

GOE HARVEST

29th September 2025



ASCI
Agriculture Skill Council of India

CEASI
CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE FOR
AGRICULTURE SKILLS IN INDIA



CEFMI
Centre of Excellence for
Farm Mechanization Skills in India

CEHSI
Centre of Excellence for
Horticulture Skills in India

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Dear Readers,

It is a privilege to reach you through our weekly newsletter, which reflects the pulse of CEASI working under the aegis of ASCI, our collective journey toward skill development and sustainable agriculture. Every story we share here is a testament to the dedication of our teams, partners, and farming communities.

Our mission remains clear: to empower farmers and agri-professionals with the skills, knowledge, and technology they need to thrive in a changing world. By combining innovation with grassroots engagement, we are laying the foundation for a more productive, resilient, and inclusive agricultural sector.

I invite you to read, learn, and actively participate in the opportunities this newsletter presents. Your involvement is what transforms ideas into impact.

Dr. Satender Singh Arya
Chief Executive Officer



Dear Readers,

CEASI weekly newsletter is not only a summary of activities. Rather it is a platform to exchange ideas, celebrate achievements, and strengthen our shared vision for the future of Indian agriculture and its allied sectors like Dairy, Horticulture, Farm Mechanisation, Climate resilience, to name a few. Each edition carries stories of innovation, collaboration, and progress from across the agriculture domain and across geographies.

As we move forward, our focus will continue to be on sharing knowledge, latest developments, building capacity, and sharing success stories at every level from the farmer's field to the policymaker, ensuring that modern tools, techniques, and best practices reach those who need them most.

I agree that this newsletter is at its nascent stage. I encourage the readers and stakeholders to stay engaged with the initiatives, trainings, and updates featured here, and to share the salient achievements and developments that can be published herein. Your ideas for improvement of coverage, publication frequency, new sections to be included and feedback will be of immense importance to make it a model periodical that will provide opportunities to grow stronger and together.

Jaswant Singh Kalsi
Chief Operating Officer

Who We Are:

“Centre of Excellence for Agriculture Skills in India (CEASI)” is an autonomous organization working under the aegis of “Agriculture Skill Council of India (ASCI)”, which is working under Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) for skilling and capacity building of farmers, wage workers, self-employed professionals, extension workers etc. engaged in organized and unorganized segments of Agriculture & Allied sectors.

CEASI is an apex organization of Centres of Excellence in various sub-sectors of agriculture viz.

- Centre of Excellence for Dairy Skills in India (CEDSI)
- Centre of Excellence for Horticulture Skills in India (CEHSI)
- Centre of Excellence for Farm Mechanization Skills in India (CEFMI)
- Centre of Excellence for Climate Resilient Agriculture (CoECRA)
- Centre of Excellence for Artificial Intelligence in Agriculture (CoE-AI)

What We Do:

Skilling & Capacity Building:

Building capacity based on stakeholder needs in agriculture and allied sectors.

Knowledge Management:

Developing QPs, NOS, skill gap reports, and newsletters to support workforce standards.

Research:

Conducting industry research to identify needs and bridge skill gaps as per industry demands.

Advocacy & Advisory Services:

Creating networks to share innovations and address sectoral challenges.

Our Vision

An autonomous institution of excellence committed to developing a highly skilled workforce in agriculture, driving innovation, technological advancement, and sustainable practices to enhance the prosperity and resilience of Indian agriculture.

Our Mission

To emerge as the leading organization for skill development in cutting-edge agricultural practices, both nationally and globally, fostering holistic sector growth through sustainability, profitability, capacity building, knowledge dissemination, policy advocacy, and innovative research.

CEASI's Impact:

CEASI is driving transformative change in Indian agriculture by empowering individuals, enhancing skills, and uplifting communities across the country.

- ▶ 15+ States
- ▶ 15 FPOs Trained & Supported
- ▶ 20,000 Agri / Dairy Professionals Upskilled
- ▶ 5000+ Entrepreneurs Skilled
- ▶ 3000+ Women Empowered
- ▶ 30,000+ Lives Impacted

FARM MECHANIZATION INSIGHTS

PUNJAB LAUNCHES AWARENESS DRIVE TO REDUCE STUBBLE BURNING



The Punjab government has started a large-scale awareness campaign to reduce stubble burning and promote green farming practices. Agriculture Minister Gurmeet Singh Khudian said the state has prepared an extensive information, education, and communication (IEC) plan to encourage farmers to adopt crop residue management (CRM).

