

# ORGANIC FARMING AND ITS BENEFITS

Organic farming is a type of agriculture or farming which avoids the use of synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, growth regulators, and livestock feed additives.

Organic farming systems rely on crop rotation, crop residues, animal manures, legumes, green manure, off-farm organic wastes and biofertilizers, mechanical cultivation, mineral bearing rocks. To maintain soil productivity to supply plant nutrients and biological pest control, controlling weeds, insects and other pests. All kinds of agricultural products can be produced organically , including grains, meat, dairy , eggs, fibres such as cotton, jute, flowers etc. Thus organic farming creates a sustainable lifestyle for generations to come.

Organic farmers build healthy soils by nourishing the living component of the soil, the microbial inhabitants that release, transform, and transfer nutrients. Soil organic matter contributes to good soil structure and water-holding capacity .

Organic farmers feed soil biota and build soil organic matter with cover crops, compost, and biologically based soil amendments. These produce healthy plants that are better able to resist disease and insect predation.

Organic farmers' primary strategy in controlling pests and diseases is prevention through good plant nutrition and management.

Organic farmers use cover crops and sophisticated crop rotations to change the field ecology , effectively disrupting habitat for weeds, insects, and disease organisms. Weeds are controlled through crop rotation, mechanical tillage, and hand-weeding, as well as through cover crops, mulches, flame weeding, and other management methods.

Organic farmers rely on a diverse population of soil organisms, beneficial insects, and birds to keep pests in check. When pest populations get out of balance, growers implement a variety of strategies such as the use of insect predators, mating disruption, traps and barriers.

Some important benefits for organic farming and organic foods:

- Organic farming is a science in itself which can be learnt easily by any conventional farmer .
- It has been found that by switching to organic farming, conventional farmer can actually reduce its production cost by over 25% as compared to the cost of conventional farming. This is eliminate the use of expensive synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, minimizing soil erosion by up to 50% and increasing crop yields up to five-folds.
- A well planned transition strategy may allow conventional farmers to adopt new , more effective or ganic farming practices easily .
- Organic farms can support substantially higher levels of wildlife especially in low lands and where animals can roam in pastures or graze on grassland. Not only does wildlife benefit, but entire ecosystems and ground water are improved by simply following organic farming methods.
- Organic farming practices not only benefit farmers and consumers; but the dairies can benefit. When dairies feed their cows organic feed and graze them on organic fields, the cows experience better health, less sickness, diseases and ultimately produce better tasting milk for consumers.
- Organic farming promotes healthy soils that are teaming with life and rich in micro nutrients and which can be used for decades to grow crops without getting exhausted.
- Consumers purchasing organically grown foods are tastier . Regardless of minimal price differences, consumers can smell, taste and see the difference in the quality of organically grown food products.
- Organically grown products are free from harmful chemicals, artificial flavors and preservatives that ultimately cost consumers more money than non-organically grown products. You can always taste the difference between organically grown and conventionally grown products.