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A Comparative Study on Organic Farming and Inorganic Farming in Tirunelveli District

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Abstract

The concept of organic farming is gaining momentum day by day. The awareness towards organic produce goods is increasing. So both consumer and farmers are now gradually shifting back to organic farming in India. It is believed by many that organic farming is healthier. Though the health benefits of organic food are yet to be proved, consumers are willing to pay higher premium for the same. Many farmers in India are shifting to organic farming due to the domestic and international demand for organic food. Further stringent standards for non-organic food in European and US markets have led to rejection of many Indian food consignments in the past. Organic farming, therefore, provides a better alternative to chemical farming. So an attempt is made in this article to study their awareness about organic farming, practices and problems of both organic and inorganic farmers.

Keywords: organic, inorganic farming, training, equipments used

Introduction

Organic farming was practiced in India since thousands of years. The great Indian civilization thrived on organic farming and India was one of the most prosperous countries in the world, till the British ruled it. In traditional India, the entire agriculture was practiced using organic techniques, where the manure, pesticides, etc., were obtained from plant and animal products. The cow, not only provided milk, but also provided bullocks for farming and dung which was used as manure.

During 1950s and 1960s, the ever increasing population of India and several natural calamities lead to a severe food scarcity in India. As a result, the government was forced to import food grains from foreign countries. To increase food security, the government had to drastically increase the production of food in India. The Green Revolution (under the leadership of M. S. Swaminathan) became the government's most important program in the 1960s. Large amount of land was brought under cultivation. Hybrid seeds were introduced. Natural and organic fertilizers were replaced by chemical fertilizers and locally made pesticides were replaced by chemical pesticides. Large chemical factories such as the Rashtriya Chemical Fertilizers were established.

During twenty – first century the focus of agricultural research, and the majority of publicized scientific findings, have been on chemical, not organic farming. This emphasis has continued to biotechnologies like genetic engineering. One recent survey of the UK's leading government funding agency for bioscience research and training indicated 26 GM crop projects, and only one related to organic agriculture. This imbalance is largely driven by agribusiness in general, which, through research funding and government lobbying, continues to have a predominating effect on agriculture-related science and policy.

Agribusiness is also changing the rules of the organic market. The rise of organic farming was driven by small, independent producers, and by consumers. In recent years, explosive organic market growth has encouraged the participation of agribusiness interests. As the volume and variety of "organic" products increase, the viability of the small-scale organic farm is at risk, and the meaning of organic farming as an agricultural method is ever more easily confused with the related but separate areas of organic food and organic certification.

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Objectives

General Objective

The general objective is to undertake a comparative study on Organic farming and Inorganic farming in Tirunelveli district.

Specific Objectives

- To create awareness among the people of Tirunelveli district that organic food products are good for health.
- To analyze the constraints, both political and social, and above all economic, in the introduction of organic farming in Tirunelveli district.
- To assess and evaluate the factors which may facilitate the adoption of organic farming in Tirunelveli district.

Research Design

Descriptive research design is adopted in this study

Sampling

The sampling strategy of present research study is simple random sampling method. The total numbers of organic farmers were listed from an NGO which helps the farmers in organic farming and 50 farmers were chosen from 278 by lottery method and since inorganic farmers community too big the researcher used Snow Ball method to get 50 respondents of inorganic farmers were considered as the Universe in Tirunelveli district. The sample size is 100 respondents of both the categories from rural areas in Tirunelveli Corporation namely, Manur, Munirpallam, Sankarnagar, Parvathiya puram, Kothankulam, Naranammalpuram.

Tools of Data Collection

The tool used for data collection was interview schedule. The interview schedule contained questions regarding demographic characteristic, social, economic conditions, impact of organic farming in Tirunelveli district and social development of respondents. The interview schedule was consists of open ended and closed ended questions.

Definitions

Organic Farming

Organic farming is a form of agriculture that relies on techniques such as crop rotation, green manure, compost and biological pest control to maintain soil productivity and control pests on a farm. Organic farming excludes or strictly limits the use of manufactured fertilizers, pesticides (which include herbicides, insecticides and fungicides), plant growth regulators such as hormones, livestock antibiotics, food additives, and genetically modified organisms.

Inorganic Farming

Inorganic farming is an agriculture production method which involves the use of manmade products such as pesticides, herbicides, antibiotics, hormones and other chemical which are used to increase the rate of growth of crops.

