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Strawberry Cultivation

Published On: 15-11-2022

Why is in news? Strawberry cultivation providing employment opportunities to youth in J&K

In Jammu and Kashmir, Strawberry cultivation is gaining momentum as it is yielding good profits to the farmers. Strawberry cultivation is equally providing ample employment opportunities to the youth of Jammu and Kashmir.

Farmers in **Gassu Batpora village on the outskirts of Srinagar city** are happy with the harvesting of strawberries. Having the highest number of people growing strawberries, **Gassu is famously known as the 'Strawberry Village'**.

Farmers cultivate tonnes of exotic berries on hundreds of acres of land every year. It is also the first one to produce strawberries in the entire Kashmir Valley. Women as well as children, are also involved in the strawberry business in this village.

In recent years, **strawberry has emerged as a cash crop in the Kashmir valley** with many vegetable farmers having switched to strawberry cultivation.

Besides strawberries, Kashmiri fruits like **apple, cherry, grapes, apricot and plum** are also very famous across the world for their quality and rich taste and are bringing good returns to the farmers of Jammu and Kashmir

Strawberry:

Strawberry (*Fragaria sp.*) is a **native of temperate regions**, but varieties are available which can be **cultivated in subtropical climate**.

In India it is generally cultivated in the hills. Its main center of cultivation are Nainital (district) and Dehradun in Uttar Pradesh, Mahabaleshwar (Maharashtra), Kashmir Valley, Bangalore and Kalimpong (West Bengal).

In recent years, strawberry is being cultivated successfully in plains of Maharashtra around Pune, Nashik and Sangali towns.

Satara district famous for the country's **80% strawberry production**. The fruit is grown mainly in Mahabaleshwar, Wai and Panchagani areas. The rest comes from Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir.

The strawberry is the most widely adapted of the small fruits. Strawberries are **grown throughout Europe, in every state of the United States, as well as in Canada and South America**.

The SAS- **Strawberry Advisory System mobile app** monitors real-time and forecast weather conditions that increase the risk for Botrytis and anthracnose fruit rots, providing risk level information for each disease.

Strawberry is rich in Vitamin C and iron Some varieties viz. Olympus, Hood & Shuksan having high flavour and bright red colour are suitable for ice-cream making Other varieties like Midway, Midland, Cardinal, Hood, Redchief and Beauty are ideal for processing.

As per 2019 data, **China is the largest strawberry producer** in the world followed by **United States of America**. China and United States of America produce together 57% of World's total

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