The campaign will include 50 publicity vans, 444 street plays, and 12,500 wall paintings to spread awareness. More than 3,300 village-level camps and 296 block-level camps will also be held, along with door-to-door

campaigns by ASHA workers. School students will take part in essay, painting, and debate competitions to build environmental awareness from a young age.

Officials said that 1.58 lakh CRM machines have already been provided to farmers since 2018, helping reduce farm fires. Punjab recorded 10,909 farm fire incidents in 2024, a sharp 70% decline compared to 36,663 in 2023. Authorities expressed hope that community engagement and use of technology will further cut down stubble burning this year, ensuring cleaner air and healthier soil.

MAHARASHTRA BECOMES INDIA'S FIRST AI-POWERED FARMING STATE



Maharashtra is pioneering the use of artificial intelligence in agriculture with the launch of the MahaAgri-AI Policy 2025-2029, a ₹500-crore initiative aimed at improving productivity, sustainability, and farmer incomes. The policy integrates AI, drones, robotics, IoT sensors, and data analytics to support precision farming and better crop management.

Key features include Vistaar, an AI advisory service providing real-time guidance in Marathi, and a centralized Agricultural Data Exchange (A-DeX) that combines soil, weather, and market information for farmers. Drones and satellite imagery enable precise

monitoring of crop health, irrigation needs, and pest control, while blockchain systems ensure transparency and traceability for export-quality produce.

The policy also focuses on capacity building, with four AI training centres established at state agricultural universities. Pilot "Cluster AI Farming" projects in Vidarbha involve groups of farmers managing adjacent plots with AI-based recommendations.

Through phased implementation, public-private partnerships, and district-level engagement, Maharashtra aims to modernise farming practices, improve yields, and strengthen livelihoods, serving as a model for AI adoption in agriculture across India.

KERALA AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT LAUNCHES RS 100 CRORE MICRO-IRRIGATION PROJECT



Thiruvananthapuram: The Kerala state agriculture department plans to roll out a Rs 100 crore micro-irrigation project to help farmers manage water during the summer months. Agricultural Production Commissioner B. Ashok, inaugurating the programme under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Vikas Yojana, emphasised the need for strong public participation.

Although Kerala receives adequate rainfall, per capita water availability remains low. The project will implement micro-irrigation methods, including drip and other water-saving techniques, on a cluster basis for crops such as coconut, banana, cashew, and medicinal

plants. It aims to benefit around 6,000 farmers, reduce water loss by up to 70%, and make agriculture more profitable.

The initiative includes preparation of ponds, tanks, and basic irrigation infrastructure, in collaboration with government and private institutions. Farmers will also receive training through workshops at the panchayat level, conducted by experts from Kerala Agricultural University, local agriculture engineers, and consultants.

Applications for the project can be submitted through the agriculture department, which will provide guidelines and support for effective implementation across the state.

UP TO SHOWCASE FARMING STRENGTH AT INTERNATIONAL TRADE SHOW



Uttar Pradesh will highlight both its farming traditions and modern agri-tech innovations at the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS) 2025, being held from September 25-29 at the India Expo Mart, Greater Noida. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the event, organised under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

The Agriculture Department has set up a 1,000-square-meter pavilion to showcase drones, precision farming equipment, and smart irrigation systems, alongside displays of traditional crops. More than 15 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) from across the state will present their produce and technologies, connecting farmers with buyers

from India and abroad.

Five leading agricultural universities and IIT Kanpur will demonstrate research-based solutions, training models, and agri-tech startups, highlighting opportunities for young entrepreneurs. Seventeen mechanisation firms, along with companies in seeds, fertilizers and crop protection, will display advanced solutions such as drone sprayers and AI-powered monitoring tools.

Officials said the exhibition would provide a platform for farmers, researchers, and industries to collaborate, positioning Uttar Pradesh as a rising hub of agricultural innovation.

