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Cultivating a Greener Tomorrow: India's Natural Farming Revolution

Indian agriculture is undergoing a historic transformation. The Government of India's National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF), a Rs. 2,481 crore initiative approved in late 2024, is rapidly gaining momentum. Targeting 1 crore farmers across 7.5 lakh hectares, this mission is a decisive move toward economic resilience and environmental sustainability.

At the Institute of Horticulture Technology (IHT), this vision aligns perfectly with our core philosophy. We believe the future lies in working with nature, and our hands-on training programs are designed to equip farmers with the skills to thrive in this new paradigm.

Understanding the NMNF Framework

- The NMNF is designed to lower barriers for small and marginal farmers through a comprehensive support system:
- Direct Financial Support: A Rs. 4,000 per acre/year subsidy for two years to ease the transition.
- Support Ecosystem: Establishment of 10,000 Bio-input Resource Centres (BRCs) to ensure easy access to natural inputs like Jeevamrut and Beejamrit.
- Grassroots Leadership: Over 70,000 trained Krishi Sakhis and 1,100 model farms (as of July 2025) serve as community mentors and living classrooms.
- Market Linkage: The 'Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) – INDIA-NATURAL' platform provides peer-reviewed certification, unlocking premium prices for farmers.

IHT: Bridging Policy and Practice

At IHT, we know that natural farming is a new science, not just the absence of chemicals. We are proud to be at the forefront of this knowledge revolution, offering specialized, hands-on training in organic and natural farming techniques. Through our collaboration with NCOF, Ghaziabad, we provide farmers with direct access to the country's leading experts. By improving soil health and adopting certification protocols like PGS, farmers can ensure long-term productivity and command the premium prices that discerning consumers seek. As the NMNF scales up, IHT remains committed to empowering farmers by offering courses on organic and Natural Farming.

Capacity Building in Modern Gardening for POWERGRID Officials

In February, the Institute of Horticulture Technology organized an On-the-Job Field Training Program on Modern Gardening for officials of Power Grid Corporation of India Limited. The program was designed to provide practical knowledge and field-based exposure to modern gardening and landscape management practices. During the training, participants learned key aspects of landscape gardening, including lawn establishment and maintenance, selection and planting of ornamental plants, seasonal flower cultivation, pruning and trimming techniques, and overall garden care. Experts also demonstrated modern gardening tools and equipment to improve efficiency in routine maintenance. The program included hands-on training sessions where participants practiced planting techniques, lawn management, and proper irrigation methods. Special emphasis was given to sustainable gardening practices such as efficient water use, balanced nutrient management, and eco-friendly maintenance of green spaces. This practical training helped participants strengthen their technical skills and understanding of scientific gardening methods. The program will support them in developing and maintaining attractive, well-managed, and environmentally sustainable green landscapes in their respective workplaces and project sites.



Powergrid officials during hands on training on modern gardening practices

Capacity Building of Jharkhand Farmers through Training and Exposure Visits

Farmers from Dumka, East Singhbhum (Tatanagar), Giridih, Gumla, and Sahibganj districts of Jharkhand participated in a series of training and exposure visits organized in February under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture by the Institute of Horticulture Technology. The program aimed to enhance farmers' knowledge and skills in modern horticulture and allied activities. During the training, farmers attended classroom lectures by experts on topics such as improved vegetable cultivation, nursery management, mushroom production, protected cultivation, integrated nutrient and pest management, and efficient water use in farming. Along with theoretical sessions, the farmers received hands-on training and practical demonstrations on nursery raising, use of modern tools, mushroom cultivation techniques, and improved crop management practices. These sessions helped farmers understand the practical application of scientific horticulture methods that can increase productivity and income. As part of the exposure visit, farmers travelled to Haryana where they visited renowned horticulture institutions, progressive farms, and mushroom production centers. At these locations, they interacted with experienced growers and experts to learn about protected cultivation, advanced nursery techniques, and commercial mushroom production. The visits provided valuable insights into successful farming models and modern technologies being adopted by progressive farmers. A group of farmers from Dhanbad Jharkhand visited Raipur, Chhattisgarh for an exposure program on advanced agricultural practices. During this visit, farmers observed innovative cultivation methods, improved farm management practices, and modern technologies that can help enhance crop productivity and sustainability.



