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78th Independence Day Celebration at Institute of Horticulture Technology, Greater Noida, and Mandira, Assam Campus

The Institute of Horticulture Technology (IHT) celebrated Independence Day 2024 with great enthusiasm at both its Greater Noida and Mandira, Assam campuses. The national flag was proudly hoisted by Sh. Sandeep Sudan, Co-Chairman, at the Greater Noida campus, and by Dr. R. S. Kureel, Director, at the Assam Centre in Mandira.

During the celebration, Sh. Sandeep Sudan delivered an inspiring speech that resonated deeply with the attendees. He highlighted the enduring spirit and sacrifices of India's freedom fighters, urging everyone to remember the values they fought for. Sh. Sudan spoke about the importance of unity and integrity in today's world, encouraging the audience to take pride in their heritage while also looking forward to the future. He stressed the significance of innovation and education in nation-building, urging the faculty, staff, and students to contribute their skills and knowledge towards the country's growth. His speech served as a reminder that the freedom we enjoy today comes with the responsibility to work collectively towards making India a global leader.

The day was also celebrated at IHT Mandira Assam Centre, with Dr. Dipankar Bharali Chief Scientist AAU-LRS Assam as chief guest. He along with Dr. R.S. Kureel Director IHT hosted the National Flag which was followed by speeches from other esteemed faculty and staff members, each adding their own perspective on the importance of Independence Day. Dr. R. S. Kureel, and other speakers spoke passionately about the role of education in empowering the youth to shape the future of the nation.

The programmes at the both places concluded with a powerful message, calling for collective efforts from all to create a prosperous and strong nation.



Sh. Sandeep Sudan,
Co-Chairman of IHT,
Addressing the Staff on
Future Initiatives for IHT



A) Dr. Dipankar Bharali Chief Scientist AAU-LRS along with Dr. R.S. Kureel Director IHT hosting the National Flag at IHT, Mandira, Assam. B) Group Photograph of IHT Staff



Zero Budget Farming: A Path to Increased Income and Economic Growth

Zero Budget Farming (ZBF) is a sustainable agricultural approach that significantly benefits farmers, enhances their income, and supports India's economic development. By focusing on minimizing external inputs and using natural resources efficiently, ZBF reduces costs and increases profitability. This method emphasizes the use of indigenous seeds, organic fertilizers, and pest management techniques, which helps farmers cut down on expensive chemical inputs and synthetic fertilizers. For the future, ZBF offers promising prospects for increasing farmers' income and welfare. By reducing dependency on costly inputs, farmers can achieve higher net profits and reinvest savings into their farms, leading to better living standards. ZBF also promotes environmental sustainability by minimizing chemical runoff and enhancing biodiversity, which supports long-term agricultural productivity.

In the broader context of India, ZBF is crucial for several reasons. The country faces challenges such as rising agricultural input costs, environmental degradation, and the need for sustainable farming practices. ZBF addresses these issues by promoting self-sufficiency and reducing the ecological footprint of farming. Moreover, the widespread adoption of ZBF can contribute to rural development, create job opportunities, and stabilize food prices, ultimately boosting the Indian economy.

Currently, the adoption of Zero Budget Farming in India is growing, with several states and farmers embracing its principles. Initiatives by government bodies, NGOs, and agricultural organizations have helped raise awareness and provide training. However, there is still significant potential for broader implementation.