HIMACHAL PRADESH HIGHLIGHTS HORTICULTURAL INNOVATIONS AT WORLD FOOD INDIA 2025



Himachal Pradesh showcased its rich horticultural diversity at World Food India 2025, held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, from September 25–28. The state's Department of Horticulture set up an exclusive pavilion featuring premium produce including apples, persimmons, kiwi, dragon fruit, honey, juices, red rice, and exotic capsicum. The event hosted over 1,700 exhibitors, 500 international buyers, and delegates from more than 100 countries.

Director of Horticulture Vinay Singh, leading the delegation with senior officers and progressive farmers from Shimla, highlighted the integration of innovation with tradition to

boost farmers' incomes. The pavilion attracted attention for value-added products like Blueberry Crush, Seabuckthorn Shots, patented Guchhi and Red Rice Teas, specialty honeys, bee-wax candles, and lemongrass oil innovations. Cordyceps cultivation by VertiBoom also drew global interest.

With APEDA's support, the delegation engaged with international buyers, emphasizing strengthening farmer-producer organizations, expanding cold storage, and aligning Himachal's produce with global market demands for better price realization.

PROTECTED CULTIVATION TRANSFORMS PRAYAGRAJ INTO FLORICULTURE EXPORT HUB



Prayagraj's horticulture sector is witnessing a transformation with the adoption of protected cultivation methods, including polyhouses and net houses, boosting farmer incomes and export potential. Under the Horticulture Development Mission, six polyhouses and two net houses were installed last year, with farmers receiving a 50% government subsidy. Four polyhouses focus on floriculture, cultivating premium-quality flowers such as the locally popular 'Top Secret' rose and daisies, while the two net houses are used for dragon fruit cultivation.

District officials report that these high-tech structures provide a controlled environment, ensuring consistent yields despite erratic weather. The flowers are now being exported to markets in Russia and the Middle East, positioning Prayagraj as an emerging floriculture hub. Farmers like Jigyasu Mishra from Harwari Lakhapur have leveraged polyhouse cultivation to tap international markets, growing high-demand roses and significantly enhancing earnings. The initiative is setting a model for sustainable, profitable horticulture in the region.

HISAR FARMERS SHIFTS FROM TRADITIONAL CROPS TO LUCRATIVE HORTICULTURE



Farmers from villages in Hisar, Haryana, has transformed his agricultural journey by moving from traditional crops like paddy and cotton to high-value horticulture. Beginning in 2005 with guava cultivation on two acres, Khawal earned Rs 2.5 lakh per acre, gradually expanding to 21 acres growing kinnow, lemon, jujube, sweet lime, and date palm using drip irrigation. In 2020, he purchased an additional five acres, bringing his total farm size to 25 acres, and began vegetable cultivation in net houses. By 2024, he earned Rs 25 lakh from bell peppers grown on just one acre, prompting him to plant bell peppers across all four acres of his net

house this year for sale at Delhi's Azadpur market.

Khawal's success highlights the profitability of horticulture and protected cultivation, demonstrating how strategic crop diversification can significantly enhance farmer incomes while reducing reliance on traditional crops.

DODDASAGGERE BOTANICAL GARDEN IN KARNATAKA SEES SURGE IN BIODIVERSITY



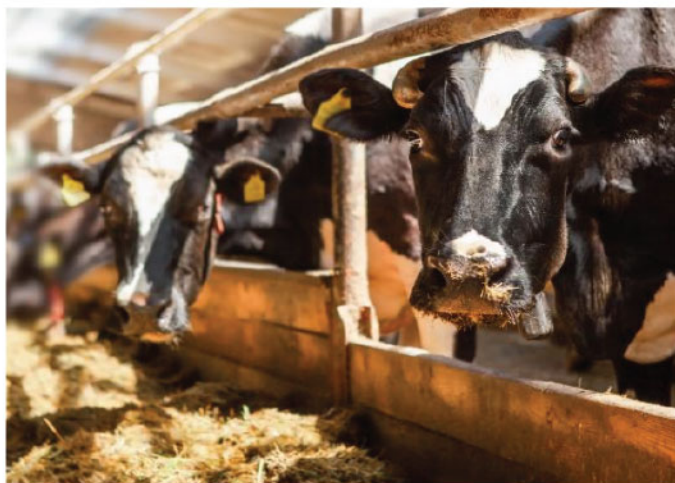
Doddasaggere Botanical Garden in Tumakuru, Karnataka, modelled on Bengaluru's Lal Bagh, is witnessing a remarkable rise in biodiversity. An Avifauna Survey in March 2025 recorded 75 bird species—up from 35 in 2021—including two near-threatened and one vulnerable species, along with five long-distance winter migrants.

