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## Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Program

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India is renowned for its diverse range of fruits, from the luscious mangoes of Ratnagiri to the succulent bananas of Kerala. Despite being a leading producer of fruits like bananas, mangoes, pomegranates, and papayas, India has struggled to meet global export expectations. One of the key factors behind this disparity is disease and substandard quality. In an effort to overcome these challenges and to maximize the complete export potential fruits, India has launched the Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Program.



Under the '**Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Program**,' the Indian government has strategized the establishment of ten Clean Plant Centers. This initiative was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman during the Union Budget of 2023-2024, operating within the ambit of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare with a budget of Rs 2,200 crores. With a vision that extends until 2030, the aim is to amplify the accessibility of disease-free, high-quality planting materials for valuable horticultural crops. These centers specifically target the promotion of domestic crop production, including varieties like Apples, Almonds, Grapes, Avocados, and Blueberries.

The main aim of this program is to transform India's fruit production and export potential. Its primary objective is to ensure the production of high-quality, disease-free materials for horticulture crops. Through its emphasis on improving the health and quality of these plants, the program strives to remove the limitations that have restricted India's fruit export.

Over the years, India's fruit exports have faced a range of difficulties. Among these, a significant challenge has been the variability in the quality of the produce. Issues such as diseases, pests, and health-related problems have impacted the desirability of the fruits in

international markets. Moreover, the strict quality criteria set by importing nations have frequently posed a challenge, which has added an extra dimension of restriction to India's ability for exports.

The Program adopts a multifaceted strategy to address these challenges:

**1.Disease Management:** The program focuses on implementing advanced disease management practices to ensure that the plants are healthy and free from pathogens.

**2.Quality Assurance:** Strict quality control measures are instituted to monitor and uphold the highest produce standards. This encompasses thorough testing and certification procedures.

**3.Research and Development:** Continuous research endeavors are directed towards enhancing fruit varieties, refining cultivation techniques, and developing strains resistant to diseases. These combined efforts contribute to an overall improvement in quality and yield.

**4.Training and Awareness:** The program aims to educate farmers about best practices, proper plant care, and disease prevention methods, empowering them to produce superior crops.

- Contributes to decreasing dependency on other nations.
- Traditionally, India procures plant materials and employs them for several seasons by storing them. With the establishment of plant centers, the storage duration can be shortened to merely six months.
- Enables the cultivation of fresh plantings, ensuring a readily available supply for farmers.
- Promotes self-sufficiency in plant production, enhancing agricultural sustainability.
- Strengthens the domestic fruit industry by fostering higher quality and disease-resistant crops.

The Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Program serves as a ray of hope for India's fruit sector, that transforms its export potential by addressing quality and disease-related challenges. As the program gains momentum, it is expected to boost exports and reinforce India as a reliable supplier of high-quality fruits on a global scale.

