

NSAI NEWSLETTER

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Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI) Organizes 4th Global Cotton Conference on "Cotton 2040: Technology, Climate & Competitiveness" in New Delhi

Dr. R. K. Tripathi, Director (Technical), and Dr. Deepanker Pandey, Deputy Director (Technical), NSAI, participated in the 4th Global Cotton Conference held on the theme "Cotton 2040: Technology, Climate & Competitiveness" in New Delhi on October 7, 2025. The conference was organized by the Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI) in collaboration with the Union Ministry of Textiles and the Cotton Corporation of India, coinciding with the celebration of World Cotton Day. The National Seed Association of India (NSAI) participated as a Partner Association, while the Indian Chamber of Food and Agriculture (ICFA) served as the Knowledge Partner for the event.

The conference received support from the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Cotton Textiles Export Promotion Council (TEXPROCIL), and CITI-CDRA. The programme was inaugurated by Union Minister of State for Textiles, Shri Pabitra Margherita, and featured a keynote address by Union Minister of Textiles, Shri Giriraj Singh.

Several industry leaders, including Mr. Rajvir Rathi from Bayer, shared their insights during the sessions. Panelists underscored the need for an ecosystem-based approach to create a win-win framework for farmers, industry, and consumers. They highlighted that leveraging technology, addressing structural challenges, and strengthening research and development (R&D) would be crucial for enhancing the competitiveness and climate resilience of India's cotton textile sector. The event concluded with a Vote of Thanks delivered by CITI Deputy Chairman, Shri Dinesh Nolkha.



FSSAI Organizes 48th Meeting of the Central Advisory Committee (CAC) at FDA Bhavan, New Delhi

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) convened the 48th meeting of its Central Advisory Committee (CAC) on October 14, 2025, at FDA Bhavan, New Delhi. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), FSSAI, and was attended by newly nominated members of the CAC, representatives from various Ministries and Departments of the Government of India, Commissioners of Food Safety from States and Union Territories, members of the FSSAI Scientific Committee, and senior officials of FSSAI.

Dr. R. K. Tripathi, Director (Technical), NSAI, participated in the meeting as a nominated member of the Central Advisory Committee.

During the introductory session, Dr. Tripathi provided a comprehensive overview of his professional background and technical expertise. He elaborated on his extensive experience in the fields of agricultural sciences, seed technology, and food safety regulations.

Dr. Tripathi also highlighted the potential areas where he could contribute to the strengthening of the food safety and standards ecosystem in India, particularly in promoting traceability, ensuring quality assurance across the food value chain, and enhancing collaboration between the seed and food sectors. He expressed his commitment to actively support FSSAI's initiatives aimed at safeguarding public health and improving the integrity of food systems through scientific and evidence-based approaches.

The meeting served as an important platform for members to deliberate on key policy and regulatory matters pertaining to food safety, discuss emerging challenges, and explore collaborative strategies for effective implementation of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 across the country.



Meeting Held to Resolve Breeder Seed Indent Issues on SATHI Portal

A meeting was convened on October 14, 2025, at Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi, under the chairmanship of Shri Anand Kumar Prabhakar, Additional Commissioner (Seeds), Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, to discuss issues related to the submission and finalization of breeder seed indents for Rabi crops through the SATHI portal. The meeting was attended by officials from the Seed Division, representatives from State Agriculture Departments, the National Seed Association of India (NSAI), and the technical team managing the SATHI platform. From NSAI Dr. Pramod Sharma, Assistant Director (NSAI) and Dr. Aashima Batheja, Research Associate attended the meeting.

