

# Govt school kids to raise own kitchen garden

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**Lucknow:** Students of government-run schools will now raise their own kitchen garden and eat fruits and vegetables they choose to grow.

Ministry of human resource development (MHRD) has issued instructions to all government schools up to Class 8 to include the produce from the kitchen garden in mid-day meal.

"When children will work hard to grow vegetables and are asked to eat it, the vegetable will taste different to them for the simple reason that they would already have had developed a connect," said sources in the

state government, adding that the idea was to boost the nutritive value of mid-day meal.

MHRD will allocate Rs 5,000 per year per school for the purpose and each school will have to work out its own plan considering what variety of vegetables or fruits can be grown in the locality.

Mid-day meal has already been a turnaround story for primary school education in the country and adding a vegetable to the mid-day meal will further boost the scheme.

The schools that do not have land available can raise a terrace garden and use



Over 2,500 schools in the state already have their kitchen garden

pots, containers or bags. The gardens will have to be managed by children mainly with the help of staff and teachers. In UP, it will be done with the help of the Central Institute of Subtropical

Horticulture (CISH). "We are seeking expert advice to make proper use of fund so that money is not wasted due to lack of planning," an official said.

About 2,500 schools in the state already have their kitchen garden raised by teachers and students much before these instructions came.

Such schools can play a major role in helping others on deciding things like who would take care of the garden when the school is closed.

The state government will organise a workshop at Central Institute for Subtropical Horticulture (CISH) in

the first week of August wherein teachers, staff and students of some of the schools will be called and their doubts, if any, cleared. They will also be taught gardening.

Director, CISH, Shailendra Rajan, said: "The workshop will also guide participants on collective growing of vegetables and fruits on the land available to them."

Besides improving the nutritive value of mid-day meal, it will also make children aware of seasonal vegetables. The activity may also bring a change in the food habits of the families of these children," Rajan said.