

Visit of Chief Agriculture Officer Baramulla for inspection of Saffron Crop at Govt. Degree College Baramulla.



As part of departmental initiative to promote agropreneurship among college students, the department of Botany successfully grew forth crop of Saffron in the outdoor farm and indoor in the departmental museum. The Saffron cultivation in the college campus is being under taken as part of departmental endeavour with an aim to provide Hands-On training to students about various aspects of its cultivation like method of Corm sowing, harvesting of saffron flowers, plucking of stigma and drying techniques involved in its processing.

Despite COVID -19 pandemic the department continued its efforts to augment existing piece of land by way of its expansion from 3 Marla's to 5 Marla's of land and preparation of saffron beds in ridge and groove pattern.

This year around 50 kgs. of new corms (Bulbs) were planted in the first week of September following suitable protocol with line to line spacing of 9 inches and corm to corm spacing of around 4 inches at depth of 6 inches.

The corms began to flower in the last week of October and the flowering is on right now.

The students are being given first-hand information about flower morphology, stigma separation and collection and drying techniques.

In the indoor segment, the corms were planted in trays without soil. Simultaneously saffron corms were also planted in flower pots with specific soil: vermicompost mixture like 50:50, 60:40 and 70:30 ratio of soil to organic manure (vermicompost).

Pertinent to mention that department has modified ceiling of museum and lab by way of uninstalling GI sheets and fixing of fibre glass sheets to facilitate passage of sky light.

To provide technical expertise, a 10 membered team of Govt. Agricultural department Baramulla headed by Chief Agricultural Officer Baramulla Mr.Sasan along with Agricultural extension officers and subject matter specialists visited college on 8th November 2021 to have interaction with College Principal Prof.(Dr.) Mushtaq Ahmad Lone and faculty of Botany. The team physically inspected outdoor and indoor saffron farm, vermicompost unit and Mushroom cultivation chamber. The Chief Agriculture Officer (CAO) Mr.Sasan appreciated the efforts of department in promoting agropreneurship in college as alternate means of livelihood after Govt. sector as this sector can give opportunity to young college scholars to earn while learning.

The officers also visited dept. of chemistry of college and got acquainted with HPLC equipment which the college has procured this year with an initiative to promote interdisciplinary research in chemical and biological sciences.

The CAO assured worthy principal and faculty that Agriculture department will provide every possible start- up support like financial support in the form of seed money, or Mushroom compost and casing to students with drive and initiative to become agropreneur.

The team summed up this visit with extending gratitude to Principal and dept. of Botany for promotion of agro based skill training to college students in digitized era.