

# Bihar is the top litchi producing State, about 300 thousand metric tonnes of litchi is being produced from 32 thousand hectare areas: Shri Radha Mohan Singh

## Scientists at BARC and National Research Centre on Litchi succeeds in treating litchi and preserving it for 60 days at low temperature: Shri Singh

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### **Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister inaugurates Litchi Processing Plant, Muzaffarpur, Bihar**

Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Radha Mohan Singh said that the main objective of the Central Government is focused on research to develop new varieties and techniques of litchi farming to increase its production and to share information with the Extension Division. Shri Singh said this at the inauguration and co-training of Litchi processing plant here.

Union Minister said that Bihar is the top litchi producing State in the country. In Bihar, about 300 thousand metric tonnes of litchi is being produced from 32 thousand hectares of area. Bihar's contribution in the production of litchi is about 40 percent. Considering the importance of litchi, National Research Centre on Litchi was established on June 6, 2001.

Shri Singh said that the contribution of Muzaffarpur district in litchi's production is impressive, but there is a need to increase the productivity of litchi, which is currently 8.0 tonne. For this, all the government institutions, cooperatives and farmers will have to come forward. Union Agriculture Minister said that it is a matter of immense pride that scientists at Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and National Research Centre on Litchi have succeeded in treating litchi and preserving it for 60 days at low temperature. One of its processing plants has also been developed. Shri Singh said that this technique will be useful for the litchi producers and businessmen. Shri Singh also said that to make this technique effective, litchi producers will have to produce superior quality fruits for which National Research Centre on Litchi has developed several techniques. The National Research Centre on Litchi is providing about 35-40 thousand plants every year to various institutions/states in the country. Union Agriculture Minister said that the National Research Centre on Litchi is working closely with other institutions of ICAR and agricultural universities of the state and the development centres of the Central and State Governments like National Horticulture Board, APEDA, National Horticulture Mission etc.

Shri Radha Mohan Singh said that our scientists are working day and night to develop advanced varieties and agricultural activities and that State Governments, KVKs and other institutions should take it to the masses. Through its limited resources, the centre has implemented ICAR's Farmers First project in East Champaran district. As many as 1,000 families from 8 villages (Mehsi Block-Uzhilpur, Bakri Najir, Damodarpur Village, Chakia Block-Khairwa, Ramgarha, Jishnupura, Ojha Tola- Vaishah and Chintanpur-Malahi Tola village) are reaping the benefits of several new techniques. And the unique initiative by the council allows farmers to test advanced technology themselves. And now there is a need to create awareness about it. Through 'Mera Gaon- Mera Gaurav' program, scientists have been successful in taking new techniques to some villages. The Centre has initiated Health Card scheme through which orchards are being examined and farmers are being sensitised. Not just Bihar, litchi fruit farming can be successfully done in other parts of the country too. Therefore, there is a need to promote research in these areas too.

On this occasion, Shri Singh congratulated all the scientists and officers and hoped that this plant will help litchi farmers, producers and traders of Bihar and the entire nation in increasing their income.

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