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ORGANIC FARMING IS AN ULTIMATE LIVELIHOOD FOR FARMERS IN MYSORE DISTRICT

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Abstract

The current agricultural crisis and the farmers situation in the era of globalization, increasing capitalization of agriculture, chemical intensive and bio-technology oriented farming and implications of soil and water degradation or depletion for farmers livelihoods. Agriculture is the most important livelihood strategy in India, with two thirds of the country's workforce depending on farming. Most farmers are small and marginal farmers cultivating areas of less than two hectares. Increasing land fragmentation, diminishing natural assets, high costs for external farm inputs, indebtedness, and pesticide-related health issues have threatened the livelihoods of many farming families. So, organic farming is best and ultimate livelihood option for any kind of social horizon. If you are in any profession take big 'U' turns and lives and enjoy remaining life without any presser. Organic farming makes following assets Enhanced NATURAL assets – here all kind of natural assets will increased and without any environmental cause. Enhanced SOCIAL assets – organic farmers will get in same thread and they will discuss about new methods and connected to each other always. Enhanced HUMAN assets – by eating organic food and working in organic farm will improve the health. Enhanced FINANCIAL assets – here reduced the input cost and increased outputs. Famers will not apply for any loans because no need buy inputs. Enhanced CULTURAL assets – celebrate local festivals with related to agriculture and connected to our cultural roots. An attempt is made in this paper to analyse the socio and economic status of organic products producers in Mysore District.

Keywords: Liberalization, Privatization & Globalization, Financial Sector, Public Sector, Capital Market.

Introduction

The main idea behind organic farming is 'zero impact' on the environment. The organic farming is to protect the earth's resources and produce safe and healthy crop. Organic farming is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local condition, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects. Food is our most basic need, the

very stuff of life. 75 percent of the Indian population derives its livelihood from agriculture, and every fourth farmer in the world is an Indian, the impact of globalization on Indian agriculture is of global significance. Small and marginal farmers are pushed to extinction, as monoculture replace biodiversity crops, as farming is transformed from the production of nourishing and diverse foods into the creation of markets for seed company products, as farmers are transformed from

producers in to consumers of corporate-patented agriculture products.

Organic farming combines tradition, innovation and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and a good quality of life for all involved. Organic farming is being practiced in 130 countries of the world. The ill effects of chemicals used in agriculture have changed the mindset of some consumers of different countries who are now buying organic with high premium for health. Policy makers are also promoting organic farming for restoration of soil health and generation of rural economy apart from making efforts for creating better environment. The global organic area is 26 million hectare roughly along with 61 standards and 364 certification bodies roughly. The world organic market is now \$26 billion. The organic area in India is 2.5 million hectare including certified forest area.

Organic Farming in India

In Indian agriculture, organic manures have been used since Sir Albert Howard. A British agronomist way back in 1900 started the organic farming. The commercial organic farming, as practiced today, is still at a nascent stage. According to a survey of International Federation of Organic Agriculture movement and Stiftung Oekologie and Landbou (SOEL) February 2005 India has about 76,326 hectare land under organic management. Which is only 0.05 per cent of total agricultural land According to this survey; there are about 5,147 certified organic farms in India. The Indian organic farming industry is estimated at us20 million and almost entirely export oriented. According to Agricultural and Processed food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA 2005), agency involved in promoting Indian organic products with a worth of rupees 72 million are being exported from India.

Organic farming is a holistic production management system which promotes and enhances agro-ecosystem health, including biodiversity, biological, cycles and soil biological activity. It emphasizes the use of management practices in preference to the use of off-farm inputs. This is accomplished by using, where possible, agronomic, and biological and mechanical methods, as opposed to using synthetic materials to fulfill any specific function in the system.

The approach and outlook towards agriculture and marketing of food has seen a quantum change worldwide over the last few decades. Whereas earlier the seasons and the climate of an area determined what would be grown and when, today it is the "market" that determines what it wants and what should be grown. The focus is now more on quantity and "outer" quality (appearance) rather than intrinsic or nutritional quality, also called "vitality". Pesticide and other chemical residues in food and an overall reduced quality of food have led to a marked increase in various diseases, mainly various forms of cancer and reduced bodily immunity.