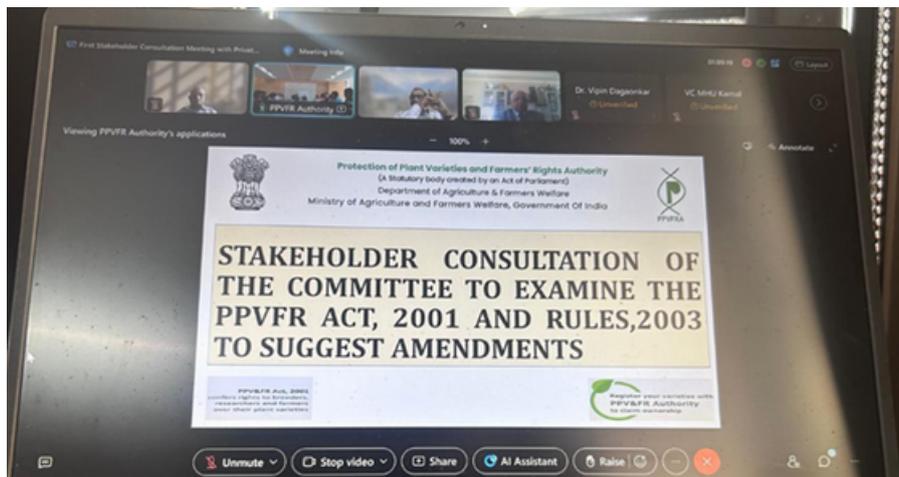
During the meeting, several key concerns were raised regarding the functionality and data accuracy of the portal. It was reported that the breeder seed indent report from Madhya Pradesh included data from private seed companies, which needed correction. The NSAI flagged two major issues: the appearance of breeder seed indents from certain non-member companies and the omission of indents from six of its member seed companies. The Chairperson directed the concerned agencies to reconcile these discrepancies in coordination with the NSAI.

Participants also reported that login credentials for Seed Producing Agencies (SPAs) and indenters were not functioning properly, and that reports for oilseed and pulse crops were not visible under the Seed Division's login on the SATHI portal. Additionally, the breeder seed allocation functionality was found to be malfunctioning, delaying the allocation process. The Chairperson instructed the technical team to address these issues on a priority basis to ensure seamless operation of the portal.

Another point of discussion was the need to update the formats of breeder seed indent reports to meet current reporting requirements. The Seed Division and the SATHI technical team were directed to finalize the revised templates before the next indenting cycle. Shri Prabhakar emphasized the importance of data integrity, system efficiency, and timely resolution of all technical issues to facilitate smooth breeder seed planning for the upcoming Rabi season. The meeting concluded with the decision to hold a follow-up review within three weeks to assess the progress on corrective actions and ensure full functionality of the SATHI portal for breeder seed management.

First Stakeholder Consultation meeting held to Review Proposed Amendments to the PPVFR Act

A stakeholder consultation meeting was held on October 25, 2025, under the chairmanship of Dr. R. S. Paroda to review the proposed amendments to the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPVFR) Act. The meeting was attended by Dr. R. K. Tripathi, Director (Technical), and Dr. Deepanker Pandey, Deputy Director (Technical), from the NSAI Secretariat, along with several leaders from the Indian seed industry.



Participants engaged in detailed deliberations on the proposed amendments, identifying key provisions that require revision to better serve the evolving needs of the seed sector. They shared valuable suggestions and insights aimed at ensuring that the amendments maintain a balanced framework supporting innovation, farmers' rights, and sustainable growth of the Indian seed industry. The meeting concluded with Dr. Paroda expressing appreciation for the participants' constructive contributions and underscoring the importance of continued collaboration to represent the collective voice of the seed industry in the ongoing PPVFR amendment process.

Consultation Meeting of Farmers regarding Annex 1 Crops in MLTS ITPGRFA hosted by PPV&FR Authority

On October 27, 2025, a consultation meeting of Farmers regarding Annex 1 Crops in MLTS ITPGRFA was organized by the PPV&FR Authority in Plant Authority Bhawan, New Delhi.

The meeting was chaired by Dr. Trilochan Mohapatra, Chairperson, PPV&FRA, and attended by several key dignitaries including Shri Ajeet Kumar Sahu, Joint Secretary (Seeds), Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Dr. D. K. Yadava, DDG (Crop Science), ICAR, Shri Vilas D. Sonawane, Dr. G. P. Singh, Director, NBPGR and Shri M. Gunashekran, Deputy Commissioner (Seeds). The meeting was also attended by representatives from public research institutions, private seed companies, and farmers' organizations.