States following Zero Budget Farming

1. **Karnataka:** In every one of the state's ten agro climatic zones, Karnataka has begun implementing the ZBNF on a pilot basis in an area of 2000 hectares through the relevant State Agriculture / Horticulture Universities as demonstrations / scientific experiments conducted in farmers' fields and in the research facilities of the respective universities.
2. **Himachal Pradesh:** Since May 2018, Himachal Pradesh has been implementing the Prakritik Kheti Khusha Kisan programme, which is financed by the state. The results of studies carried out by the state demonstrated that ZBNF practice improved soil quality within a single cropping season and that invasive leaf miner incidence was much lower in the ZBNF system when compared to organic farming as well as conventional farming.
3. **Kerala:** In order to pique farmers' interest in ZBNF, awareness campaigns, workshops, and training sessions are being held in Kerala.
4. **Andhra Pradesh:** ZBNF was introduced by Andhra Pradesh in September 2015 as part of the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana. In partnership with the University of Reading, the UK World Agroforestry Centre, Nairobi, FAO, and resource NGOs/Civil Society Organizations such as the Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (CSA), Hyderabad.

CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Two-Weeks Hydroponic Training Equips Entrepreneurs for Success

Institute of Horticulture Technology (IHT) organized a two-week training program focused on commercial hydroponic production. Entrepreneurs from different states participated in this program, gaining valuable knowledge and skills about hydroponic technology. Throughout the training, they learned about the various aspects of hydroponics, including the setup of systems, the selection of crops, nutrient management, and overall maintenance. The hands-on sessions allowed participants to understand the practical applications of hydroponics, which is crucial for anyone looking to enter this field. By the end of the program, the entrepreneurs had a much clearer understanding of how to effectively use hydroponic systems for commercial purposes. This training was helpful for them, as it provided a solid foundation in both the theory and practice of hydroponics, helping them to confidently pursue opportunities in this innovative agricultural sector.



Trainees Undergoing Hands on Training on Hydroponic Nursery Production, Seed Treatment and Crops Care

Boosting Mushroom Farming: IHT's Training Program

The IHT organized an online training program focused on mushroom production. This aimed to equip growers with essential knowledge and techniques for cultivating mushrooms efficiently. Participants learned about various mushroom species, substrate preparation, environmental control, and pest management. The online format allowed for broad accessibility, enabling farmers from diverse locations to benefit from expert insights and practical demonstrations. The training also included interactive sessions and Q&A opportunities, ensuring that attendees could address their specific concerns and gain hands-on expertise.

Enhancing Farmers' Success through Training on Protected Cultivation

Protected cultivation, such as using greenhouses or high tunnels, offers significant benefits to growers, enhancing both their income and food quality. This farming technique creates a controlled environment that shields crops from harsh weather conditions, pests, and diseases, leading to higher yields and better-quality produce. By extending the growing season and allowing for year-round production, protected cultivation enables growers to grow more diverse crops, increasing their market opportunities and revenue. Additionally, the ability to precisely manage environmental factors—like temperature, humidity, and light—results in healthier plants and more consistent produce, which can command higher prices in the market. Training programs are crucial for growers to fully leverage these benefits. They provide essential knowledge on best practices for setting up and managing protected cultivation systems, including techniques for soil management, pest control, and crop nutrition. The Institute of Horticulture Technology (IHT) organized a training program specifically to educate growers on these aspects. This program covered a wide range of topics, including the setup and maintenance of protective structures, advanced irrigation techniques, and climate control systems. Participants learned to implement innovative practices that improved crop health and yield while gaining insights into market trends and consumer preferences. Through such training, farmers learn to optimize their use of resources, avoid common pitfalls, and implement innovative practices. This education ensures that growers can effectively utilize protected cultivation to improve their productivity and profitability. By equipping growers with the right skills and knowledge, training programs not only enhance their agricultural practices but also contribute to their overall economic stability and the quality of food available to consumers.



Trainees Undergoing Hands on Training on Plug Type Seedling Production

Upcoming Trainings

IHT is excited to offer these valuable training programs in the upcoming month to help you enhance your skills and grow your agricultural ventures.

S. No.	Title
01	Landscape Horticulture
02	Vegetables Nursery Production
03	Basic Hydroponics
04	Commercial Hydroponics
05	Protected Cultivation of Vegetable Crops

For more updates and to register for upcoming trainings, visit IHT's website or contact Mr. Anish Ranjan, Relationship Manager, Mobile +91-8860082566