

Gangtok, Jan 11: (IPR) Sikkim Organic Day 2018 will be celebrated with the enthusiastic participation of farmers, delegates and stakeholders on the 17th and 18th of this month at Saramsa Garden, Ranipool, it was informed. It may be recalled that Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi had made the landmark declaration of Sikkim as the first Organic Farming State in the country on 18th January, 2016. Consequently, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Sikkim Shri Pawan Chamling made the announcement that 18th January will be celebrated each year as Sikkim Organic Day, through diverse activities promoting the organic way of life.

In a press conference organised by Food Security & Agriculture Development and Horticulture & Cash Crops Development Department today, Secretary Shri Khorlo Bhutia shared the activities lined up for Sikkim Organic Day Celebration 2018. He informed that the celebrations this year is themed 'Transforming Agriculture For A Better World', and would be spread across two days (17th & 18th January) comprising of activities such as display of organic produce from throughout the State, competitions in vegetable and flowers production, progressive farmers Award, Seminars, and interaction with delegates. Shri Khorlo informed that the two-day event will be graced by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Sikkim Shri Pawan Chamling as the Chief Guest, and will have the presence of Acharya Bal Krishna of Patanjali Ayurveda, Haridwar, among host of other dignitaries. The two-day Seminar will see experts from the State Government and Central Government Agencies deliberate on various aspects of Organic Farming like production, value chain development, Pest Management, and various schemes being implemented by the Government.

According to Shri Khorlo, the two-day event will see a participation of about 300 farmers on each day, along with stakeholders and visiting delegates.

Interacting with the media, Secretary Shri Khorlo Bhutia shared that the officers and field staff of the Agriculture and Horticulture Departments have been continuously making field visits, interacting with farmers and providing technical support wherever necessary. He reiterated that the Government is committed in its resolve to make Sikkim into a self-sustainable State in vegetable production. He shared that the farmers in the State are highly motivated and with support from concerned quarters and stakeholders, the State will be able to meet the deficit of 40,000 metric tonnes of vegetables by the end of March, 2018. At present, the State is producing 80,000 metric tonnes of vegetables out of the total requirement of 1,20,000 metric tonnes. Out of the total area under organic mission in Sikkim, vegetable cultivation is being carried out in 15000 hectares. He also informed that two Kisan Bazars with sufficient space will be operational soon in Gangtok and Namchi, and two cold storage units of 500 metric tonnes capacity each will be established near Jorethang in South Sikkim and around Ranipool in East Sikkim. He appealed to all the stakeholders to provide support and encouragement to the farmers at various stages.

The Secretary was accompanied in the press conference by senior officers of the Agriculture and Horticulture Departments.