From NSAI, Dr. R. K. Tripathi, Director (Technical), and Dr. Pramod Sharma, Assistant Director (Technical), attended the meeting. The meeting primarily focused on key issues of the Provisional Agenda of the 11th Meeting of the GB of ITPGRFA, such as the expansion of crops to all PGRFA under the ITPGRFA, which currently includes 35 food and 29 forage crops, as well as matters related to Fair and Equitable Benefit Sharing and the Digital Sequence Information (DSI) system.

During the discussion, it was emphasized that India should gain access to key crops such as soybean, groundnut, tomato, and watermelon, which are not currently covered in the Annex 1 crop list, to support Indian breeders. It was proposed that additional crops should be included in the Annex 1 list in a phased and systematic manner, taking into account their importance to food security, breeding programs, and national priorities. Participants expressed concerns that the current monetary contributions to the Benefit-Sharing Fund are insufficient, the guidelines do not clearly mandate the release of benefit-sharing funds, and hence, a proposed subscription-based system with mandatory advance payments was suggested to ensure a more effective and transparent framework.



It was also suggested that Digital Sequence Information (DSI) could be integrated into the sharing framework of the Multilateral System. The use of DSI would enable easier and wider access to genetic data for research and breeding purposes, while also ensuring that benefit-sharing principles apply to both physical germplasm and digital genetic sequence information. It was further suggested that access and benefit-sharing mechanisms under the MLS should be practically tested and implemented, as India has not yet shared any material through the system. This would help assess the effectiveness of the framework and strengthen India's participation in the Multilateral System.

Shri Ajeet Kumar Sahu, Joint Secretary (Seeds), realized that the existing Multilateral System (MLS) has several shortcomings and emphasized the need to prevent the use of unauthorized or illegal channels for germplasm exchange. He recommended strengthening the implementation of the Treaty by establishing a more structured, transparent, and legally enforceable mechanism to ensure effective governance and accountability.

In conclusion, Dr. Trilochan Mohapatra underscored the need to establish a robust enforcement mechanism to ensure effective compliance with the Treaty, protect India's rich genetic resources, and create a transparent and accountable system for the declaration and management of sequence databases.

APSA Holds Online Meeting with Seed Associations Across Asia-Pacific

The Asia and Pacific Seed Alliance (APSA) convened an online meeting on October 28, 2025, bringing together representatives from member seed associations across countries including Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, Turkey, and Vietnam. The meeting, open to all voting representatives, officers, and Secretariat members, was chaired by Ms. Francine Sayoc, Executive Director of APSA, who welcomed participants and provided updates on the first-year implementation of APSA's Strategic Roadmap 2025–2027, focusing on regulatory advocacy, member engagement, and operational excellence. Dr. Jai Singh, General Secretary, Dr. R. K. Tripathi, Director (Technical), represented NSAI.



Mr. Shivendra Bajaj, Technical Advisor, APSA, highlighted key initiatives undertaken in 2025, including consultations on phytosanitary regulations, plant breeding innovation, and PVP & biodiversity, along with several capacity-building programs organized in collaboration with USDA and ASTA. He reported that APSA now has 523 active members, with 71 new members joining this year, and that India leads with the highest number of member companies (139). Mr. Bajaj also announced the merger of the APSA Seed Academy with the ASF Seed Industry Professional Program (SIPP) to enhance professional training opportunities.

Mr. Mike Kingpayom, APSA Events Manager, presented details of the upcoming Asian Seed Congress 2025, scheduled from November 17–21, 2025, in Mumbai, India, which has already received 1,100 registrations, along with post-congress tours to Pune and Mumbai on November 21, 2025. During discussions, Dr. Anthony Tse of the Hong Kong Seed Trade Association raised concerns about visa delays for Chinese delegates, to which Dr. Jai Singh assured that NSAI is coordinating with India's Ministry of External Affairs to facilitate clearances. Concluding the meeting, Mr. Kenan Yalvac from Turkted invited participants to the Asian Seed Congress 2026, to be held in Antalya, Turkey, from December 1–5, 2026.

NSAI and Argentine Embassy Collaborate to Finalize Study Visit Schedule

The Argentine Embassy held an online meeting with NSAI on October 29, 2025, to finalize plans for an upcoming study visit by an Indian seed industry delegation. The NSAI team included Mr. Vaibhav R. Kashikar, Mr. Ram Babu, Dr. R.K. Tripathi (Director, Technical), Dr. Deepanker Pandey (Deputy Director, Technical), Dr. Pramod Sharma (Assistant Director), and Dr. Aashima Batheja (Research Associate). Mr. Mariano Beheram, Minister Attaché (Agriculture), represented the Argentine Embassy.

