STATUS, SCOPE AND POTENTIALS IN INDIAN ORGANIC FARMING

In this paper:

***Concepts**: Agriculture is one of the key sectors for the economic development for the developing countries[1]. The concept of the practice is to feed the soil rather than the crop so there is a need for adoption of an alternative farming system like organic farming so as to keep soil alive. It is based on minimizing the use of external inputs through the use of on-farm resources efficiently, thus the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides is avoided[2]*

***Status**: To ease the trade and growth in organic farming sector EU regulation and COS standard came into force. Several organic standard setters have also developed draft standards for climate "add-ons" for organic certification, and it is expected that the use of carbon labelling by retailers will grow considerably in the future. One of the new initiatives is the proposed Organic Research Centres Alliance (ORCA), hosted by FAO, which intends to internationally network and strengthen existing institutions with scientific credentials and empower them to become centres of excellence in trans-disciplinary organic agriculture research.*

Status of Organic Certification in India (2013-14) Source: APEDA, 2015
Area under organic certification: 4.72 m ha Cultivated Area: 0. 72 m ha Forest Area: 4.00 m ha Organic Certified Production: 1.24 million MT Cultivable Production: 1.23 m MT Wild Collection: 0.01 m MTa

Technological applications*: The present level of organic agriculture has not reached the optimal stage because of series of hurdles. Biotechnology has acted as a major pillar in the development and modernization of agriculture with the use of bio-fertilizers which can fix atmospheric nitrogen and provide micro-nutrients useful to plant growth. Biotechnological application has a maximum role for the organic input providers in increasing soil fertility, in pest management and in veterinary feed additives*[6].

Status of organic farming since ancient period[4]*: India has the historical perspective on organic farming it's not new to India.*

Oldest practice*: 10,000 years old – Neolithic age practiced OF*
Ramayana*: All dead things returned to earth are transformed into wholesome things that nourish life.*
Mahabharata*: Kamadhenu – Its role on soil fertility*
Arthashastra*: Excreta of animals – Manure*
Brihad samhitha*: Methods of manuring for different crops*
Rig veda*: To cause healthy growth of plants, they should be nourished by dungs of goat, sheep and cow*
Holy Quran*: One third of what you take from soil must be returned to it.*

Organic agriculture: Its relevance to Indian farming[7]***:***

As India is in the initial phase of organic farming, strong institutional mechanisms and governmental support must be essential to realize its sustained growth[5]*. The Govt. of India has set up a special cell under APEDA of MOCI. The MOCI has come out with the NPOP in 2000, and the 'India Organic' logo in 2002*[3]*. The policies adopted by the govt. of India to encourage the exports of organic products are the driving forces responsible for uprising of the Indian organic food industries which have the potential to strengthen the Indian economy as well as the health standards of the Indian masses*[7]*.*
Indian states involved in organic farming are West Bengal, Karnataka, Uttarkhand, Sikkim, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Tamilnadu, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Orissa.

India is one of the producers of organic food and foods exported from India includes; Organic cereals, pulses, fruits, oil seeds, oils, vegetables, herbs & spices, jaggery, sugar, tea, coffee, cotton and textiles.


Organic food market and trade in India

Potentials*: There is a great potential for organic farming to flourish in India[3]. With an increase in awareness on subsidies on organic produces also there is an enormous potential for increasing the area under organic farming. The traditional and indigenous knowledge should be conserved, while introducing selected modern technologies to manage and enhance diversity into farming systems[5]. A long term experiments as conducted by ICRISAT, sustains the view that yield of different crops in low cost sustainable system, the annual productivity in particular, is comparable to that in the conventional system.*



High yield in productivity

Conclusion: *The basic rules and regulations for accreditation and certification of organic products are in place in India. Considering the above, it may be concluded that organic farming will progress tremendously in India[1].*

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