

Tropicana to be localised

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IN A bid to bring down the prices of its Tropicana fresh juices in India, Pepsi Foods has initiated a backward integration project in Punjab to locally produce the international quality citrus concentrate in the country.

"Pepsi currently imports its entire requirement of citrus concentrate from various countries including the US. The venture, a joint initiative of PepsiCo and Punjab Agri Export Corporation, will enable the company to reduce its import bill for fruit concentrate by at least 20 per cent," Pepsi Foods executive

director Abhiram Seth said.

The company will commercialise the production of a variety of citrus cultivars in Punjab over the next five years, he added. The two partners in the project have set up a screen house at PepsiCo's Agri R&D centre in Jallowal, near Jalandhar, where fruits imported from the US are being tested. Following this, the various citrus saplings will be made available to the farmers.

Around 80 per cent of the fund for the agricultural part of the project has been provided by the Punjab government. PepsiCo/Tropicana will provide the requisite technical know-how.