinal and aromatic plants and the sector has become a key driver for economic development in many states.

Agriculture Minister stated that India is currently producing about 286 million tonnes of horticulture produce from an area of about 24.4 million hectare, accounting for about 13 percent of the total world production of fruits and leads the world in the production of mango, banana, papaya, sapota, pomegranate, acid lime and aonla.

Shri Singh informed the session that India is the second largest producer of vegetables after China and is a leader in production of vegetables like peas and okra. Besides, India occupies the second position in production of brinjal, cabbage, cauliflower and onion and third in potato and tomato in the world. Special thrust is being given for production of vegetables under protected cultivation under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH).

The Minister said that there are numerous success stories, for example, banana in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, guava & tomato in Chatisgarh, pomegranate and mango in Gujarat, pineapple in Nagaland, kiwi in Arunachal and orchids in Sikkim, off season vegetables in Uttarakhand, etc - the challenge is to complement the sector with food processing, cold-chain agro logistics, agri-business, input related services, agricultural lending, insurance and value chain related services.

Shri Singh said that in case of Horticulture, cold-chain strengthens the total value chain system and enables socio-economic transformation of farmers. To double farmer's income, cold-chain plays an important role in ensuring that farmers can recover value from produce to result in gainful economic productivity.

Agriculture Minister said that it is equally essential to ensure the development of trained and skilled manpower and availability of quality planting material suitable to the local agro climatic conditions. Human resource development needs to be given thrust for capacity building of farmers, horticulture entrepreneurs/supervisors and field functionaries. Establishment of crop based Centres of Excellence is being encouraged in each state to serve as a hub for supply of planting material and dissemination of technology to farmers. So far 27 CoEs have been established with Indo-Israel collaboration and more are in the pipeline with collaboration with other countries.

The Minister hoped that deliberations of the In-Session Consultative Committee would help bring a clearer insight of the lead role that horticulture must play in improving livelihood options, diversification of agriculture, and higher income to farmers.

Shri Parshottam Rupala, the Minister of State for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Shri Sudarshan Bhagat, the Minister of State for Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, the Members of Parliament, Shri Chintaman Navsha Wanaga (Lok Sabha), Shri Kamala Devi Patle (Lok Sabha), Shri Manshankar Ninama (Lok Sabha), Shri Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel (Lok Sabha), Shri Rodmal Nagar (Lok Sabha), Shri Sanjay Shamrao Dhotre (Lok Sabha), Shri Sumedhanand Saraswati (Lok Sabha), and Dr. Tapas Mandal (Lok Sabha) attended the meeting.

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