Need of Organic Farming

With the increase in population our compulsion would be not only to stabilize agricultural production but to increase it further in sustainable manner. The scientists have realized that the 'Green Revolution' with high input use has reached a plateau and is now sustained with diminishing return of falling dividends. Thus, a natural balance needs to be maintained at all cost for existence of life and property. The obvious choice for that would be more relevant in the present era, when these agrochemicals which are produced from fossil fuel and are not renewable and are diminishing in availability. It may also cost heavily on our foreign exchange in future.

The key characteristics of organic farming include

- ✓ Protecting the long term fertility of soils by maintaining organic matter levels, encouraging soil biological activity, and careful mechanical intervention
- ✓ Providing crop nutrients indirectly using relatively insoluble nutrient sources which are made available to the plant by the action of soil micro-organisms
- ✓ Nitrogen self-sufficiency through the use of legumes and biological nitrogen fixation, as well as effective recycling of organic materials including crop residues and livestock manures
- ✓ Weed, disease and pest control relying primarily on crop rotations, natural predators, diversity, organic manuring, resistant varieties and limited (preferably minimal) thermal, biological and chemical intervention
- ✓ The extensive management of livestock, paying full regard to their evolutionary

adaptations, behavioral needs and animal welfare issues with respect to nutrition, housing, health, breeding and rearing

- ✓ Careful attention to the impact of the farming system on the wider environment and the conservation of wildlife and natural habitats.

Given below are some of the Advantages of Organic Farming for Small Farmers

- ✓ *High premium:* Organic food is normally priced 20 - 30% higher than conventional food. This premium is very important for a small farmer whose income is just sufficient to feed his/her family with one meal.
- ✓ *Low investment:* Organic farming normally does not involve capital investment as high as that required in chemical farming. Further, since organic fertilizers and pesticides can be produced locally, the yearly costs incurred by the farmer are also low. Agriculture greatly depends on external factors such as climate, pests, disease. Furthermore, most of the small farmers are dependent on natural rain for water. Therefore in cases of natural calamity, pest or disease attack, and irregular rainfall, when there is a crop failure, small farmers practicing organic farming have to suffer less as their investments are low. (It should be noted that while shifting from chemical farming to organic farming, the transition might be costly)
- ✓ *Less dependence on money lenders:* Many small farmers worldwide commit suicide since chemical inputs, which are very costly, are not required in organic farming, small farmers are not dependent on money lenders. Crop failure, therefore, does not leave an organic farmer into enormous debt, and does not force him to take an extreme step.
- ✓ *Synergy with life forms:* Organic farming involves synergy with various plant and animal life forms. Small farmers are able to understand this synergy easily and hence find it easy to implement them.
- ✓ *Traditional knowledge:* Small farmers have abundance of traditional knowledge with them and within their community. Most of this traditional knowledge cannot be used for chemical farming. However, when it comes to organic farming, the farmers can

make use of the traditional knowledge. Further, in case of organic farming, small farmers are not dependent on those who provide chemical know-how.

Cropping Pattern in Mysore District

Cropping pattern means the proportion of area under various crops at a given period of the time. Cropping pattern differs from macro to micro regions both in area and time and it is largely governed by the physical, culture and technological factors.

Mysore district is a dry area in general as it lies in the rain – shadow region of the Western Ghats. Wet crops like sugarcane and rice occupy lesser area when the compared to dry like ragi, groundnut, jowar and mulberry. But in the recent years ht area under wet crops in slightly increasing because of increase in irrigation facilities. The areas under different crops is given in table 3.4 It can be seen from the Table 3.6 that the district has 20.4 per cent of the area under Paddy. Ragi is another important Cereal product in the district. Area under cereals constitute 40.8 per cent of the total area under all crops. Pulses are also important crop in the district with 20.6 per cent of the cropped area under pulses. Non-food crops have major share in H.D Kote, Hunsur and Periyapatna. T. Narasipura. K. R Nagar and Nanjangud are mainly paddy growing areas. Pulsed, Ragi and other non-food crops are mainly grown in Mysore.