Initially planned for October 13–17, 2025, the visit was postponed due to the festival season in India. During the meeting, NSAI proposed rescheduling the visit to either the last week of January or March 2026. Mr. Beheram informed that March coincides with the harvesting period of key crops such as soybean and corn, while the end of January would allow delegates to visit fields of sorghum, sunflower, soybean, and corn. However, he noted that January is also a holiday season in Argentina, urging early planning and coordination.

After discussions, both sides agreed to schedule the visit for the last week of January 2026. Mr. Kashikar emphasized the need to circulate the proposed schedule among NSAI members and seek their confirmation within ten days. Mr. Beheram also highlighted the availability of a Market Study Research Visa, valid for three months, allowing sufficient time for organizing the tour. He further mentioned that since the Federation of Seed Industry of India (FSII) was willing to join this study tour, NSAI should seek FSII's consent and coordinate with them accordingly.

The meeting concluded on a positive note, with both parties reaffirming their commitment to strengthening bilateral cooperation and facilitating a productive exchange between the Indian and Argentine seed sectors.

Seed Industry Updates

Cabinet Approves ₹11,000 Crore Plan to Boost Pulses Production, Hikes MSP for Rabi Crops

In a major push towards agricultural self-reliance, the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on October 01, 2025, approved a ₹11,000 crore six-year mission to boost pulses production across the country. The initiative aims to reduce India's dependence on pulse imports, enhance domestic production, and strengthen national food security. Alongside, the Cabinet also cleared ₹84,200 crore towards the Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for Rabi crops, reinforcing the government's commitment to farmer welfare.

The comprehensive plan for pulses focuses on developing high-yielding, pest and climate-resilient varieties, supported by multi-location trials to ensure regional adaptability. States will prepare five-year rolling seed production plans, while breeder seeds will be managed by ICAR and foundation and certified seeds will be produced and tracked via the SATHI portal. By 2030-31, 126 lakh quintals of certified seeds are expected to be distributed, covering 370 lakh hectares. The Mission also targets an additional 35 lakh hectares of pulse cultivation, particularly in rice fallow and suitable lands. Over 88 lakh seed kits will be distributed free of cost, and training programmes will promote sustainable farming practices. To strengthen value chains, 1,000 post-harvest processing units will be supported with subsidies up to ₹25 lakh each.

Procurement of key pulses like Tur, Urad, and Masoor under the Price Support Scheme (PSS) will be handled by NAFED and NCCF for the next four years. The plan also includes a global price monitoring mechanism to protect farmers interests. By the end of the mission, pulses production is projected to reach 350 lakh tonnes, covering 310 lakh hectares with an average yield of 1,130 kg per hectare, contributing to higher farmer incomes and greater agricultural resilience.

Maharashtra Onion Farmers Forced to Dump Crops as Prices Hit Record Lows

A deep agrarian crisis is unfolding across Maharashtra's onion belt, as farmers reel under the dual blow of unseasonal rains and a price collapse. In Purandar, Pune district, farmer Sudam Ingle recently sold 7.5 quintals of onions for just ₹664, earning less than ₹1 per kilogram after deducting transport and weighing charges. The meagre returns, coming after months of hard labour and rising cultivation costs, have left growers devastated. "This year, Diwali is being celebrated only in cities. In villages, there's no money even to buy a diya," said a despondent Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) member from Nashik.

At Lasalgaon APMC, Asia's largest onion market, wholesale prices have stagnated between ₹500 and ₹1,400 per quintal, averaging around ₹1,050, far below the ₹1,800–₹2,000 farmers say they need just to cover expenses. A bumper rabi (summer) harvest earlier this year, combined with heavy rains that damaged the kharif crop, has created a glut of poor-quality onions that neither traders nor exporters are keen to buy. With no remunerative prices and high transportation costs, many farmers have resorted to dumping or destroying their produce to cut further losses.

