

Stakeholder Consultation in the Medicinal Plant Sector to promote medicinal plants

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A Stakeholder Consultation under the Co-Chairmanship of Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, MoA&FW and Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH was held on Monday at Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi to promote the cultivation and use of medicinal plants across the country, observing participation from Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Ministry of AYUSH, Ministry of Food Processing Industries, National Plant Medicinal Board (NPMB), State Horticulture Missions (SHMs), ICAR, State Medicinal Plant Boards, progressive farmers and leading private players from Medicinal Plant industry.



In his opening remarks, **Shri. Devesh Chaturvedi, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare**, highlighted that there is a scope to increase domestic production of medicinal plants as inter-state trade and export of medicinal plants. He highlighted the need for better convergence between Ministry of AYUSH and Agriculture departments and collaboration with State Medicinal Plant Boards, to promote medicinal plants at national level. He also mentioned that important medicinal plants have been included under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) scheme, DA&FW. He stressed that there is a need for a mission-mode program for medicinal plant cultivation, identifying good practices of cultivation, efficient techniques, etc., which will help in the upliftment of the sector.

Shri Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH highlighted that there is a huge possibility of growth in the sector. The AYUSH manufacturing sector has grown by 8 times in the last 10 years and has vast export potential. The sector has enormous economic opportunities, and especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for AYUSH products including medicinal plants has grown immensely.

Key objectives of the session majorly focussed on:

- Exploring avenues for developing region-specific medicinal plant clusters.

- Facilitating partnerships between farmers and industry players for assured procurement and end-to-end value chain development.
- Discussing the establishment of dedicated mandis and marketing platforms to ensure fair prices for farmers.
- Promoting research, training, and extension services to build capacity among stakeholders.

During the meeting, various participants and stakeholders suggested identifying crop-specific areas for the establishment of clusters dedicated to medicinal plants. These clusters would focus on area expansion, production, industry partnerships, farmer training and marketing through setting up specialised mandis for these crops ensuring remunerative prices to the farmers.

In his concluding remarks, Shri Priya Ranjan, Joint Secretary (Horticulture), emphasized the need to identify policy interventions and financial incentives to encourage farmers to take up the cultivation of medicinal plants.

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