

Horticulture Cluster Development Programme

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In news– The Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has prepared the Horticulture Cluster Development Programme (CDP), for which a meeting was held under the chairmanship of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister.

Key features of the programme-

- Horticulture cluster is a regional/geographical concentration of targeted horticulture crops, offering scope for specialisation in pre-production, production, post-harvest management, logistics, marketing and branding.
- These clusters provide growth and development opportunities to stakeholders including farmers/producers, traders, aggregators, agribusiness enterprises, logistic players, retailers, processors, exporters and other public and private operators.
- The main **objective of the government is to promote the Agriculture sector in the country and to increase the income of the farmers** by giving them a reasonable price for their produce, so the interest of the farmers should be paramount in the center of any programme/scheme.
- As per the Minister land available with Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) affiliated institutions within the identified clusters should be utilized for the implementation of this programme.
- The CDP will also create cluster-specific brands, while helping the economy, to integrate them into national and global value chains, thereby providing higher remuneration to farmers.
- The CDP will benefit around 10 lakh farmers and related stakeholders along the value chain.
- The **CDP aims to improve exports of targeted crops by**

about 20% and create cluster-specific brands to enhance the competitiveness of cluster crops.

- A lot of investment will also come in the horticulture sector through CDP.
- It is a Central Sector programme implemented by the National Horticulture Board (NHB).

Status of Horticulture in India-

- India is the second-largest producer of horticulture crops globally, accounting for approximately 12% of the world's production of fruits and vegetables.
- Due to its high remunerative capability, the horticulture sector has emerged as one of the potential agriculture enterprises that will accelerate the growth of the Indian economy.