Experts say the crisis underscores long-standing structural problems in India's onion economy, price volatility, inadequate storage, and policy uncertainty. The lack of sufficient cold-storage capacity forces farmers to sell their produce immediately after harvest, even when prices are unfavourable. Meanwhile, frequent export bans and stock limits, imposed to control retail inflation, have eroded farmer confidence and deterred private investment in the sector.

Farmer unions are demanding government procurement at a minimum support price and the creation of local dehydration and processing units to add value and stabilize incomes. The state government has sought central intervention through the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED) to increase buffer stock purchases. For now, though, the mood in rural Maharashtra remains grim. As cities light up for Diwali, the state's onion-growing regions are plunged in darkness and their fields filled not with prosperity, but with piles of rotting onions symbolizing broken hopes.

Government Hikes Subsidy on Non-Urea Fertilizers to Offset Import Costs

The Union Cabinet approved an increase in subsidies on non-urea fertilizers, mainly phosphorus (P) and Sulphur (S) raising the total outlay to ₹37,952 crore for the 2025-26 rabi season. The hike, aimed at offsetting rising import costs and keeping fertilizer prices stable for farmers, will be effective from October 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026. Under the Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS) scheme, the subsidy for phosphorus has been raised to ₹47.96 per kg from ₹43.60, while Sulphur's rate has gone up to ₹2.87 per kg from ₹2.61, both around 10% higher than the kharif season. Subsidy rates for nitrogen and potash remain unchanged. Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the package is about ₹14,000 crore higher than last rabi's ₹24,000 crore allocation. The move follows a sharp rise in global prices of phosphoric acid, Sulphur, and DAP, and is expected to ensure the continued availability of key fertilizers like DAP and TSP to farmers without any increase in retail prices.



PM Modi Urges Group Farming, Adoption of High-Value Crops to Boost Farmers' Income

Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi, on October 13, 2025, called for group farming initiatives, urging small and marginal farmers to pool land and focus on high-value crops to increase production, reduce costs, and enhance income. Speaking at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) in Delhi, Modi interacted with farmers from across the country ahead of launching two major schemes with a combined outlay of ₹35,440 crore, the PM Dhan Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (₹24,000 crore) and the Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses (₹11,440 crore). He encouraged a phased adoption of natural farming alongside traditional methods to build confidence and highlighted the importance of inter-cropping with pulses for soil fertility and higher yields. During the programme, farmers shared success stories, including residue-free Kabuli chana cultivation, aeroponic potato farming, integrated organic farming, and dairy initiatives under self-help groups, illustrating the benefits of cooperative models and government schemes such as PM Kisan Samman Nidhi and PM Matsya Sampada Yojana. Sh. Modi also emphasized the promotion of millets in water-scarce regions, the potential of aquaculture, and sustainable practices such as Gir cow community chains, urging youth participation and entrepreneurship in modern agriculture.

ICL Partners with BioPrime to Launch Next-Gen Biofertilizers, Boost Soil Health in India

Global crop nutrition leader Israel Chemicals Limited (ICL) has announced a strategic long-term partnership with Pune-based agri-biologicals innovator BioPrime to introduce advanced soil and crop health solutions in India. The collaboration marks ICL's entry into the microbial biofertilizers segment, leveraging BioPrime's proprietary BioNexus platform to commercialize next-generation biofertilizers aimed at improving nutrient use efficiency (NUE), especially for phosphorus (P) and zinc (Zn), two critical nutrients for Indian farmers. The partnership will enable farmers to optimize nutrient uptake, enhance productivity, and reduce fertilizer wastage while promoting sustainable agriculture practices.

BioPrime Co-founder and CEO Renuka Karandikar said the tie-up represents a milestone in bringing microbial innovations from lab to land, powered by ICL's scale and expertise. Anant Kulkarni, Country Lead, ICL Growing Solutions India, added that the collaboration reinforces ICL's commitment to sustainable agriculture and innovation-led growth. Industry analysts estimate that the alliance could accelerate both firms' growth in the biofertilizer space by 10–20 times, while helping India curb fertilizer imports and reduce subsidy burdens. With India's biofertilizer market growing at a CAGR of 11.5%, the ICL–BioPrime partnership is being hailed as a significant step toward greener, more resilient, and cost-efficient farming.

