

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMPUTER APPLICATION & MANAGEMENT

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## REACHING TOWARDS ORGANIC FARMING

SHALLU  
RESEARCH SCHOLAR  
PUNJABI UNIVERSITY  
PATIALA

## ABSTRACT

Agriculture sector contributes a major portion in gross production of India. In spite of this, agriculture today is finding itself in increasing difficulties. The adverse impact of agriculture based on synthetic fertilizers and herbicides is visible in the degradation of soil fertility, quality of food, taste of food and so on. Above this continuously increasing demand for food by burgeoning human population, rising risk of agriculturally driven global environmental changes and food related health hazards due to excessive use of agrochemicals have become the prime concern of the globe. Hence, increasing consciousness about future sustainable agriculture and hazard free food production has lead organic farming at the zenith of the farm practices. Instead of much limelight, it is found that the consumers are very less aware of organic farming. The aim of this paper is to empirically analyze the consumer awareness about organic food and products. To study how much is the awareness & what are the reasons they are not aware about it, a close and open ended questionnaire was administered and responses are checked. The study is purely based on primary data collected from a sample of 100 respondents. Convenient random sampling technique is used to find out the consumer awareness about organic farming.

## KEYWORDS

organic farming, consumer awareness, organic produces, eco-friendly environment.

## INTRODUCTION

In today's terminology it is a method of farming system which primarily aims at cultivating the land and raising crops in such a way, as to keep the soil alive and in good health by use of organic wastes (crop, animal and farm wastes, aquatic wastes) and other biological materials along with beneficial microbes (biofertilizers) to release nutrients to crops for increased sustainable production in an eco-friendly pollution free environment. Organic farming to agriculture is often described in spatial terms such as "close to," "going back to," and "following" nature, and correspondingly represent a production process that is local, farmer-led, and relies on minimal external inputs, especially in terms of science and technology.

Since organic farming means placing farming on integral relationship, we should be well aware about the relationship between the soil, water and plants, between soil-soil microbes and waste products, between the vegetable kingdom and the animal kingdom of which the apex animal is the human being, between agriculture and forestry, between soil, water and atmosphere etc. It is the totality of these relationships that is the bed rock of organic farming.

## ORGANIC AGRICULTURE IN INDIA

Since January 1994 "Sevagram Declaration" for promotion of organic agriculture in India, organic farming has grown many folds and number of initiatives at Government and Non-Government level has given it a firm direction. While National Programme on Organic Production (NPOP) defined its regulatory framework, the National Project on Organic Farming (NPOF) has defined the promotion strategy and provided necessary support for area expansion under certified organic farming.

## GROWING CERTIFIED AREA

Before the implementation of NPOP during 2001 and introduction of accreditation process for certification agencies, there was no institutional arrangement for assessment of organically certified area. Initial estimates during 2003-04 suggested that approximately 42,000 ha of cultivated land were certified organic. By 2009 India had brought more than 9.2 million ha of land under certification. Out of this while cultivable land was approximately 1.2 million ha, remaining 8 million ha area was forest land for wild collection. Growing awareness, increasing market demand, increasing inclination of farmers to go organic and growing institutional support has resulted into phenomenal growth in total certified area during the last five years. As on March 2009, total area under organic certification process stood at 12.01 lakhs.

TABLE NO.1: TEN COUNTRIES WITH THE MOST ORGANIC AGRICULTURE LAND 2011

| Sr. No. | Country       | Land(million hectares) |
|---------|---------------|------------------------|
| 1       | Australia     | 12.0(2009)             |
| 2       | Argentina     | 3.8                    |
| 3       | United States | 1.9(2008)              |
| 4       | China         | 1.9                    |
| 5       | Spain         | 1.6                    |
| 6       | Italy         | 1.1                    |
| 7       | India         | 1.1                    |
| 8       | Germany       | 1.0                    |
| 9       | France        | 1.0                    |
| 10      | Uruguay       | .9(2006)               |

Source: FIBL-IFOAM survey 2013, based on data from Govt., the private sector and certifiers)

## IMPORTANT FEATURES OF INDIAN ORGANIC SECTOR

With the phenomenal growth in area under organic management and growing demand for wild harvest products India has emerged as the single largest country with highest arable cultivated land under organic management. India has also achieved the status of single largest country in terms of total area under certified organic wild harvest collection. With the production of more than 77,000 MT of organic cotton lint India had achieved the status of largest organic cotton grower in the world a year ago, with more than 50% of total world's organic cotton.

