

# The Statesman

## State takes steps to help exporters meet norms for European market

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Abul Razzaq Molla addressing the 3rd food conclave at ITC Sonar on Saturday. (Photo: SNS)

In a bid to help fruits and vegetables exporters subsequently enter the European markets, West Bengal Government has taken initiatives to meet the stringent norms prevalent in most European countries, said the food processing & horticulture minister Mr Abdur Rezzak Mollah. He was addressing the inaugural session of the Food Processing Conclave organised by CII.

“While Rs 15 crore has been spent on setting up a hot water treatment plant at Malda, Rs 25 crore has been invested on providing modern water sprinklers in farms. The government is also encouraging participatory farming, making it easier for agro-based companies to enter into supply contracts with farmers,” the minister said.

Mr Molla said, “Litchi has huge prospects for export in European markets given that we are able to comply with their food processing norms.”

About the lesser yields of oranges in the last harvest, Mr Molla said that in spite of repeated endeavours, cultivators were unwilling to switch to new methods of grafting and budding even though in the old method the plants were attacked by pests affecting the produce. He added that to avoid such situations cultivators are being educated and better yield is expected in the next harvest.

## FSSAI IN NEWS

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Ashish Bahuguna, chairman, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), said, “The Eastern states have enormous potential which has remained unrealized for long years. Creating an eco-system which will enable farmers realise better prices is the need of the hour.”