Objectives

1. To study the present scenario of organic farming in the study area.
2. To assess and evaluate the factors which facilitates the adoption of organic farming
3. To analyses the constraints of organic farming in the study area.
4. To study the Organic farming is ultimate livelihood for Vulnerable poor
5. To provide the remedial measures to both the farmer and consumers in the study area

Methodology

The present research is conducted in Mysore District. The district has been purposefully selected due to the availability of data base relating to organic farmers. Department of Agriculture has documented details relating to the growers who are practicing organic farming in the district namely selected H.D.Kote. Department of Agriculture and MYRADA has initial several programmes to provide training in organic

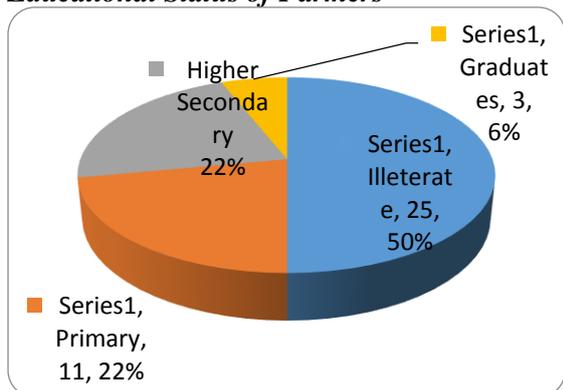
farming. H. D. Kote have been selected for the present study, as the concentration of organic growers is more in this Taluk.

Sample Size

The 50 organic producers were selected for the study and by administering the questionnaire the primary data has been collected through personal observation and interview in the study area.

Results and Discussions

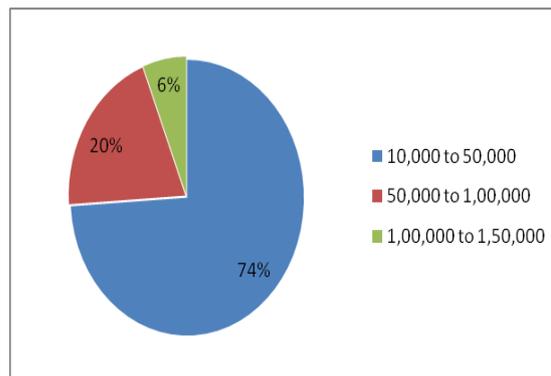
Educational Status of Farmers



The above table 1 reveals that the educational status of the sample farmers in the study area. Out of 50 farmers, 25 (50.0) percent are illiterate, and remaining 50 percent are literate out of that (11) 22.0 percent farmers are studied up to 7th standard, (11) 22.0 are obtained Higher Secondary education level and only (3) 6.0 percentage of farmers obtained Graduate level of Education. It indicate present situation only those who are illiterate and Primary and Secondary level farmers are involving in organic farming and suggested thing is to if more educational people are involve in Organic Farming it useful to understanding the things of Cropping Pattern and method of Cultivation and easily understanding the facts in training programmes and also they may adopt technology if they are literate people.

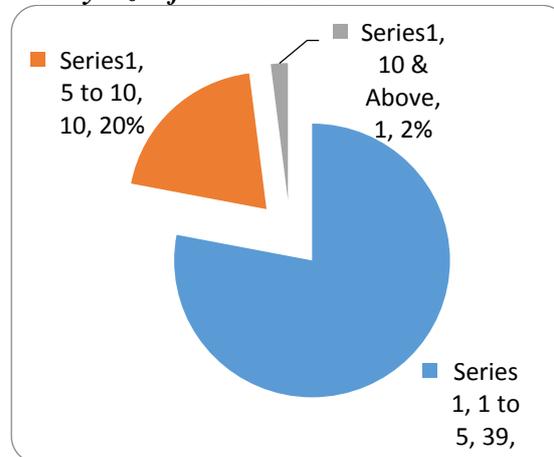
Income Status of Farmers

The table and figure 2 clearly shows that income of sample farmers in the study area. In level of income of farmers the range of (10,000 to 50,000) 74 percent had found, the range of (50,000 to 1,00,000) 20 percent of farmers having annual income in the study area, and only (1,00,000 to 1,50,000) 6 percent farmers are found in the study area. This shows



status and standards of living of the family, and it conclude those Low income groups' people are engaging in Organic Farming in the study area and for the Successful Organic farming huge investment are needed.