Developed by the Horticulture Department over 120 of its planned 228 acres, the garden now hosts nearly 80 bird species and around 50 species of animals, reptiles, butterflies, and bees. Afforestation efforts on 14 acres, supported by Mphasis and United Way of Bengaluru, introduced 1,00,000 saplings of 77

native trees to recreate a dense dry deciduous forest.

The park's 17 blocks include a bird block, fragrance block, palmetum, and nutrition garden with nearly 400 fruiting plants. The initiative focuses on carbon sequestration, oxygen generation, soil and water conservation, and enhancing habitat for wildlife, establishing the garden as a model for ecological restoration and horticultural excellence in Karnataka.

BANAS DAIRY CUTS 30% METHANE WITH AI CLIMATE TECH



Banas Dairy has launched the world's largest methane reduction program. Banas Dairy, Asia's largest dairy cooperative, has launched the Banas Methane Management Program (BMMP), marking the world's largest methane reduction initiative in the dairy sector. Spearheaded by Chairman Shankar Chaudhary, the program aims to achieve a 30% reduction in methane emissions from 3 million cattle annually, positioning India at the forefront of sustainable dairy practices.

The initiative is powered by eVerse.AI's climate technologies, including the ConnectedCow and GreenCow digital MRV systems, which track,

verify, and mitigate livestock emissions. By combining technology with natural plant-derived feed additives and the National Dairy Development Board's Ration Balancing Program, the BMMP also enhances productivity, with expected gains of 10-12% in milk yield.

Methane, nearly 80 times more potent than CO₂, is a major contributor to global warming. By integrating proven strategies from eVerse.AI's Maharashtra Methane Mission, Banas Dairy is pioneering scalable solutions. This landmark initiative sets a global benchmark for climate-smart agriculture, demonstrating how cooperative-led innovation can strengthen both farmer livelihoods and environmental responsibility.

PUNJAB SLASHES VERKA DAIRY PRICES IN MAJOR RELIEF MOVE



Punjab implements a significant reduction in Verka dairy prices to ease inflationary pressures on households.

The Punjab government, led by Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, has announced a significant cut in Verka dairy prices to provide relief to households struggling with inflation. As part of the move, ghee prices have been reduced by ₹30-35 per kilogram, while paneer prices are down by ₹15 per kilogram, directly lowering the cost of essential food items for families across the state.

The initiative forms a key part of the administration's broader strategy to prioritize consumer welfare and reinforce the cooperative dairy model. By making dairy products more affordable, the government aims to ease economic pressure on poor and middle-class families, who spend a large share of their income on food.

The price reduction is also expected to boost demand, resulting in higher sales volumes for Verka. This, in turn, could benefit farmers by strengthening cooperative institutions and ensuring better incomes. Additionally, increased consumption may contribute to higher tax revenues, supporting Punjab's long-term development agenda.

INDIA HOSTS ITS FIRST-EVER CHEESE FESTIVAL SHOWCASING INNOVATION AND DIVERSITY IN DAIRY



The First Indian Cheese Festival 2025 was held at the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) in Anand, Gujarat, marking a significant event for the country's dairy sector.

Jointly organized by the Indian National Committee of the International Dairy Federation and the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, the festival aimed to inspire innovation and elevate the quality and market potential of Indian cheese. It featured 59 varieties of cheese from 12 participants, including cooperatives, startups, and artisanal producers.

The event included competitions, exhibitions, and seminars, culminating in a prize ceremony that highlighted excellence in cheese-making. Notably, Bengaluru Milk Union Limited won for Ripened Cheddar, while Vivanda Gourmet was recognized for its non-cow milk cheese and innovation. Dr. Meenesh Shah, Chairman of the NDDB, underscored the significance of expanding the organized cheese sector, stating that it presents vast opportunities for domestic and international markets. The festival also highlighted the increasing demand for cheese in urban India, driven by changing lifestyles and growing exposure to global cuisines, projecting double-digit growth for India's cheese segment.

DELHI'S DAIRY SECTOR GETS A GREEN ENERGY BOOST



In a significant step toward sustainability and waste management, Delhi's Chief Minister inaugurated the city's first large-scale biogas plant at the Nangli Dairy.