Glimpses of Jharkhand farmers Training and Exposure Visit Program

Within-State Horticulture Trainings Strengthen Farmers' Skills in Chhattisgarh

A series of within-state horticulture training programs were organized across several districts of Chhattisgarh during January and February 2026 to enhance farmers' knowledge of modern cultivation practices. The trainings were conducted in districts including Raigarh, Jagdalpur Korba, Mahasamund, Mohla–Manpur–Ambagarh Chowki and Mungeli Chhattisgarh. These programs focused on improving farmers' skills in horticulture development through classroom lectures, practical demonstrations and interactive discussions with experts. Farmers were trained on topics such as improved vegetable cultivation, nursery management, integrated nutrient and pest management, efficient irrigation practices and post-harvest handling of horticultural crops. Demonstrations and field-based learning helped farmers understand modern techniques that can enhance productivity and sustainability. The trainings also encouraged farmers to adopt innovative and scientific horticulture practices suitable to local agro-climatic conditions. Through these capacity-building programs, farmers gained practical knowledge and confidence to improve crop production, diversify their farming systems and increase their income through horticulture-based activities.



Chhattisgarh Farmers learning Training & Pruning during Training Programme

Sahibganj Farmers Gain Advanced Skills in Sugarcane Cultivation

The Institute of Horticulture Technology organized a 7-day training-cum-exposure programme for farmers from Sahibganj at the Indian Institute of Sugarcane Research, Lucknow. The programme was conducted under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture with the support of the Department of Horticulture Government of Jharkhand. Farmers received training on improved sugarcane varieties, single bud sett technology, trench planting, integrated nutrient and pest management, and efficient irrigation practices. They also learned about mechanized cultivation and value addition through jaggery production. The programme provided practical exposure and encouraged farmers to adopt modern sugarcane technologies to improve productivity and income.



Sahibganj Jharkhand farmer visit to IISR Lucknow

Trainings at IHT: Practical Learning and Innovation in Horticulture

In February, the Institute of Horticulture Technology organized a series of training programs focusing on practical learning and modern innovations in horticulture. These programs were designed for farmers, entrepreneurs, gardeners and horticulture enthusiasts to enhance their knowledge and skills in advanced cultivation techniques. The trainings covered important areas such as Saffron cultivation, mushroom cultivation, protected cultivation of vegetables, hydroponic farming, landscape and garden maintenance, and modern home gardening. The mushroom cultivation training introduced participants to different mushroom species and their cultivation techniques. Trainees learned compost preparation, spawn production, pasteurization, casing methods and post-harvest handling through demonstrations and practical sessions. Exposure visits to progressive mushroom farms helped participants understand commercial production and marketing practices.

Another major program focused on protected cultivation of vegetables such as tomato, capsicum and seedless cucumber. Participants learned about greenhouse structures, soilless nursery techniques, fertigation, pest management and crop scheduling. Practical sessions demonstrated nutrient management, micro-climate monitoring and efficient water use to improve productivity and profitability. IHT also organized training on commercial hydroponic farming, where participants learned about different hydroponic systems, nutrient management, crop scheduling and business planning. Hands-on sessions in the hydroponic facility helped trainees understand system installation, crop management and harvesting techniques.



Hands on training on Saffron & Mushroom Production

In addition, practical trainings on landscape and garden maintenance and modern home gardening were conducted. These sessions covered plant selection, lawn care, pruning, irrigation management, container gardening and maintenance of ornamental plants for homes and institutions. Through a combination of classroom lectures, demonstrations and hands-on practice, the February training programs at IHT provided participants with valuable practical exposure and technical knowledge, enabling them to adopt innovative horticulture practices and create sustainable and productive green spaces.



Hands on training on grafting and ornamental plant care



Upcoming Trainings

1. Commercial Hydroponics
2. Orchid Production in Protected Setup
3. Protected Cultivation of Vegetable Crops
4. Landscaping and Garden Maintenance
5. Saffron Cultivation- online and offline
6. Mushroom Production- Online
7. Commercial Nursery Production – Vegetables
8. Italian Gourmet Herbs

IHT is excited to offer these valuable training programs in the upcoming month to help you enhance your skills and grow your agricultural ventures. For details visit www.iht.edu.in



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