

## **EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL COMMUNITY THROUGH ORGANIC FARMING**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

In the modern era of chemical based agriculture, indiscriminate use of fertilizers and other inorganic compound like insecticides; pesticides have threatened the environment, ecological balance and food security. Against this back drop, the concept of organic farming is becoming increasingly popular both in national and international level. In fact, organic farming is holistic approach where it promotes integral relationship between different components of natural soil, water, atmosphere, soil microbes, plant and animal kingdom. Organic farming can be profitable and organic food grains appeals to consumers as both a healthy and moralistic choice. Beyond money and ethics, though, organic farming practices result in various environmental benefits. Currently organic farming has emerged as a reliable farming system in the developed and developing country. Organic farming has the potential to create many employment opportunities at village level. Rural people can strengthen their economic status through organic farming because the market price of organic food is very high than the other product. This paper discusses the importance of organic farming in community empowerment. It also analyses the advantages and disadvantages of organic farming in India.

### **Definition of Organic Farming:**

Organic farming is a techniques or in other term known production techniques used to produce food grains. It include much more than choosing not to use pesticides, genetically modified organisms, fertilizers, growth hormones and antibiotics. Organic farming is an ecological management procedure to maintain and enhance the soil fertility and prevent soil erosion. Organic farming encourage ecological balance and conserves biodiversity. International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movement (IFOAM), an international organization established in 1972 for organic farming institution defines goal of organic farming as "*Organic agriculture is a production method that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people. It beliefs on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with unfavorable effects. Organic agriculture merges the tradition, innovation*

*and science to benefit the environment and promote equitable relationships and a good quality of life for all involved..."*

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design:**

The present study is analytical in nature and comprises secondary data which is collected from books, periodicals, journals and news papers. Information has also been taken from the websites.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

This study plans to study the importance of organic farming in community empowerment. It also analyses the advantages and disadvantages of organic farming in India.

Organic farming system is not a new technique in India. It is being followed from ancient time. It is a procedure of farming system which primarily aimed at cultivating the land and raising crops in such a way, as to keep the soil alive and in good health by utilise of organic inputs (crop, animal and farm wastes, aquatic wastes) and other biological materials along with microbes (biofertilizers) to release nutrients to crops for increased sustainable production in an environmental friendly and pollution free environment. Despite the fact that most farmers aim to produce more food grains through the use of fertilizers , pesticides in their limited available land but the recent trends in India has changed since many farmers are showing interest in organic farming. The major factors (affecting emergence of organic farming) listed are:

- Impact of green revolution
- Imbalanced and excessive use of chemical fertilizers
- Indiscriminate use of chemical pesticides
- Environmental protection
- Concern for food Quality
- Changed trend to grow horticultural crops
- Growing demands of organic farming

Basic principles involved in organic farming for supply of crop nutrients

- Principle of Health- It gives pollution and chemical free, nutritious food items for people.

- Principle of Fairness-Natural resources must be judiciously used and preserved for future generation.
- Principal of Ecological Balance: organic farming techniques must fit the ecological balance and cycle in nature.
- Principle of Care: Organic farming should be practiced in a careful and responsible manner to the welfare of present and future generation.

According to the World of Organic Agriculture 2018 report, India has the highest number of organic producers in the world. It is a home of 30 per cent of the total organic producer but accounts for just 2.59 per cent (1.5 million hectares) of the total organic cultivation area of 57.8 million hectares. At the same time, most organic farmers are struggling due to poor government policy measures, rising organic input costs and limited market, says a study by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM).

#### **Advantages of Organic Farming**

- Farmers can reduce their production costs because they do not need to buy expensive chemicals and fertilizers.
- Healthier farm workers.
- They improve plant growth and physiological activities of plants.
- In the long term, organic farms save energy and protect the environment.
- It can slow down global warming.
- There is an increasing consumer are willing to pay more for organic foods.
- Fewer residues in food.
- More animals and plants can live in the same place in a natural way. This is called biodiversity.
- Pollution of ground water is stopped.
- They reduce the need for purchased inputs.
- Poison-free
- Food Tastes Better
- Food Keeps Longer
- Organic fertilizer is considered as complete plant food.

#### **Disadvantages of Organic Farming**

- Organic products are more expensive because its production cost is very high.
- Production costs are higher.

- Marketing and distribution is not proper because organic food is produced in smaller quantity.
- Food illnesses may happen more often.
- Organic farming cannot produce enough food that population needs to survive.
- Organic farming requires greater interaction between a farmer and his crop and a single farmer cannot produce more crops at large scale.
- It requires considerably more skill to farm organically.

### **Consumer Benefits:**

#### 1) Nutrition

The nutritional value of food is largely a function of its vitamin and mineral content, besides organic farming does not affect soil ecosystem.

#### 2) Poison free

A major benefit to consumers of organic food is that it is totally free from pesticides, fungicides and herbicides.

#### 3) Food quality

The basic aim of the organic farming is to provide sufficient quantities of high quality food, fiber and other products

### **Growers Advantages**

#### 1) Disease and Pest Resistance

#### 2) Lower Input Costs

#### 3) Drought Resistance

### **CONCLUSION**

The analysis shows that organic agriculture is becoming increasingly popular and the global demand for organic products is growing rapidly. Organic farming on one hand is expected to provide sustainability; while on other hand, it will help in increasing the income of the farmers. Organic farming has the potential to create many employment opportunities at village level.

Rural people can strengthen their economic status through organic farming because the market price of organic food is very high than the other product.

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