

**Expression of Interest
for the setting up of Model Herb Farms
of the following crops (Rosemary, Lavender and Damask Rose)
Meghalaya Basin Management Agency (MBMA)**

1. Introduction and Context

Meghalaya presents an ideal setting for cultivating a variety of aromatic and medicinal plants. The findings on the exposure visit to Uttarakhand has revealed that Rosemary, Lavender, and Damask Rose are being cultivated in similar agroclimatic regions as that of Meghalaya. This has led to the distribution of planting material of Lavender and Rosemary to the farmers in the state. However, since the crops are novel to our farmers, the reception has not been very positive from the farmers' side despite awareness being provided. Hence, it was decided to establish model herb farms of these crops through technical assistance from Dhar Kshetriya Vikash Sansthan, a society involved with farmers in Uttarakhand which has been successful in promoting these herb crops in the state of Uttarakhand. These herb model farms will be established in farms belonging to progressive farmers to provide a proof of concept of profitability in cultivating these crops. The following outlines the brief description and benefits of each plant.

i. Rosemary (Rosmarinus officinalis):

Rosemary is a fragrant herb with needle-like leaves and blue flowers. It is native to the Mediterranean region but can thrive in various climates.

Cultivation: Rosemary prefers well-drained soil and requires moderate sunlight. It can be grown in pots or directly in the ground.

Benefits: Rosemary has culinary and medicinal uses. It is known for its aromatic properties and can be used in cooking, essential oils, and herbal remedies. Rosemary oil is also used in cosmetics and aromatherapy.

ii. Lavender (Lavandula spp.):

Lavender is a versatile herb with fragrant, purple flowers and silvery-green foliage. It is renowned for its soothing scent and beauty.

Cultivation: Lavender thrives in well-drained, slightly alkaline soil and requires full sun. It can be grown in fields, gardens, or as decorative landscaping.

Benefits: Lavender is widely used in perfumery, aromatherapy, and herbal medicine. Its essential oil is known for its calming and relaxation-inducing properties. Lavender can also be used in culinary creations, teas, and sachets.

iii. Damask Rose (Rosa damascena):

Damask Rose is a fragrant rose variety known for its pink to light red flowers and sweet aroma. It is prized for its essential oil.

Cultivation: Damask Rose thrives in well-drained soil and requires ample sunlight. It can be cultivated in gardens and fields.

Benefits: Damask Rose is highly valued in the perfume and cosmetics industry for its exquisite scent. Its essential oil is used in the production of rosewater, perfumes, and skincare products. Additionally, it has a history of use in traditional medicine for its potential health benefits.

Potential Benefits for Meghalaya:

Economic Diversification: Cultivating these aromatic plants can provide a new source of income for local farmers and entrepreneurs.

Tourism: The beauty and aroma of lavender and Damask Rose fields can attract tourists, promoting eco-tourism in Meghalaya.

Medicinal and Cosmetic Industry: The essential oils and extracts from these plants can be processed locally and used in the production of cosmetics, herbal remedies, and perfumes.

Sustainable Agriculture: These plants are often low-maintenance and can be grown using eco-friendly practices, contributing to sustainable agriculture in the region.

2. Objectives of the EOI

- i. To identify and gauge the level of interest from prospective stakeholders, including farmers, entrepreneurs, or organizations, in establishing and managing herb model farms.
- ii. The EOI may include pre-qualification criteria to ensure that potential participants meet certain standards or qualifications, such as financial stability, experience in farming or herb cultivation, and adherence to regulatory requirements.
- iii. Allows project organizers to identify suitable partners or investors who align with the project's objectives, values, and long-term goals. It helps in building a collaborative and committed team.
- iv. The EOI may outline the expected roles, responsibilities, and contributions of potential participants, helping to set clear expectations from the outset.
- v. To identify the resources (financial, human, and technological) that potential participants can bring to the project, which is essential for planning and implementation.

3. Benefits to the partner taking up the project

- i. A herb model farm will be established on the land as recommended by the partner; this will serve as the hotbed for the best package of practices of cultivation of these herbs which might later be converted into a farmer training school for the particular crop.
- ii. The herb model farm will consist of a nursery for propagation of planting material.
- iii. The produce from these farms will be shared between the partner and the nodal IVCS/CBO as per negotiations between both parties for a period of 5 years, after which, all the proceeds will go to the partner.
- iv. Trainings on package of practices on cultivation and post-harvest processing will be provided to the partner, as well as exposure to various markets and buyers/traders of the herb crops.

4. Who can apply

- I. The applicant can be an individual farmer with a Farmers' ID card.
- II. Farmer-based organization/cooperative society.
- III. Agri-Entrepreneurs and start-ups.

5. Final selection would depend on the application and the presentation that the applicants will have to make to a panel.

6. Detailed contract between the Agri-entrepreneur, farmer collective and the anchor Community Based Organization (CBO) will be finalised post the selection process.

7. GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

a. Applications must be delivered in a written form as per Annexure A to the address below through registered post/speed post/courier/by handing over to office staff/via email on or before the 20th of October 2023, 5 pm.

Address to:

*The Chief Executive Officer,
Meghalaya Basin Management Agency,
C/o Meghalaya State Housing Financing Cooperative Society Ltd.
Upper Nongrim Hills, Shillong -793003*

“IMPORTANT POINTS TO NOTE”

As per the evaluation done by the technical support partner, i.e. Dhar Kshetriya Vikash Sansthan, a society based in Uttarakhand that has been helping farmers in Uttarakhand with the cultivation and marketing of herbs and aromatic plants, it was found that:

- ✓ The areas of higher elevation in Meghalaya are more feasible for the cultivation of these novel crops as they possess the more suitable soil and agroclimatic conditions.
- ✓ The areas around Sohra and most of the southern part of Meghalaya that receives heavy and incessant rainfall through most of the year is not ideal for the cultivation of these crops. The

areas that lie in the leeward side of the Meghalaya plateau is more ideal, these include the regions of:

- a) Mawthadraishan hill range.
- b) Mairang hill range.
- c) Dieng-iei hill range.

***Therefore, areas in and around these three regions would be preferred for the intervention.**

- ✓ The proposed land should not have problems of waterlogging, but a water source must be present nearby as these crops are required to be planted during the winter months of November-January and irrigation will be necessary.
- ✓ The proposed areas should be open to people from outside the state from freely visiting the farms as regular monitoring of the progress will be required to be done by the members of DKVS. All necessary paperwork and documentation will be prepared by DKVS in advance.