Delhi Chief Minister Gupta inaugurated a pioneering biogas facility at Nangli Dairy, marking a significant step toward sustainable waste management and green energy. Spread across 2.72 acres, the plant has the capacity to process 200 tonnes of cattle dung and biodegradable waste daily, addressing both urban sanitation and agricultural waste challenges.

The facility is projected to generate 14,000 cubic meters of raw biogas per day, which will be purified into 5.6 tonnes of compressed biogas (CBG). This clean energy will be supplied to Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL), while nutrient-rich manure produced as a byproduct will serve as an organic fertilizer, supporting the circular economy.

Highlighting the scale of the challenge, Gupta noted that Delhi produces nearly 1,500 tonnes of cow dung daily, stressing the need for more such initiatives. She credited the "triple-engine government" for delivering the project, linking it to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's green energy vision.

The project sets a global model for integrating dairy waste management with renewable energy production, creating economic and environmental value simultaneously.

PM-KISAN: GOVT TRANSFERS OVER RS 540 CR TO FARMERS IN THREE FLOOD-HIT STATES



This instalment has been specially prioritised for the farmers... who have been severely affected by recent floods and landslides,” the Agriculture Ministry said.

The Centre Friday released Rs 540 crore under the August-November instalment of the PM-KISAN scheme to beneficiaries in Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, and Uttarakhand, which were recently hit by floods.

The Rs 2,000 instalment was released by Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

“This instalment has been specially prioritised for the farmers... who have been severely affected by recent floods and landslides,” the

Agriculture Ministry said.

Under the scheme, the government provides those eligible ₹6,000 in three equal instalments paid in four-monthly cycles — April-June, August-November and December-March.

TRICHY DISTRICT TO ESTABLISH 28 FARMERS' WELFARE CENTRES



The agriculture and horticulture departments in Trichy district are establishing 28 Farmers' Welfare Centres (FWCs) as part of the Chief Minister's Farmers' Welfare Service Centres scheme. These centres, with a total investment of ₹4.2 crore and a subsidy of ₹1.26 crore, aim to promote agricultural entrepreneurship, particularly among agricultural graduates.

FWCs will serve as hubs where farmers can obtain farm inputs, technologies, and expert consultations. Of the 28 centres in Trichy, 16 will be supported by the agriculture department and 12 by the horticulture department. Backend subsidies will be provided, including ₹3 lakh for

centres valued at ₹10 lakh and ₹6 lakh for those valued at ₹20 lakh.

Statewide, the initiative supports the creation of 1,000 FWCs with a total subsidy outlay of ₹42 crore, addressing the growing number of agricultural graduates and diploma holders produced yearly.

SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MAHARASHTRA TO LEARN ABOUT FARMING FROM NEXT YEAR



Starting June 2026, the Maharashtra state education department will introduce an agricultural curriculum for school students to promote practical learning and cooperative teaching methods in farming. Announced by Minister of State for Education, Pankaj Bhojar, the curriculum will cover a range of topics including soil science, crop production, irrigation, agricultural technology, plant protection, horticulture, and animal husbandry.

It aims to bridge traditional and modern farming practices while integrating local rural traditions, arts, and geography. The initiative is designed to improve students' awareness of

agriculture's role, especially in rural settings, and to lay a foundation for professional paths in the agricultural and allied sectors, including agri-tourism.

Experts will be involved in creating a comprehensive, technology-inclusive syllabus that connects the younger generation to farming and boosts their scientific understanding of agricultural practices.

INDIA AND RUSSIA STRENGTHEN COOPERATION IN AGRICULTURE



New Delhi: Union Agriculture Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan met His Excellency Mr. Dmitry Patrushev, Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, at Krishi Bhawan on September 26 to discuss expanding bilateral cooperation in agriculture.

The meeting focused on enhancing trade in agricultural products, improving market access, and promoting technology-driven solutions. Both sides expressed interest in formalising partnerships through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and agreed to explore initiatives in seed traceability systems, technical collaboration, and

innovation in agriculture.

Shri Chouhan highlighted India's priorities, including food security, improving farmer incomes, and access to safe and nutritious food, while Mr. Patrushev emphasised Russia's keen interest in strengthening agricultural trade ties.

