

RECORDING & BROADCAST OF RADIO TALK OF DR S K DUBEY (DEPUTY DIRECTOR – NATIONAL HORTICULTURE BOARD, HARYANA, PUNJAB, HIMACHAL PRADESH & UNION TERRITORY CHANDIGARH) ON VARIOUS SCHEMES OF NATIONAL HORTICULTURE BOARD

Dated: 9th April 2025

CHITKARA UNIVERSITY runs a radio station at 107.8 MHTZ for the local people living within the radius of 5 kms. Recently Dr S K Dubey, Deputy Director – National Horticulture Board was kind enough to address the farming community of Punjab state through Chitkara radio station. He briefed the listeners about ongoing schemes of NHB for the welfare of the common masses. He told us that how can people take advantages of the ongoing schemes of the NHB.

The National Horticulture Board (NHB) plays an important role in promoting the growth and modernization of India's horticulture sector. Through various schemes and initiatives, NHB supports farmers, entrepreneurs, and horticulture enterprises in establishing new orchards, expanding existing plantations, developing protected cultivation, and creating modern post-harvest infrastructure. These interventions aim to improve productivity, quality, sustainability, and the overall income potential of horticultural crops.



A radio talk on NHB schemes can help farmers and stakeholders understand the eligibility criteria, financial assistance, application procedures, and benefits available under different programmes. Such awareness programmes can encourage farmers to adopt modern technologies, scientific cultivation practices, efficient irrigation, cold-chain facilities, and better post-harvest management. Radio, with its wide rural reach and simple communication format, can therefore serve as an effective medium for taking information about NHB schemes directly to farming communities and supporting the development of a more competitive and sustainable horticulture sector.

The **National Horticulture Board (NHB)** operates several core, ongoing central sector schemes across India under the umbrella of the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture . While the core schemes remain uniform nationwide, the subsidy rates and maximum financial ceilings differ between plain regions (**Punjab** and **Haryana**) and Himalayan/hilly terrain (**Himachal Pradesh**).

Note: As per recently updated eligibility rules, NHB financial assistance follows strict "one family, one subsidy" guidelines and explicitly excludes serving government employees, ministers, and lawmakers.

1. Development of Commercial Horticulture

This scheme focuses on promoting high-tech commercial production and post-harvest management (PHM) for intensive fruit, vegetable, and flower farming. It covers protected cultivation structures like polyhouses, shade net houses, and high-density planting.

- **Pattern of Assistance:** Provided as a credit-linked, back-ended subsidy tied to a bank term loan.
- **Punjab & Haryana (General Areas):** Offers a **50% subsidy** on the eligible project cost, capped at **₹56 Lakhs** per project.
- **Himachal Pradesh (Hilly/Special Category Area):** Offers an enhanced **50% subsidy** but with an increased project ceiling of up to **₹1 Crore** to account for mountain topography and logistics costs.

2. Capital Investment Subsidy for Cold Storage & Storages

This infrastructure scheme funds the construction, expansion, or technical modernization of Controlled Atmosphere (CA) storages, multi-chamber cold storage units, and specialized onion warehouses.

- **Punjab & Haryana:** Eligible for a **35% capital subsidy** on the project cost, with the total financial assistance capped at **₹2 Crore**.
- **Himachal Pradesh:** Eligible for an elevated **50% capital subsidy** (capped at **₹2 Crore**) to aggressively boost mountain-side cold chain loops for apple and stone-fruit harvests.

3. Cluster Development Programme (CDP)

The CDP focuses on globally scaling up specific horticultural crops by developing geographically localized clusters across production, pre-production, post-harvest management, logistics, and branding.

- **Punjab & Haryana:** Active peri-urban vegetable clusters and high-value citrus/kinnow cultivation zones.
- **Himachal Pradesh:** Primarily focused on structural optimization for the temperate fruit sector, specifically Apple fruit crop clusters.

4. Clean Plant Programme (CPP)

A major national initiative implemented by the NHB to provide Indian farmers with virus-free, high-quality, and disease-free planting material.

- **Regional Impact:** Vital for **Himachal Pradesh** to regenerate apple, pear, and stone fruit orchards with certified elite rootstocks. It is equally leveraged in **Punjab and Haryana** for disease-free citrus fruit, potato seed tissue-culture networks, and high-yield vegetable crops.

5. Technology Development and Transfer for Promotion of Horticulture

This scheme aims to popularize new technology variants by financing research, pilot projects, and training programs.

- Funds the establishment of demonstration plots, introduction of new farm machinery, and skill-building exhibitions organized via state agricultural universities (e.g., PAU in Punjab, CCSHAU in Haryana, and YSPUHF in Himachal Pradesh).

6. Accreditation and Rating of Horticulture Nurseries

To guarantee the quality of commercial seeds and saplings, the NHB enforces a strict evaluation network.

- Fruit nurseries in all three states must secure formal NHB star-ratings and accreditation to supply government-subsidized saplings for state area-expansion programs.

Regional Variations Overview

Parameter	Punjab & Haryana (Plains)	Himachal Pradesh (Hilly/Mountainous)
Commercial Horticulture Subsidy	50% of cost (Max ₹56 Lakhs)	50% of cost (Max ₹1 Crore)
Cold Storage / CA Storage Subsidy	35% of eligible project cost	50% of eligible project cost
Primary Crop Focus Areas	Citrus (Kinnow), Peri-urban vegetables, Potato seed, Flowers	Apples, Stone fruits, Off-season vegetables, Flowers
Protected Cultivation Focus	Net houses & regular polyhouses	Multi-tier polyhouses, hail-protection nets