

Saudi Arabia approves plan to increase agricultural production in greenhouses

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Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture has approved the expansion plan in the plant resources sector and greenhouses with a new investment worth SR4 billion until 2025

Â Abdulrahman Bin Abdul Mohsen Al-Fadhli, Water and Agriculture Eng, who is also the chairman of the Board of Directors of the Agricultural Development Fund has approved the plan.

According to the Saudi Gazette, this has been made in cooperation with the relevant authorities and private sector companies, which aim to increase production capacity by encouraging the usage of the latest technologies in the agriculture sector.

Eng. Al-Fadhli confirmed that the approved plan from 2023 to 2025 will contribute to additional productivity estimated at 430,000 tons, bringing the total production capacity of the greenhouses to more than 1 million tons annually.

About 613.590 thousand tons is the total current production capacity, and it is expected that the rate of increase will be about

70 per cent.

This aims to achieve national food security, and increasing the contribution in the local content, and offer job opportunities in accordance with the goals of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, he said.

The expansion plan comes as an extension of the unlimited support that the agriculture sector enjoys in the Kingdom from the wise leadership, Eng. Al-Fadhli said.

He added that the value of the loan provided by the Agricultural Development Fund (ADF) to the productive sectors during 2022 has exceeded about SR5 billion.

He said that the greenhouses project is considered one of the main sectors that are financed by ADF.

The plan comes out of the ministry's keenness in raising the efficiency of this vital sector and working towards its development, and sustainability, as it is an important pillar of food security in Saudi Arabia.

It is noteworthy that preparations for the expansion plan in the greenhouses with the latest technologies have started earlier, as this type of cultivation in Saudi Arabia has been used for more than 30 years ago.

The cultivation in greenhouses has witnessed significant development in all its technical, productive and protective fields, as it helps in producing crops during the off-season, as well as extending its availability.

Greenhouses are also considered a key factor for the success of specialized agricultural production, such as organic farming, providing protection from different climatic conditions and their effects.

The results of the studies and research conducted by the ministry have revealed that the usage of the latest technologies in the agriculture sector and greenhouses has contributed to saving irrigation water by up to 60 per cent.

This is in addition to raising the production capacity, reducing costs, improving quality, and also increasing farmers' profits.

The study also showed that the percentage of investment profits in greenhouses ranged from 15 per cent to 60 per cent, noting that the number of greenhouses in Saudi Arabia reached 73.542 thousand.