## GROWING ORGANIC FOOD MARKET

Although no systematic information is available on size of organic food market by as per the survey conducted by the International Competence Centre for Organic Agriculture (ICCOA) in top 8 metro cities of India (which comprise about 5.3 % of the households) the market potential for organic foods in 2006 in top 8 metros of the country is at Rs 562 crore taking into account current purchase patterns of consumer in modern retail format. The overall market potential is estimated to be around Rs.1452 crore.



**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

According to RAJIV K. SINHA (1998) has tried to explore the origin of the traditional agriculture with the help of certain case studies. Modern technology is helpful in increasing the output, but wholly depends upon it, will reduce the fertility of the land. So traditional methods are advisable to increase the fertility of the land

A. Kuhar<sup>1</sup> and L. Juvancic (2001) focus on general dietary patterns and lifestyle determination; purchasing behavior acquaintance, beliefs and perception of OIFV and purchase frequency of OIFV. As per this study people of Slovenia are more conscious regarding their health as compare to environmental disaster. People are not aware about organic farming. So there is need of promotional activities.

Raffaele Zanoli and Simona Naspetti (2002) analysed the factors and barriers of consumer behavior towards organic foods with the help of means-end chain model. They found that two key factors, experience and expertise, plays crucial role in formulating consumer perception towards organic products and a better communication strategy should be formulated to create awareness among the consumers regarding organic products and their numerous benefits.

Samuel Bonti-Ankomah (2006) has made comparison between organic and conventional agriculture methods. As per this study people are ready to pay more price for organic products than conventional products. Quality and output aspects are also analyzed. As per findings output is low in case of organic farming but quality is better than conventional farming.

Zhou Lili, Chen Tong (2007) explored the core reasons of feeble consumer perception towards organic food were lack of knowledge and awareness among the consumers for organic food. The study revealed that a good chunk of consumers are willing to buy and pay more for organic food but they need to educate more to differentiate between organic and green food in the market. For this the producers should pull up their socks to enrich the knowledge of the target consumers through good advertisement, sales and promotional strategies.

Cissy Bowman (2008) has answered the questions like how an organic consumer becomes more aware of such products. What stringent measures organic companies, retailers and producers should take in order to win the confidence of the consumers and hence expand organic market. He also focused on National Organic Program (NOP) to ensure that organic standards are met in compliance with the labels on them.

J. Pandey & Usha Pandey (2008): This study has investigated the accumulation of air-borne heavy metals in edible parts of vegetables and in cultivated soil horizon in organic farming system in a low rain fall tropical region of India. The results of this study indicate that continued atmospheric deposition of heavy metals will have a destabilizing effect on soil fertility in long-run. The study further suggests that atmospheric deposition was the main contributor to raised heavy metals in edible parts, especially in fruits and leaves. The study clearly demonstrated that if the present trends of atmospheric input of heavy metals are continued, it will undermine the real objectives of organic farming in long-run.

Siti Nor Bayaah Ahmad and Nurita Juhdi (2010) try to understand consumer motivations for buying organic food products so that organic producers could develop more effective strategic marketing planning. In the light of these objective author is able to conclude that price become barrier in the usage of organic products. Govt initiative regarding the promotion of organic farming is also not appreciable.

**Organic farming, food quality and human health (A review of the evidence) 2012:** The object of this report is to scrutinize the available scientific evidence and to throw light on comparisons of organically and non-organically produced fruits, vegetables and cereals, Livestock products. It also assess the qualitative differences about organic food which are most important to the promotion of good health, specifically the four areas Food Safety, Primary Nutrients, Secondary Nutrients and Observed Health effects and ended up the document with number of recommendations and suggestions to consumers, researchers, producers and government.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To study the awareness of organic farming
2. To study the demand of the organic farming

**NEED OF THE STUDY**

Organic farming is one of the burning issues in each and every economy these days. Number of researches has been conducted on organic farming in context with farmers, government policies regarding organic farming, techniques of organic farming, benefits and advantages of organic farming, consumer's perception towards it and so on. But still there are number of other factors that need more intense research to get the clear picture of organic scenario. Hence, the kingpin of the market, the consumer and his knowledge regarding organic farming is our main concern. The current study is going on to find out the awareness and demand among the consumers towards organic products.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research can also be defined as the search for knowledge or any systematic investigation to establish facts.

**RESEARCH DESIGN**

Descriptive Research: It has described information collected through questionnaires and analyzes the information to make a critical evaluation of subject.