Findings

From the analysis of the data it has been found that 82per cent of the male belong to the inorganic farming where else in organic farming only 74per cent of male are practicing farming whereas 26per cent of female were practicing

organic farming and 18 per cent were practicing inorganic farming. Due the awareness and the present day market potentials respondents in the age group less than 35 years were practicing organic farming i.e., 40 per cent and 12 per cent respondents in the age group 46 and above were practicing organic farming and the remaining were in inorganic farming. It has also been found that the practice of inorganic farming increase with the increase in their level of education. Especially respondents who don't have any formal education practice organic farming.

The area of cultivation is an important factor in cultivation. It has been found that 14per cent of Inorganic respondents and 4per cent of Organic respondents have 1 acre of land for cultivation, 42per cent of Inorganic respondents and 56per cent of Organic respondents have 2-4 acres of land for cultivation, 12 per cent of Inorganic respondents and 24per cent of Organic respondents have 5-7 acres of land for cultivation, 32per cent of Inorganic respondents and 16per cent of Organic respondents have above 7acres of land for cultivation. The years of practice shows that 4per cent of Inorganic respondents and 20per cent of Organic respondents have practiced 1-2 years of agriculture, 10per cent of Inorganic respondents and 56per cent of Organic respondents have practiced 3-5 years of agriculture, 40per cent of Inorganic respondents and 14per cent of Organic respondents have practiced 5-7 years of agriculture and 46per cent of Inorganic respondents and 10per cent of Organic respondents have practiced above 7 years of agriculture.

Most of the respondents haven't done soil testing i.e., 78 per cent of inorganic farm practicing respondents and 100 per cent of the Inorganic respondents and 96per cent of Organic respondents cultivate food crops and only 2per cent of the Organic respondents cultivate Vegetables. Most of the respondents have cow and buffalo, 46 per cent of Organic respondents purchase manure/fertilizer from S.H.G./ N.G.O., 10 per cent from government and the inorganic respondents purchase the fertilizer from private. The respondents use modern equipments such as tractors and sprayers in farming. It has been found that 38per cent of Inorganic respondents and 22per cent of Organic respondents have Tractors, 12 per cent of Inorganic respondents and 4per cent of Organic respondents have Kona veter and 50per cent of Inorganic respondents and 74per cent of Organic respondents have sprayer. It is also found that 78per cent of the Inorganic respondents and 86per cent of Organic respondents use Harvesting machines and 22per cent of the Inorganic respondents and 14per cent Organic respondents use laborers. Even though the respondents states that the organic farming is good for health, they have attended training programmes many respondents were practicing inorganic farming because the income is more than the organic farming. Most of the cultivation is been done with B.T., Hybrid seed only. Traditional seeds are not available and no one is interested to get in market. Very few organic farmers are having these seeds. 74per cent of the Inorganic products and 28per cent of Organic products are been marketed in ulavarsandhai, 26per cent of the Inorganic products and 60per cent of Organic products are been marketed in private markets and 0per cent of Inorganic products are marketed in civil society organizations, were 12per cent the Organic been marketed in civil society organizations. Whether it is organic or inorganic the problem of shortage of labourers is

high. There are no society is federation for organic farmers in Tirunelveli but there are societies and federations for Inorganic farmers. 68 per cent of Inorganic respondents and 22 per cent of Organic respondents states that government gives full support, 12 per cent of Inorganic respondents and 70 per cent of Organic respondents have stated that government gives no proper cooperation and 8 per cent of Organic respondents have stated that government gives support only for name sake. It has been noted that 14 per cent of the Inorganic respondents feel Organic farming would be more expensive, 76 per cent have stated that they are used to this kind of Inorganic farming and 10 per cent say that they have no awareness about Organic farming. Further they state that Pest control is difficult in organic farming i.e., 42 per cent, 32 per cent state it is hard to get high yield, 6 per cent state there are many practical difficulties to practice organic farming, 4 per cent state there are no markets for organic products, 4 per cent say organic food products are very expensive, 10 per cent state organic food products are seasonal.

Conclusion

The new millennium has thrown many challenges subjecting many nations to undergo transformation cutting across their established tradition and culture. Organic Farming has the twin objective of the system sustainable and environmentally sensitive. With ever increasing population having huge requirements of vegetables and meager availability of organic resources, pure organic farming is not possible in India; rather some specific areas can be diverted to organic farming for export of high quality vegetable crops. Thus, as a whole under Indian condition, only partial switching to Organic Farming of export oriented vegetable crops can be possible in recent times. So the government and NGOs should take adequate steps to ensure smooth transformation of agricultural practices.

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