

# Commercial cultivation of liquorice (Mulethi)

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**In news**– Himachal Pradesh has become first state in India to have organised cultivation of Mulethi recently.

## What is Mulethi(Licorice)?

- Mulethi is a perennial shrub having sweet roots due presence of glycyrrhizin, which is 50 times sweeter than sucrose and it is used as a natural sweetener in herbal medicines, flavouring in candies and tobacco.
- Licorice, scientifically known as *Glycyrrhiza glabra*.
- It is also used in traditional medicine against treating chest and lung diseases etc.
- Mulethi is grown mainly in Afghanistan, while minor producing countries include Pakistan, China, Nepal and India.
- The properties of licorice are given as follows:
  - It may show antibacterial, anti-inflammatory properties.
  - It may show expectorant (helps in secretion of sputum) property.
  - It may show demulcent (relieves irritation) property.
  - Combat digestive issues.
  - Helps in weight reduction.
  - Improves immunity & combats respiratory infections.
- India imports 8047 tonnes of liquorice annually from Afghanistan, China and Nepal.
- Realising the large import of liquorice in the country, it was envisioned to extend its production area through initiating organized cultivation after identifying the

potential areas in HP The districts of Hamirpur, Bilaspur, Kangra, Una, Solan and Sirmour in HP have potential areas for its cultivation.