Sample Size: Considering the constraints it was decided to conduct the study based on sample size of 100. It comprises 56 females and 44 males.

Sampling Unit: The respondents include students, teachers, housewives, professionally qualified persons, shopkeepers, businessmen.

**SOURCES OF DATA**

Primary data: Primary data is collected by meeting the concerned people through questionnaire and personal interview.

**TOOL OF ANALYSIS**

In the project work, quantitative technique & percentage method have been used.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

Table no.2 depicts that 71% of the people knew about organic products whereas 29% were unaware rather organic farming is a novel term for them. This shows that a good chunk of people are aware about organic farming.

**TABLE 2: DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS ON THE BASIS OF AWARENESS**

| Response | No. of Respondent | %age of Respondent |
|----------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Yes      | 71                | 71                 |
| No       | 29                | 29                 |
| Total    | 100               | 100                |

Source: Field investigation

Table no. 3 represents that 30% people have heard about organic farming from their friends or family, 10% from radio, 15% from newspaper, 18% from television, 20% from internet and 7% get to know about it from other sources like magazines, books and seminars etc.

**TABLE 3: MEANS OF AWARENESS REGARDING ORGANIC FARMING**

| Response      | No. of Respondent | % age of Respondent |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Radio         | 10                | 10                  |
| Newspaper     | 15                | 15                  |
| Television    | 18                | 18                  |
| Family/Friend | 30                | 30                  |
| Internet      | 20                | 20                  |
| Other         | 7                 | 7                   |
| Total         | 100               | 100                 |

Source: Field investigation

It can be inferred that people are quite aware about organic farming as maximum no. of people know about organic farming from their friends and family.

**TABLE 4: DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS ON THE BASIS OF USE OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS**

| Response   | No. of Respondent | %age of Respondent |
|------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Yes        | 43                | 43                 |
| No         | 47                | 47                 |
| Don't Know | 10                | 10                 |
| Total      | 100               | 100                |

Source: Field investigation

Table no.4 represents that how many respondents have used organic products or foods, 43% said yes they have used them and 47% said no and 10% said that they don't know about it as they are not aware about organic foods or products.

**TABLE 5: DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS ON THE BASIS OF KNOWLEDGE OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS**

| Responses | No. of Respondent | %age of Respondent |
|-----------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Poor      | 25                | 25                 |
| Fair      | 15                | 15                 |
| Average   | 30                | 30                 |
| Good      | 25                | 25                 |
| Excellent | 5                 | 5                  |
| Total     | 100               | 100                |

Source: Field investigation

When the respondents were asked to rate their knowledge of organic farming then table no.5 depicts that 15% rated it fair, 25% rated good, 30% average, 25% poor, and 5% rated it excellent, which shows people have good knowledge about organic farming.

**TABLE 6: RESPONSE OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS REGARDING VISIT TO ORGANIC FARMS**

| Response   | No. of Respondent | %age of Respondent |
|------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Yes        | 86                | 86                 |
| No         | 11                | 11                 |
| Don't Know | 3                 | 3                  |
| Total      | 100               | 100                |

Source: Field investigation

Table no.6 depicts that 86% people want to visit the organic farm to know more about organic farming. Only 11% didn't want to visit organic farm and 3% said don't know. This makes it apparent that people are curious to know about organic farming.

**TABLE 7: DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS ON THE BASIS OF USE OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS**

| Response   | No. of Respondent | %age of Respondent |
|------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Yes        | 43                | 43                 |
| No         | 47                | 47                 |
| Don't Know | 10                | 10                 |
| Total      | 100               | 100                |

Source: Field investigation

Table no.7 represents that how many respondents have used organic products or foods, 43% said yes they have used them and 47% said no and 10% said that they don't know about it as they are not aware about organic foods or products.

**TABLE 8: DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS ON THE BASIS OF TASTE OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS**

| Responses                    | No. of Respondent | %age of Respondent |
|------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Better than traditional meal | 32                | 74                 |
| Equal to traditional meal    | 10                | 23                 |
| less than traditional meal   | 1                 | 3                  |
| Total                        | 43                | 100                |

Source: Field investigation

Table no.8 depicts that 74% people find the taste of organic foods quiet better than traditional food, 23% equal to traditional food and % find it less tasty than traditional food. It seems that people are satisfied with the taste of organic products.

