

Chief Secretary reviews Action Plan for Export of 1,000 MT of Fresh Apricots to Dubai under Lulu Group Initiative



Leh, July 9, 2026: Chief Secretary of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Ashish Kundra, today chaired a review meeting on the implementation of the 1,000 MT Fresh Apricot Export Initiative, launched under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with Lulu Group to facilitate the export of Ladakh's premium fresh apricots to Dubai and other international markets.

Secretary, Agriculture and Horticulture, Bhupesh Chaudhary, delivered a detailed presentation outlining the overall implementation strategy for the initiative. The presentation covered the project overview, key provisions of the MoU, participation of Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and aggregators, financial aspects, identification of villages and hamlets, establishment of collection centres, estimated fresh apricot production across Ladakh, previous production and export data, pre-production planning, harvesting schedules, mapping of production clusters, transportation plans, operational requirements, labour deployment, risk mitigation measures, contingency plans, and village-wise export projections.

Reviewing the progress in detail, the Chief Secretary examined every component of the action plan, with particular emphasis on ensuring seamless procurement, grading, sorting, packaging, transportation and timely export of the fruit. He sought updates on the quantity of fresh apricots being mobilised from different clusters, transportation arrangements from Leh and Kargil to Srinagar and onward to Delhi, and the preparedness of the designated aggregators involved in the supply chain.



The Chief Secretary also reviewed the grading and sorting process, quality standards, rejection rates, and the reasons for any rejections, including issues relating to pest infestation, spoilage or non-conformity with export specifications. He directed the concerned departments and aggregators to minimise post-harvest losses through strict adherence to quality protocols and scientific handling practices.

He further reviewed the payment mechanism for farmers and aggregators, stressing the need for timely and transparent payments. He instructed the officials to ensure that quality certification, procurement procedures and financial transactions remain transparent and are completed without delay.

During the meeting, Secretary Agriculture and Horticulture informed that a special cargo aircraft is scheduled to depart from Delhi for the UAE on July 14, carrying the first consignment of fresh apricots under the initiative. The Chief Secretary reviewed the flight schedule, cargo capacity and dispatch timeline, and directed all stakeholders to ensure that the produce reaches Delhi well within the stipulated timeframe.

Emphasising the importance of efficient logistics, Sh. Kundra reviewed transportation routes from various production clusters, including Sarchu, Zanskar, and instructed the Deputy Commissioners and all concerned agencies to closely monitor road conditions and coordinate with transport authorities to ensure the safe and timely movement of consignments to Srinagar and onward to Delhi. He also stressed the importance of contingency planning in view of possible road disruptions.

The Chief Secretary reviewed the preparedness of all five aggregators and the cooperative society participating in the initiative, assessing their procurement plans, farmer outreach, production estimates and operational readiness. He directed them to maintain regular coordination with farmers and ensure adherence to the production and harvesting schedules.

He also examined the cold chain infrastructure, including pre-cooling facilities, refrigerated transport, temperature maintenance protocols and certification procedures for the produce. Stressing that maintaining the cold chain is critical for preserving fruit quality during transit, he instructed officials to ensure that standard operating procedures are strictly followed from collection centres until export.

Sh. Kundra further emphasised that Ladakh's identity should be prominently reflected on the packaging of the exported produce, highlighting the region's premium-quality apricots in international markets. He directed the concerned agencies to coordinate closely with Fair Exports, Lulu Group and other stakeholders to ensure compliance with packaging, branding and quality standards prescribed under the export agreement.

The meeting also reviewed the proposed flag-off arrangements for the inaugural consignment scheduled on July 14 and discussed inter-departmental coordination, including support from the Police Department for smooth movement of refrigerated vehicles carrying the export shipments.

The meeting was attended by the Senior Superintendent of Police, Leh, Secretary, Agriculture and Horticulture, Deputy Commissioner, Kargil, Director, Horticulture, Director, Agriculture, representatives of the concerned departments, and other senior officials associated with the implementation of the fresh apricot export initiative.