

## **PRESS NOTE**

### **Virtual Cluster Web Portal to provide common platform to all stakeholders in Food Processing Industry: Press Note dated 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2014**

Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) has recently launched a Virtual Cluster Web Portal a common platform for all the stakeholders in the area of entrepreneurship development to leverage the advantage of each other's expertise and potential.

2. The Web Portal which can be accessed at [www.msmecluster.in](http://www.msmecluster.in) is designed to facilitate the stakeholders to reap the benefits available in the country in the form of various programmes & schemes, expertise and experiences. This Virtual Cluster Portal will enable networking among the stakeholders, i.e. the MSME, Academic institutions, Research institutions, equipment manufacturers, NGO's and domain specific professionals by registering on portal and thus relate to each other to their mutual advantage.

3. Academic and Research Institutions are key stakeholders in this initiative. Studies have shown that a large number of students are not able to get internships and meaningful jobs after completing their studies since they lack the exposure to solving real life problems. Through the Virtual Clusters Web Portal, it is proposed to address this problem by linking various academic institutions to business houses. As a part of their industry internship programme, students can help implement projects in the business units without these businesses having to employ outside experts to provide such services. Close interaction with MSME's will help the faculty and students in getting a better perception for real life problems besides enhancing problem solving capabilities.

4. The Virtual Clusters model will initially focus on businesses involved in the Food Processing Industry. This includes companies that make food products and those that make equipment used in food processing industry. After receiving hands-on experience from the pilot project, the Virtual Clusters Website will be opened up for other sectors. Food Processing Units and other stakeholders are, therefore, requested to register in the Virtual Cluster Web portal to avail benefit from this initiative.

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