**TABLE 9: DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS ON THE BASIS OF QUALITY OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS**

| Response                     | No. of Respondent | %age of Respondent |
|------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Better than traditional meal | 32                | 74                 |
| Equal to traditional meal    | 10                | 23                 |
| less than traditional meal   | 1                 | 3                  |
| Total                        | 43                | 100                |

Source: Field investigation

Table no. 9 displayed that 74% people find the quality of organic foods quiet better than traditional food, 23% equal to traditional food and % find it less tasty than traditional food. It seems that majority of people are satisfied with the quality of organic products.

TABLE 10: DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS ON THE BASIS OF APPEARANCE OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS

| Response                     | No. of Respondent | %age of Respondent |
|------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Better than traditional meal | 18                | 42                 |
| Equal to traditional meal    | 23                | 53                 |
| less than traditional meal   | 2                 | 5                  |
| Total                        | 43                | 100                |

Source: Field investigation

Table no.10 shows that 42% people find the appearance of organic foods or products better than traditional food or products, 53% equal to it and 5% didnt like it more than traditional foods or products.

TABLE 11: WILLINGNESS OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS FOR CHOOSING ORGANIC PRODUCTS

| Response   | No. of Respondent | %age of Respondent |
|------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Yes        | 86                | 86                 |
| No         | 11                | 11                 |
| Don't Know | 3                 | 3                  |
| Total      | 100               | 100                |

Source: Field investigation

Table no.11 states that 86% of respondents want to consume organic produces but because of lack of availability and awareness they are not been able to do so, 11% said no to organic products due to their traditional tastes and preferences and 3% said that they don't know whether they want to consume organic foods or products or not.

TABLE 12: DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS ON THE BASIS OF REASONS FOR CHOOSING ORGANIC PRODUCTS

| Response             | No. of Respondent | %age of Respondent |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Healthy              | 41                | 48                 |
| Tasty                | 10                | 12                 |
| Pesticide Free       | 28                | 32                 |
| Environment friendly | 7                 | 8                  |
| Appearance           | 0                 | 0                  |
| Others               | 0                 | 0                  |
| Total                | 86                | 100                |

Source: Field investigation

When respondents were asked the reason of choosing organic products over traditional ones then 41% said they are healthy, 28% said because they are pesticide free, 10% said because of taste and 75 find these products environment friendly. Hence, this proves that people nowadays are very health conscious and they want to consume organic foods for maintaining good health.

## FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- People have quite a good knowledge about organic farming through various mass media and personal sources but still a lot of people are unaware and are not well informed about organic food about it because of less sales and promotional activities.
- 51% of consumers have never used organic foods and products as they possess knowledge about them and can hardly differentiate between organic and normal foods and products in the marketplace.
- Majority of organic consumers are satisfied with the tastes, quality and appearance of the organic products and want to continue buying organic products.
- The study exhibits that 71% are familiar with organic farming, 86% people want to consume organic food and products and 43% are using organic produces. This states that majority is familiar with and has the willingness to buy and consume organic produces but because of lack of availability and education about organic products very less is able to consume them.
- This study also highlights that the fact that though great number of people reflect positive attitude towards willingness for buying organic produces yet 11% is still reluctant to buy them as they find organic products expensive.
- 48% people consider organic foods healthy, 32% pesticide free, 12% tasty and 8% environment friendly. This states that people have become more health conscious and concerned to the environment.
- Another finding of the study is though people are not much aware of the word "organic" yet they are lot more curious to see the organic farms and upgrade their knowledge of how these organic foods are grown and products are made.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In the light of above mentioned objectives of the study and survey analysis, the following suggestions can be given:

- The organic producers must create awareness in the consumers about organic products by imparting education on this subject and tell them how to make distinction between normal and organic foods and products. Hence, education should become their foremost objective.
- There should be sales and promotional activities on a large scale through mass media. Huge advertisement should be made at selling places, mandis, agricultural fairs and open markets etc.
- Organic producers must approach to educational institutions for making trip to organic farms, to make youth aware about organic farming.

## LIMITATIONS

- However the researcher has tried their best in collecting relevant information for research, yet there have been some problems faced by the researchers. The prime difficulties that were faced while collecting information are discussed below:-
- **Time Constraint:** the time period for carrying out research has been limited as a result of which many facts are left unexplored. If more time had been there, the sample size would have been increased.
- **Limited Sample size:** The sample size is very small of about 100 respondents. Due to which the findings could not be generalized properly.
- **Wide area of research:** The area of study has been wide which may have created problem to study whole population.
- **Respondents' bias:** due to biasness on the part of respondents, data collected may have affected which further reduces credibility of the findings.

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