

## **HRD Ministry directs all schools to set up kitchen gardens to teach kids how to grow food**

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The HRD Ministry has directed all schools to set up a kitchen garden and instructions to this effect have been issued by the Centre to all the states and union territories in October. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) has issued guidelines for developing and maintaining kitchen gardens in all schools, both in urban and rural areas.

### **Why are schools directed to set up kitchen gardens?**

The exercise is aimed at improving nutrition in schools, inculcating habits among children in an era

of rapid urbanization, and mounting environmental issues.

It also seeks to develop among children the skill of growing own vegetables and fruits in schools and homes.

The guidelines lay emphasis on a perception that kitchen garden which is being referred to as a school nutrition garden can be set up anywhere, even in a school in a crowded urban area.

### **What instructions have been sent to schools for setting up kitchen gardens?**

The HRD Ministry has sent instructions to Chief Secretaries and Education Secretaries of all states under the guidelines for School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens to issue necessary instructions to the state/UT for setting up of kitchen gardens in all schools.

As per the guidelines, provision of seeds, saplings, organic manure, training and technical assistance under the scheme can be obtained by tying up with agencies like Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Department of Agriculture/Horticulture, Food and Nutrition Board, state agriculture universities and forest department.

Moreover, activities like construction of boundary wall and levelling of land for the kitchen garden can be taken up under the MGNREGA scheme.