

ORGANIC FARMING: GROWTH AND PRESENT STATUS IN INDIA

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Abstract

Organic farming is a way towards sustainable agriculture to fulfill the needs of the current population adequately without degrading the nature of the soil. Organic farming is a step back to the nature and is based on understanding the nature's rules and laws. It is an agricultural system that excludes the use of chemical substances which alter the environment and have a drastic effect on the ecosystem. It helps in sustaining the health of the soil, ecosystems and people. Organic farming strives for the health of mankind without causing damage to the environment. Organic farming is believed to play a pertinent role in safeguarding the biodiversity, improving the soil health and also in the sustainable development of the farming community. It brings out together the tradition and innovations in science for the benefit of the ecosystem.

Keywords

Organic Farming, Agricultural system, Environment, Sustainable development.

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Introduction

Organic farming describes a form of agriculture that minimizes or completely reduces the use of artificial inputs such as pesticides, chemical fertilizers, growth hormones and feed additives in livestock activities. Organic farming is a way to connect with the land and its natural resources. It maintains and improves the ecological balance in the ecosystem. This is the method that not only improves the nutrient value of the plant but also enriches the soil with minerals and nutrients. Agriculture by organic methods is not a new step for India. It can be traced back to ancient civilizations, where sustainable agricultural practices were in use which emphasized the harmonious coexistence of humans and nature. By the use of advanced technologies, innovative methods not only reduce the limitations and challenges of organic farming but also enhance the agricultural productivity and lead to a sustainable development. Organic farming is gaining more attention as it leaves a positive effect on the ecosystem. Organic farming systems provide environmental and agronomic benefits. It is a system that has advantages and is needed both in developed and in developing countries.

With the increase in population there is a need for enormous food production. The Green Revolution has transformed the nation from a stage of food shortage to self-sufficiency by using high-yielding varieties and higher levels of fertilizer and pesticide inputs (Kotschi, 2015; IPBES 2019). With the green revolution there has been a major reduction in the soil fertility, extinction or near extinction of many useful insects, microorganisms and predators. The green revolution has also caused pollution with toxic chemicals from agrochemicals, depletion of fossil fuel resources and also a change in the natural taste of food due to chemicals. To advocate for sustainable and eco-friendly farming, practices like organic farming have emerged as a response to the increasing reliance on chemical fertilizers and pesticides. It is a way of sustaining the productivity of the crop, maintaining the soil health and also a healthy ecosystem. It is based on a set of principles that promote sustainability, biodiversity and environmental stewardship and include the avoidance of synthetic inputs, the promotion of biodiversity, the preservation of soil health, and the responsible use of natural resources (Gamage et al. 2023)

Objectives:-

To analyze the organic farming growth in India and worldwide and its status.

Methodology:-

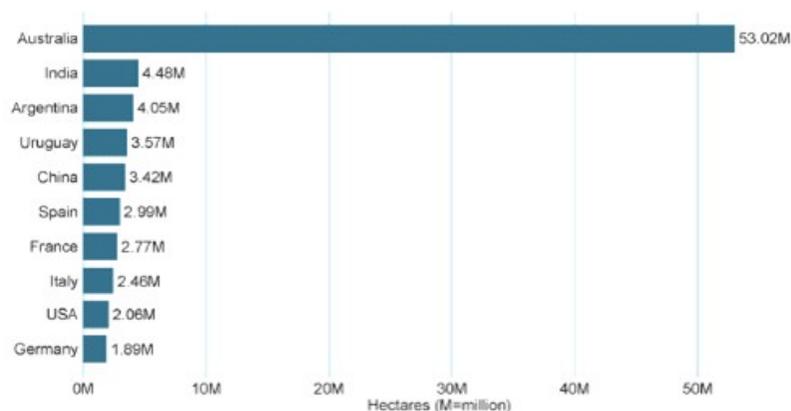
The present study is primarily based on secondary data collected on various aspects of organic agriculture (area and production) at both the country and world levels. Also information on various aspects of organic farming has been collected from various

sources like published reports and official websites of Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), Agriculture and Processed Food products Export Development Authority (APEDA), International Federation of Organic Farming Movements (IFOAM), International Trade Centre (ITC), National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP), National Centre of Organic Farming (NCOF), journals etc.

The world of Organic Agriculture:-

The concept of organic farming which began to take shape in the early 20th century has slowly gained a momentum worldwide. It focuses on feeding the soil to nourish the plants. Today, organic farming is practiced in 191 countries encompassing approximately 98.9 million hectares of agricultural land. According to the latest reports of FiBL and IFOAM, the regions with the largest areas of organic agricultural land are Oceania with 53.2 million hectares (which accounts for more than half of the world's organic agricultural land) and Europe which has 19.5 million hectares, accounting for 20 percent of global organic farmland. Following these regions are Latin America with 10.3 million hectares (about 10 percent), Asia with 9.1 million hectares (9.2 percent), and Africa with 3.4 million hectares (3.4 percent). The countries with the most organic agricultural land include Australia (53 million hectares), India (45 million hectares) and followed by Argentina (4 million hectares). (FiBL yearbook 2025)

The largest areas of organic agricultural land of the ten countries



(Source: FiBL survey 2025)

Organic Agriculture in India:-

Organic farming in India implies a move from conventional rural cultivating practices by avoiding the utilization of pesticides and manufactured fertilizers. It is a knowledge-intensive method of agricultural production. In India, organic cultivators began as a grassroots development by the agronomists and also the society clubs.