The leaders also discussed academic exchanges, scholarship opportunities for students, and research collaboration to foster sustainable and inclusive growth in the sector.

The meeting included senior officials from both countries' agriculture ministries, research bodies, and diplomatic missions, reflecting the commitment of India and Russia to deepen long-term collaboration in trade, education, research, and development in agriculture.

SHASHWAT MITHAS INITIATIVE SHOWCASES TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABLE SUGARCANE FARMING IN AYODHYA

Under the Shashwat Mithas initiative, the Centres of Excellence for Agriculture Skills in India (CEASI), in collaboration with UPL SAS Limited, are promoting sustainable sugarcane farming practices in Ayodhya. The program aims to equip farmers with eco-friendly techniques that improve productivity while conserving natural resources and enhancing resilience to climate change.

So far, 500 farmers have been surveyed across 90 unorganized and 3 organized farmer groups to understand existing cultivation practices and identify areas for improvement. Based on these insights, village-level demonstration plots have been set up to showcase best practices in water-use efficiency, soil health management, and the application of organic inputs.

As part of this effort, a Farmers' Field Day was recently organized at one of the model plots, where participating farmers compared outcomes with a control plot. The demonstration of ZEBa technology highlighted significant benefits, including improved crop growth, better soil moisture retention, and reduced irrigation needs. The event witnessed the participation of over 100 farmers, who expressed keen interest in adopting sustainable and water-efficient practices.

Key stakeholders, including UPL, KM Sugar Mills, and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), also joined the program, reinforcing the shared vision of driving ecological sustainability and inclusive growth in the sugarcane sector.



CEFMI PARTNERS WITH EKL CSR FOUNDATION TO STRENGTHEN FPO LEADERSHIP IN HARYANA

collaboration with Escorts Kubota Limited, is conducting a 3-day residential capacity-building training program for Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) at Escorts Kubota Advanced Farming Institute (EKFAI), Kurukshetra, Haryana.

The program, scheduled from 15th to 17th September 2025, is being held in two batches and brings together 75 Board of Directors (BoDs) and CEOs representing 35 FPOs from Madhya Pradesh.

The training has been designed to strengthen organizational governance and structure of FPOs, enhance participants' understanding of farm mechanization, and improve their knowledge of financing mechanisms for

agri-business activities. Special emphasis is being placed on developing leadership skills, fostering better decision-making practices, and promoting sustainable mechanization solutions that directly benefit member farmers.

Through interactive sessions, case studies, and group discussions, the program provides a platform for FPO leaders to exchange experiences, address operational challenges, and explore opportunities for collective growth. The residential format ensures an immersive learning environment, encouraging peer-to-peer learning and collaboration across participating FPOs.



AWARENESS PROGRAM ON QUALITY, HYGIENE & FOOD SAFETY FOR DAIRY AND STREET FOOD STAKEHOLDERS IN ASSAM

The Centre of Excellence for Dairy Skills in India (CEDSI) successfully organized the 2nd batch of its Awareness Program on Quality, Hygiene & Food Safety on 16th September 2025 at its training centre, hosted c/o Directorate of Dairy Development, Khanapara, Assam. The program brought together 30 participants, including traditional sweet makers, members of dairy cooperative societies (DCS), and street food vendors from across Assam.

The sessions were conducted by Dr. Manashi Das, Head of the Food Technology Department at Assam Skill University, who shared her expertise on maintaining high standards in food quality and safety. Participants received practical guidance on implementing hygiene practices,

enhancing the quality of traditional sweets and dairy products, and ensuring safe preparation and handling of street food.

Interactive demonstrations emphasized key aspects such as proper storage, sanitation, and personal hygiene, along with techniques to preserve taste and nutritional value. Attendees gained actionable knowledge to meet regulatory standards and improve consumer trust. Feedback highlighted the relevance of the program in supporting sustainable and safe food practices.

This initiative underscores CEDSI's continued commitment to capacity building and skill development in Assam's dairy and street food sector.





CEASI

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AGRICULTURE SKILLS IN INDIA



(CEASI), Unit No. 101, First Floor, Greenwoods
Plaza, Block 'B' Greenwoods City, Sector-45,
Gurugram, Haryana-122009



+91 74287 06078



info@cedsi.in



www.ceasi.in



@ceasi_india