

APEDA launches BHARATI initiative to boost agri-food exports

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal, UAE Minister of Foreign Trade Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi and Union Minister of Food Processing Industries Shri Chirag Paswan launches the initiative during the Food & Beverages Sector Stakeholders Meeting

BHARATI to empower 100 agri-food startups, drive innovation and boost exports towards \$50 billion target by 2030

The pilot cohort from Sept 2025 to promote advanced technologies, and strengthen India's global competitiveness

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The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) launched its new initiative BHARATI on the sidelines of the "Food & Beverages Sector Stakeholders Meeting" chaired by Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal, alongside H.E. Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, UAE's Minister of Foreign Trade, and Union Minister of Food Processing Industries Shri Chirag Paswan.

BHARATI, which stands for Bharat's Hub for Agritech, Resilience, Advancement and Incubation for Export Enablement, has been designed to empower 100 agri-food and agri-tech startups, accelerate their journey, promote innovation and create new export opportunities for young entrepreneurs. Conceived as APEDA's vision to achieve \$50 billion in agri-food exports for its Scheduled Products by 2030, the initiative marks a significant step to strengthen India's agricultural and processed food exports.

Starting in September 2025, the inaugural pilot cohort will empower 100 startups, including high-value agri-food producers, technology-driven service providers and innovators. The BHARATI initiative is structured to complement and enhance industry and government-led incubation programmes in the agriculture, food and food processing sectors. It seeks to drive innovation in high-value categories such as GI-tagged agri-products,

organic foods, superfoods, novel processed Indian agri-foods, livestock products and AYUSH products. The initiative also aims to attract startups working on advanced technologies such as AI-based quality control, blockchain-enabled traceability, IoT-enabled cold chains and agri-fintech, while addressing critical areas like innovative packaging, sustainability and sea protocols. BHARATI seeks to resolve export challenges related to product development, value addition, quality assurance, perishability, wastage and logistics. By fostering a collaborative ecosystem, the programme will connect agri-food innovators, tech-driven solution providers and SPS-TBT-focused startups to deliver scalable, cost-effective solutions that enhance India's global competitiveness.

Aligned with the Government of India's vision of an Atmanirbhar Bharat, Vocal for Local, Digital India and Start-Up India, the BHARATI initiative will create globally competitive agri-products, fuel demand-driven backward integration for food innovation and boost global demand for Indian food, beverage and processed food products and services. The initiative includes a nationwide awareness campaign to engage stakeholders and attract solution-oriented startups from across India, along with an application and selection process beginning September 2025 through the APEDA website to shortlist 100 startups for the export enablement programme. Selected startups will undergo a three-month acceleration programme focusing on product development, export readiness, regulatory compliance, market access and collaborative solutions to address export challenges. To strengthen this ecosystem, APEDA will partner with state agricultural boards, agricultural universities, premier institutions like IITs and NITs, industry bodies and existing accelerators to attract startups for agri-export enablement.

The pilot cohort will serve as a model for a scalable annual incubation programme, driving continuous innovation and long-term export growth. APEDA reiterated its commitment to developing and promoting the export of agricultural and processed food products from India to global markets. With the launch of the BHARATI initiative, APEDA aims to accelerate export growth of its Scheduled Products, foster innovation and forge meaningful collaborations by harnessing the power of youth and entrepreneurship to strengthen India's position in global agri-food trade

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