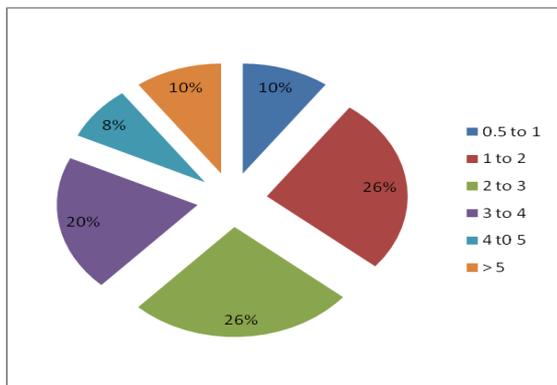
Family size of the Farmers



The table 3 shows that the Family Size of the samples farmers in the study area. Out of the 50 respondents (39) 78 percent of farmers are come under 1 to 5 size of family, (10) 20 percent of farmers having 5 to 10 size of family. (1) 2 percent size of family is involving in organic farming. The above table depicts people who are 1 to 5 size of family farmers are adopting organic farming, but in organic farming suitable for family size more than 5 and above because of it can save labour cost.

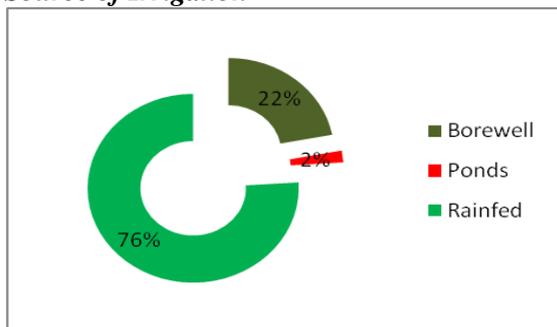
Land Holdings of farmers

The table and figure 1.5 indicate that land holding in the study area. It clearly shows that (0.5 to 1) of 10, (1 to 2) of 26, (2 to 3) of 26, (3 to 4) of 20, (4 to 5) of 8, above five 10 percent of land holding in respectively. The low land holding in the study area because of testing the yield and high land holding because of perhaps Training by MYRADA. It clearly shows that the small and marginal farmer are cultivating or practicing the organic farming.



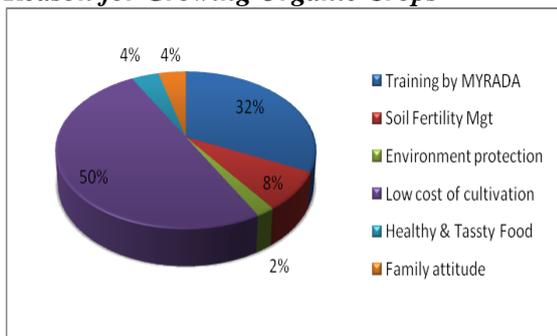
And only few people are engaging in organic farming in the study area.

Source of Irrigation



The table and figure 5 reveals that the source of irrigation sample farmers in the study area. It shows that (38) 76 percent of the respondents are depends on Rain fed, (11) 22 percent of farmers on Bore Well and remaining (1) 2 per cent of the farmers are depends on Ponds. It clearly mentions that the farmers are facing the problem of irrigation in the study area. And they expect the irrigation facilities for promoting of organic farming by the Govt.

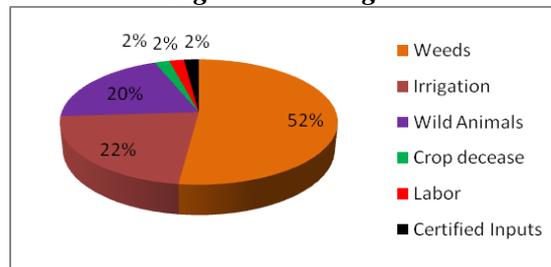
Reason for Growing Organic Crops



The table and figure 7 reveals that reason for growing organic crops of sample in study area. It clearly indicate (16) of 32 percent of respondent due to training by MYRADA, (4) of 8 percent for soil fertility management, (1) of 2 percent for Environment protection, (25) of 50 percent of people due to Low cost of cultivation, (2) of 4 percent are for Healthy and tasty food, and lastly (2) of 4 percent of farmers

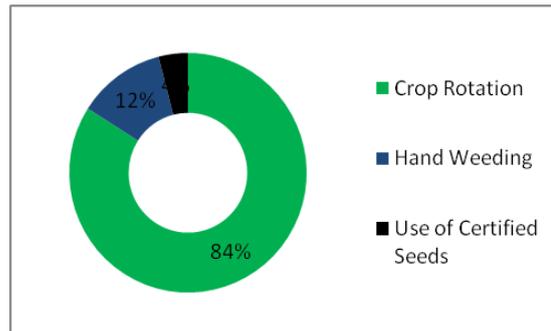
are growing for Family attitude. It summarize the things most of people who are involved in organic farming they may having the lack of Investment.

