



Honourable Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shivraj Singh Chouhan visited the ICAR–National Research Centre for Grapes (ICAR–NRCG), Pune

Honourable Minister highlighted need to develop climate-resilient, high-yielding, export-quality grape varieties and strengthen technical guidance to farmers

Shri Chouhan expressed concern over slow progress of Clean Plant Centre, stressed need for timely improvements

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Honourable Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development, Shivraj Singh Chouhan visited the ICAR–National Research Centre for Grapes (ICAR–NRCG), Pune, to review the institute's research and development activities related to grape production, export promotion, quality enhancement, and sustainable viticulture practices.



During the visit, the Honourable Minister planted saplings on the institute campus along with dignitaries under the theme "*Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam*", highlighting the importance of environmental sustainability and green initiatives in agricultural research institutions.

The Honourable Minister inspected various research and experimental facilities of the institute, including the germplasm block, research fields, nursery units, laboratories, and advanced residue analysis facilities. Scientists briefed him about ongoing work on disease management, climate-resilient grape varieties, precision viticulture, water-use efficiency, integrated pest management, and residue-free grape production systems aimed at enhancing grape productivity and quality.



Addressing scientists, farmers, and stakeholders, Shri Chouhan described researchers as the “backbone of agricultural advancement” and appreciated their commitment toward improving farmers’ livelihoods through science-based innovations and technologies.

The Honourable Minister stated that ICAR–NRCG is a highly important institution as grapes are a major commercial crop, and Maharashtra alone contributes nearly 80 percent of the country’s grape production. He noted that grape growers are currently facing serious challenges due to climate change, unseasonal and excessive rainfall, and increasing incidence of viral and other diseases, resulting in significant crop losses. Extensive discussions were held on how the institute can further strengthen its research and farmer-oriented interventions to address these emerging challenges.



The Honourable Minister reviewed the progress of the proposed Clean Plant Centre for grapes, aimed at ensuring the availability of healthy and disease-free planting material to farmers. During the visit, certain irregularities were observed in the nursery system, while farmers raised concerns regarding grape varieties and inadequate technical guidance. Shri Chouhan emphasized the need to develop high-yielding, export-quality, and farmer-friendly grape varieties suited to present-day requirements.

Expressing concern over the slow progress of the Clean Plant Centre project, the Honourable Minister stressed the need for timely improvements and effective implementation. He highlighted the importance of disease-free planting material, advanced technologies, international exposure for scientists, and stronger dissemination of improved practices for the benefit of grape growers.



Shri Chouhan further discussed several important aspects related to the future of grape cultivation, including climate-resilient approaches to overcome emerging challenges in viticulture, the use of plastic covers for improving grape production, mechanization in grape farming to address labour shortages, and the development of short-duration grape varieties. He also emphasized the need for updating advanced and need-based package of practices for grape cultivation in line with changing climatic conditions and global market demands.



The Honourable Minister highlighted the importance of strengthening Public-Private Partnership (PPP) collaborations with ICAR-NRCG for technology development and dissemination.

The visit concluded with detailed deliberations on farmers' concerns, institutional challenges, and strategies to further strengthen India's grape sector through scientific research, innovation, and sustainable agricultural practices.

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