



State Government will Start Walnut Mission in High Himalayan Regions

Why In News?

On October 17, 2023, Uttarakhand Forest Minister Subodh Uniyal said that the Walnut Mission will be started in collaboration with the Horticulture Department in the higher Himalayan regions to promote walnut production.

Key Points:

- Forest Minister Subodh Uniyal said that several action plans are being worked on to increase the percentage of forestry sector's share in the state's income. Mission to promote walnut and non-timber forest products is part of this strategy. Possibilities of including the production of herbal products are also being considered.
- According to an estimate, the share of the forestry sector in the state's income ranges from 2.5 to 3.5 percent, while the forestry sector has been identified as the major growth driver of the state's economy.
- There are preparations to conduct many new experiments in the state by connecting the forest wealth with the livelihood of the people. Under this, work is being done on different schemes for the plains including the high Himalayan regions. Under this, species like walnut, bamboo, oak, teak, and poplar will be promoted.
- The Forest Minister said that preparations are also being made to change the rules of Lisa sale. In the state, auctions are conducted under the online system of Lisa sale, but the local people do not get any benefit from it. Keeping this in mind, instructions have been given from the Chief Minister's level to explore lease sale possibilities at the local level.
- Instructions have been given at the government level to include it in the action plan for cutting old trees of Eucalyptus species in the state. In their place, new species of plants can also be planted as per the need, which come under the category of non-timber forest products.
- It is noteworthy that Uttarakhand comes second in walnut production in the country after Jammu and Kashmir. There are favorable conditions for walnut production here. Despite this, its production in the state has decreased in the last few years. About 18 to 20 thousand metric tons of walnuts are produced every year in the state.
- There is immense potential for its production in the high altitude areas of Nainital, Almora, Bageshwar, Pithoragarh, Champawat, Dehradun, Pauri Tehri, Chamoli, Rudraprayag and Uttarkashi. This is the reason why the government is now going to start walnut production in mission mode.



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