

## History of the Directorate of Horticulture in West Bengal

The establishment of a research station on a small 25 acres farm at Krishnagar, Nadia, during the year 1934, marked the beginning of horticultural activities in the state by the then State Department of Agriculture. Although, the administrative and financial resources of the department were directed towards self-sustainability of food grains, horticulture grew up gradually both as research and development programme during the past few decades. Banana Research Station and Vegetable Research Station were set up at Chinsurah & Kalimpong respectively before nineteen sixties. During nineteen sixties five more substations, viz., Mango Research Station; Pineapple Research Station; Horticulture Research Station for Lateritic Tract; Horticulture Research Station for Temperate and Horticulture Research Station for Sub – Tropical Fruit came into existence in different agro climatic regions. It was in this period that two state development schemes, namely Fruit Development Scheme and Block Nursery Scheme were first implemented. A vegetable seed production farm was also established at Barjora, Bankura during this period. In course of time the few more developmental schemes on major fruit crops like Mango, Banana, Pineapple, Mandarin Orange etc. came into operation. A 'Gardeners' Training Centre' was also established at Krishnagar during early part of the sixties.

In spite of limited administrative and financial resources, horticulture has made significant achievements during the past few decades particularly with the advent of excellent commercial varieties of Mango, Litchi, Guava, Sweet Orange, Banana, Pineapple etc. Easier and cheaper propagation methods of Mango like veneer grafting, chip budding etc were evolved at Horticulture Research Station, Krishnagar. Fruit plant demonstration centres had been set up. Input of micronutrients, fruit plants, vegetable seed minikits etc. had also been distributed amongst the farming community along with providing up of modern technical knowhow.

Considering the higher returns per unit area on land and time, generating huge employment opportunities and providing fruit & nutritional security and to give major emphasis on modern horticulture 'Government of West Bengal' separated horticulture from the Department of Agriculture. Horticulture was amalgamated with 'Food Processing Industries' to form a new independent department - 'Department of Food Processing Industries & Horticulture' which came into effect from the year 1997. Complete separation from mother agriculture department was done on 01.09.2007. The Directorate of Horticulture is now working with its limited infrastructure and manpower upto district level. It is also catering the demand of planting materials to the farming communities from its farms located at various pockets of the state. Recently, the district level setup has been extended upto sub-division level and is expected to be functioning soon. The sole mushroom development centre at Chinsurah is engaged in popularising mushroom cultivation. Thus, the mandate of this Directorate is to promote holistic growth of horticulture sector covering fruits, vegetables, flowers, roots and tuber crops, spices and aromatic plants, plantation crops etc.

Farms under the Directorate of Horticulture :

Sl.No.	Name and address of the farm	Area	Availability of planting materials
1	State Horticulture Research and Development Station, Krishnagar, Nadia, Pin - 741101, Ph. No-03472-271900 / 272442	163 acres	mango, litchi, guava, lemon, jackfruit, sapota, banana, star--apple, elephant foot yam, vegetable seeds, medicinal and aromatics etc.
2	Horticultural Research and Development Farm, Taldangra, Bankura, Pin- 722152, Ph.No 033243-265528	75 acres	mango, sapota, guava, ber, grapes, vegetable seeds, spices, medicinal and aromatics, rose, gerbera, tuberose, jasmine etc.
3	Nucleus Vegetable Seed Farm, Barjora, Bankura, Pin -722202, Ph.No -03241- 257956	53 acres	Vegetables.
4	Jalpaiguri Horticulture Research and Development Farm, Mohitnagar, Jalpaiguri, Pin : 735102, Ph.No: 03561 250328.	45 acres	mango, litchi, guava, coconut, lemon, arecanut, elephant foot yam, pineapple, ginger, turmeric, black pepper, ornamentals etc.
5	Chinsurah Horticulture Research and Development Farm, Chinsurah (R.S), Hooghly, Pin-712102. Ph.No -033 2686-8220 / 1832	30 acres	mango, banana, onion, elephant foot yam, gladiolus etc.
6	State Cashewnut & Horticulture Research & Development Farm, New Digha, Purba Medinipur, Pin 721463 Ph.No. 03220 266004	6.8 acres	cashew, coconut etc.
7	Kajlagarh Horticulture Development Farm, Kajlagarh, Purba Medinipur, Ph. No. 03228 267761	4.36 acres	coconut, lemon, betel vine, etc.
8	Horticulture Development Farm, Chandannagar, Hooghly, Ph.No- 033-26856056	7.0 acres	coconut, arecanut, black pepper etc.
9	Coconut Development Farm, Baruipur, South 24 Parganas, Ph. No. 033 24497551	1 acre	coconut

## Driving forces for development and rapid expansion of horticulture in the state:

'**Vision**' of the Directorate of Horticulture under the Department of Food Processing Industries and Horticulture, Govt. of West Bengal is modernisation of horticulture scenario of the state in the emerging areas like adoption of planting through micro-propagated planting materials, commercial and hybrid based seed production, commercial and hybrid seed production of horticultural crops, creation of model nurseries for quality planting materials, adoption of organic horticulture, post harvest management & processing of fruits & vegetables, quality packaging, cool chain infrastructure development, creation of water harvesting technologies in dry land areas, protected cultivation, precession farming and many more to come. With the following government schemes we hope to achieve our targets which seemed beyond our imagination decades ago.

- ➔ National Horticulture Mission (NHM)
- ➔ Rashtriya Krishi Vikash Yojana (RKVY)
- ➔ State Schemes
- ➔ National Bamboo Mission (NBM)
- ➔ National Medicinal Plant (NMP)
- ➔ Agri. – Export – Zones (AEZs)
- ➔ Micro Irrigation (MI).
- ➔ Accelerated Development of Minor Irrigation (ADMI)
- ➔ Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)