

Central Institute for Arid Horticulture, Bikaner (CIAH)

During V plan an *Ad-hoc* project under AP Cess fund scheme was started by Indian Council of Agricultural Research in 1976 at 10 centres for conducting research on some selected fruits in semi-arid areas in India. During VI plan, this Ad-hoc scheme was merged as such and named as cell III of All India Coordinated Fruit Improvement Project (AICFIP). During VII plan, AICFIP was restructured to form an independent project entitled All India Coordinated Research Project on Arid Zone Fruits (AICRP on AZF) with its headquarters at HAU, Hissar. The work programme of this project was thus confined to multilocal testing of technologies of some selected fruits being generated by rather inadequate manpower and infrastructure inputs either in ICAR Institutes or in State Agricultural Universities. Therefore, realizing the potential of horticultural crops in arid zone and need to achieve nutritional and income security for the people, the ICAR had established National Research Centre for Arid Horticulture (NRCAH) during VII plan after approval of Indian Planning Commission, as recommended by the Working Group on Agricultural Research and Education. The Project Coordinator (Arid Zone Fruits) was assigned additional responsibility of Officer on Special Duty to monitor the progress of NRCAH in November 1990. The land for its establishment was acquired in November, 1992 at a site close to premises of Rajasthan Agricultural University, Bikaner. In April, 1993 the Project Coordinator along with the establishment of AICRP on AZF was shifted from HAU, Hissar to Bikaner which actually started functioning at Beechwal, Bikaner from September, 1994. After visualizing the progress made by NRCAH in short span of time and future needs of the arid region, on 27th September, 2000, the NRCAH was elevated to full fledged Institute as **Central Institute for Arid Horticulture, Bikaner** (CIAH) and Central Horticultural Experiment Station (CHES), Godhra, Gujarat (Earlier under IIHR, Bangalore) was merged as its Regional Centre on October 1st, 2000.