This has evolved by combining the traditional knowledge of the farmer with the scientific knowledge of the scientists. By the use of various sustainable agricultural practices like crop rotations and mixed cropping not only maintains the soil health and retain its fertility but also controls pests and diseases which leads to overall improvement of crop productivity by diversifying the plants grown on the same land.

The National Programme on Organic Production (NPOP) along with central government programs such as Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) and Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Regions (MOVCD-NER) has positioned India as the country with the biggest number of organic agriculturists in the world. Special attention has been given to the development of organic farming in the North East regions under the MOVCD which focuses on creating Farmer-Producer Organisations to support farmers with organic inputs, quality seeds, planting materials, training and certification. This mission aimed to create a value chain from production to marketing, ensuring better market access and higher income for organic farmers in the region.

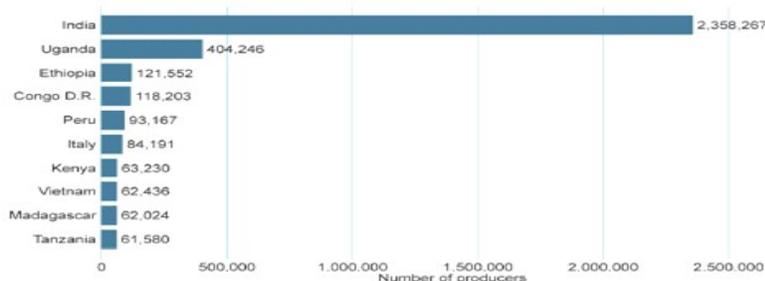
The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) through its National Innovations on Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) project, raises awareness about the impact of climate change on agriculture among farmers. Current Schemes include Rainfed Area Development (RAD), On-Farm Water Management (OFWM), and Soil Health Management (SHM). For the period 2023-26 the government has approved a Market Development Assistance (MDA) program to promote the use of organic fertilizers making them available to farmers at reasonable prices.

In August 2024, the Union Cabinet approved the Clean Plant Programme (CPP) proposed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. This program aims to enhance the quality and productivity of fruit crops across the country. This aims to set a new benchmark for excellence and sustainability in the agriculture.

The country with the most organic producers was India, followed by Uganda and Ethiopia.

World: The ten countries with the most organic producers 2023

Source: FiBL survey 2025



Organic farming is not new to India it has been practised since ancient times. Organic agriculture has been India's inherent advantage and strength. The organic food industry is rising and is growing very fast ensuring high profitability. Covid-19 pandemic has changed the perception of organic food with spotlight now on safety and healthy food that is nutritious and is required to build a strong immune system. Maintaining a clean and green environment is equally important, thus environmental sustainability needs to be maintained which can be achieved only through organic farming.

India has 10.17 million hectares land under organic cultivation which is about 4.22% of the country's total cultivable land. Sikkim is India's first fully organic practices on around 75,000 hectares of agricultural land.

State Name	Organic Area (In Ha)	Conversion Area (In Ha)	Total Area (In Ha)
Madhya Pradesh	612816	535420	1148236
Maharashtra	267229	733851	1001080
Rajasthan	215299	364793	580092
Gujarat	92334	588486	680820
Odisha	77696	103326	181022
Sikkim	75473	257	75730
Uttar Pradesh	52889	13503	66391
Uttarakhand	51628	50192	101820
Kerala	36209	8055	44264
Karnataka	30612	40474	71086
Andhra Pradesh	25877	37802	63679
Jammu & Kashmir	24963	9784	34747
Meghalaya	20112	9592	29703
Bihar	19087	9975	29062

State-wise Area under Organic Certification NPOP 2023-24

(Source NPOP)

With a total area of 1148236 hectares, of which 612816 is organic and 535420 is undergoing conversion, Madhya Pradesh has the largest area under organic certification followed by Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Karnataka. The top three states Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Maharashtra account for about half the area under organic cultivation.

Export of Organic Food Products:-

India is bestowed with a lot of potential to produce many varieties of organic products due to its various agroclimatic conditions. In most parts of the country, the inherited tradition of organic farming is an added advantage. India has emerged as a

prominent supplier of organic products in a span of two decades (Source: APEDA). The country's organic food exports have grown at a steady pace and over the past decade exports of organic products have grown from USD 213 million in 2012-13 to USD 494.80 million in 2023-24. India produced around 3.6 million tonnes. As per the available statistics, India ranks 2nd in terms of the world's Organic Agricultural Land and 1st in terms of total number of organic producers.(Source: FiBL & IFOM Yearbook 2025) The main export destinations include the USA, the European Union, Canada, the U.K., Switzerland, Australia, the Middle East and Asian countries. The major export items are cereals and millets, processed food, tea, spices, dry fruits, sugar, medicinal plant products, pulses, coffee, and oil seeds. By 2025 the Indian Organic food business is likely to be of Rs 75,000 crores.

Conclusion:

Organic farming is mostly associated with environmental sustainability and healthier food production. Though it may not reach the yield levels that a conventional farming achieves but it can still gain satisfactory crop yields. Giving priority to soil and environmental health, organic farming provides a natural and efficient way to cultivate crops while promoting biodiversity conservation. Demand for Organic food has increased tremendously as people have recognized that nutritional security is more important along with food security. With the advanced technologies and continuous research organic farming has and continues to revolutionize the agricultural sector and contribute to a more sustainable development which is beneficial not only to the environment but also for the well-being and health of future generations.

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