

Lets take a taste of Citrus



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With a aim to make available high quality and disease free quality planting materials of different citrus crops, a Centre of Excellence (Citrus), established by the Department of Horticulture & Food Processing, Assam, inaugurated by the Chief Guest of the programme, Kamal Kant Mittal, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary & Agricultural Production Commissioner, Government of Assam on Wednesday at Bamunigaon, Boko, about 61 km from Guwahati. This Inauguration Programme was organized in connection with the First 100 days Programme of Government of Assam. In his speech, Mittal appealed to the farming [community](#) to extend their cooperation towards the various departmental programmes. [As](#) per scheduled programme, Atul [Bora](#), Minister of Agriculture, Horticulture & Food Processing etc., Assam could not attend the programme due to his illness. Amlan Baruah, IAS, Commissioner & Secretary to the Government of Assam, Agriculture Department grace the occasion [as](#) a Guest of Honour in the meeting.

The Centre of Excellence (Citrus) will demonstrate the production of citrus fruits, such [as](#) mandarin, lemon etc. using modern farming techniques. Moreover, post-harvest handling of citrus crops will also be demonstrated in the Centre of Excellence (Citrus). This Centre will also undertake the [training](#) and capacity building programme of citrus [growers](#), departmental personal, nurserymen etc. On the other hand, this Centre will act [as](#) a repository of citrus trees of different types. The total area of the Centre of Excellence (Citrus) is about 11.[8](#) hectares (88 Bigha).

It may mention that, citrus crops occupy an important place in the horticultural output of Assam. These crops cover an area of 30,200 hectares and give a total production of 323,400 MT. The State produces about 3.[2](#)% of the national production of citrus crops. The important citrus crops include Khasi mandarin and Assam lemon.

However, the productivity of citrus crops has been declining in many parts of Assam due to the increased incidence of citrus diseases. In order to overcome the problem and make available disease free planting materials, this Centre of Excellence (Citrus) is established.

Several dignitaries, farmers, scientists, officials etc, including Bhabendra Nath Saikia, Director of Agriculture, Assam; Prabin Kumar Hazarika, Director of Horticulture & Food Processing, Assam , Kamal Choudhury , Chief Engineer , Agriculture, Gautam Mazumder , ADC, South Kamrup took part in the programme.

A Farmers Training Programme on Citrus Crops was also held in the event.

Mowsam Hazarika

BY MOWSAM HAZARIKA

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