

Union Agriculture Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan takes cognisance of reports of pomegranate crop damage in Balotra and adjoining areas of Rajasthan

Union Minister directs immediate investigation into the outbreak of diseases affecting pomegranate crops

Special team of scientists from ICAR to conduct detailed field assessment on the directions of Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan

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Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, and Rural Development, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan today took cognisance of reports and complaints regarding damage to pomegranate crops caused by various diseases, including the 'Tikri' disease, in Balotra district and adjoining pomegranate-growing regions of Rajasthan, and has ordered an immediate investigation into the matter.

The Union Minister has instructed the Director General of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) to deploy a special team of scientists to visit the affected areas at the earliest and assess the situation on the ground. The team will carry out a detailed study to identify the causes of the disease outbreak, review the existing management practices, and examine the techniques being adopted by farmers for pomegranate cultivation.

Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan stated that a comprehensive action plan will be prepared based on the findings of the ICAR scientific team. The plan will include measures for pruning, disease management, optimal use of fertilisers and pesticides, and the promotion of modern horticultural practices to restore crop health and prevent recurrence.

The Minister assured that affected farmers will receive full technical support and training to enhance pomegranate quality and disease management. Experts from the ICAR-Central Institute for Arid Horticulture (CIAH), Bikaner; ICAR-National Research Centre on Pomegranate (NRC), Solapur; Central Arid Zone Research Institute (CAZRI), Jodhpur; and the concerned agricultural universities will jointly provide guidance and assistance to the farmers.

Shri Chouhan emphasised that the issue can be effectively addressed only through a coordinated approach involving central and state agriculture and horticulture departments, research institutions, and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs). He reiterated the government's commitment to ensuring that farmers' problems are resolved promptly, and that their productivity and income see sustained

improvement through collective and scientific action.

RC/AR

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