Corteva Rolls Out Next-Generation Fungicide to Protect Grapes and Potatoes from Fungal Threats

Corteva Agriscience has announced the launch of its latest fungicide, Zorvec Entecta, in India, designed to help farmers combat Downy Mildew in grapes and Late Blight in potatoes, two of the most destructive fungal diseases affecting crop yields. Powered by Corteva's proprietary Zorvec active technology, the new solution offers systemic, long-lasting protection, even safeguarding new plant growth and delivering high rain-fastness within hours of application. The company recommends using Zorvec Entecta in rotation with its existing fungicide Curzate M8 to strengthen resistance management and ensure broader disease control. With this launch, Corteva aims to equip Indian growers with innovative, science-driven tools that enhance crop resilience, productivity, and quality, reinforcing its commitment to sustainable and advanced crop protection solutions in India's agri-sector.



Shivraj Singh Chouhan Inaugurates Advanced NSC Seed Processing Units and Launches Digital Seed Management Platform

Union Agriculture and Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan inaugurated a state-of-the-art vegetable and flower seed processing and packaging unit of the National Seeds Corporation (NSC) on October 27, 2025, at Pusa Complex, New Delhi. He also virtually inaugurated five NSC seed processing plants located in Bareilly, Dharwad, Hassan, Suratgarh, and Raichur, aimed at strengthening India's seed production and distribution network.

The newly established Beej Bhawan plant at Pusa has a processing capacity of one tonne per hour, while the other five plants can process four tonnes per hour each. Equipped with cutting-edge technology, these facilities are expected to enhance the quality and availability of certified seeds for farmers across the country. During the event, the Minister also launched 'Seed Management 2.0' and an online seed booking platform, enabling farmers to place seed orders digitally. Chouhan said the initiative would make seed distribution more transparent, efficient, and accessible, particularly benefiting small and marginal farmers.

Highlighting issues raised during the ‘Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan’, Chouhan noted that many farmer grievances were related to fake or low-quality seeds, and assured that the government is taking strict measures to address such challenges. “These new facilities will meet farmers’ needs and play a vital role in improving agricultural productivity,” he stated. The Minister also urged NSC to promote innovation, enhance regional language outreach, and improve coordination with State Seed Development Corporations. “Public institutions like NSC carry a special responsibility. They must work with a clear roadmap and a mission to serve farmers,” he added. The event was attended by Agriculture Secretary Devesh Chaturvedi, NSC CMD and Additional Secretary Maninder Kaur Dwivedi, Joint Secretary Ajit Kumar Sahu, and senior officials of the Agriculture Ministry. Established in 1963, NSC, a Mini Ratna Category-I company under the Government of India, continues to play a crucial role in ensuring the supply of high-quality seeds and supporting the country’s agricultural growth.



APEDA Facilitates First-Ever Export of GI-Tagged Indi and Puliyanakudi Limes to the UK

In a major milestone for India’s agricultural exports, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has facilitated the first-ever air shipment of India’s GI-tagged Indi Lime and Puliyanakudi Lime to the United Kingdom. The inaugural consignment, comprising 350 kg of Indi Lime from Vijayapura, Karnataka, and 150 kg of Puliyanakudi Lime from Tenkasi, Tamil Nadu, marks a significant step in showcasing India’s region-specific horticultural excellence to global markets.

The flag-off ceremony, led by APEDA Chairman Abhishek Dev, witnessed participation from the Department of Horticulture, Government of Karnataka, the Karnataka Lime Board, and officials from Tamil Nadu. Commending the collaborative effort, Dev emphasized that such initiatives not only promote India's unique agricultural heritage but also empower farmers through better price realization and global branding. He reiterated APEDA's commitment to supporting exporters and producers in expanding the international footprint of GI-tagged products that represent India's rich regional diversity.

V. Dakshinamoorthy, IAS, Agricultural Production Commissioner and Secretary to the Government of Karnataka, hailed the export as a testament to the strong partnership between state and central agencies, exporters, and farmer groups. He described the achievement as a remarkable stride in connecting Indian farmers to global value chains and promoting Karnataka's horticultural prowess.



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