Problems in Organic Farming



The table and figure 9 reveals that problems in Organic Farming samples respond by sample farmers in the study area. The above table represents clearly out of 50 respondents facing deferent kinds of problems such as (26) of 52 percent weeds , (11) of 22 percent irrigation, (10) of 20 percent Wild Animals attack on crops, (1) of 2 percent is Crop decease, (1) of 2 percent is labor, and (1) of 2 percent facing the problems of above respective problems. And it indicate comparatively weeds are major problem in Organic farming other than Non-Organic Farming, because in modern farming use the pesticides, insecticides, herbicides and other can be used, but in organic farming also using of pesticides but which are certified as organic manure and not affect the soil, these organic manures are not that much effective to avoid the weeds.

Remedial Measures to Solve the Problems



The table 10 shows remedial measures for solve the problems of problems of samples drawn in the Study area. Out of 50 sample drawn (42) of 84 percent Crop Rotation, (6) of 12 percent Hand weeding, and (2) of 4 percent farmers are using Certified Organic Manures for Avoid the above coated problems. It indicating farmers are go through the traditional system because of may be lack of investment for adopt the technology like adopt drip irrigation for avoid the weeds in the crop area,

also in the study area farmers facing irrigation problems.

Findings of the Study

1. Educational background of the farmers shows that there are fifty per cent of the farmers are studied primary and secondary level of education and other fifty per cent of the farmers are illiterate among those practicing organic farming.
2. Majority of organic growers has 4 to 5 range of family members and only few of having more than ten members in a family. It shows that more employment opportunity provided by organic farming system.
3. Low level of income group farmers are involve in the organic farming, shows that status and standards of living of the family, and it conclude those low income groups farmers are engaging in organic farming in the study area and for the successful organic farming need huge investment.
4. Motivational factor of farmers to cultivating organic farming in the study area KABINI organic farmers producers' Pvt. Ltd., (MYRADA) it constitute of more than ninety five per cent. It indicate if any policy can made for promoting of organic farming by any Govt. or NGO's we may bring more number of organic farmers into organic agriculture.
5. 4. Cost of cultivation: economic performance of any system could be analyzed the costs and the returns. In the present study cost of cultivation is less comparatively with (Secondary data) modern farming system, and the yield of organic farming is less in conversion stages and after three to five years the yield will be double than modern farming system.
6. The demand factor of organic is gradually increasing in the study area due to more people are having health consciousness.
7. Existing marketing arrangements: in the 4th chapter, an attempt to understand who are the consumers, who are the demanding organic commodities, why they are purchasing, their willingness to pay higher price and the opinions of these consumers to improve the system. This helps in suggesting suitable policy measures in order to develop an organized marketing system which acts as an intensive to producers.

Conclusion

Organic farming is gaining momentum all over the world as it offers a means to address food self reliance, rural development and nature conservation. The common thread in this approach is the sustainable use of bio-diversity, in terms of both agriculture's contribution to biodiversity and biodiversity's contribution to agriculture. People's consciousness towards healthy food, ecology and pollution free environment through conventional farming has encouraged them in practicing organic farming. Organic agriculture used to be a way of life in India, a tradition which for centuries has shaped the thought, the outlook, the culture and economic life of it's people. Prior to independence and till two decades later a majority of the Indian farmers were unaware of the use of fertilizers for plant nutrition and pesticides for control of pests and diseases. In fact, it was all holistic agriculture then and the majority of farmers were cultivating in this way. However, to feed the ever-growing population of the country, it was felt necessary to rapidly increase the production of food grains. Thus, to achieve self sufficiency in food, dams and irrigation systems were put in place, use of external inputs like seeds of high yielding varieties of crops, chemical fertilizers and plant protection chemicals were developed and made available.

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