

## PERCEPTION OF FARMERS ABOUT ORGANIC FARMING

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### ABSTRACT

*Organic farming is gaining ground globally. It is emerging as a green food industry in the world. Our country has vast geographic and climatic variability. Farmers are growing number of crops. Therefore, country has tremendous opportunity in organic farming. The present study was conducted in four purposively selected rain fed talukas of Patan district. Two villages from each selected taluka and fifteen farmers from each village were selected randomly. The sample of study was 120 farmers. Majority of the respondents were middle aged, had education up to primary to secondary level, medium family size and medium experience of organic farming. Majority of the respondents were having medium annual income and farming with animal husbandry as a occupation. Majority of the respondents were having medium level of perception of organic farming. Majority of the respondents perceived that future scope of sustainable agriculture will depend on organic farming and increased health consciousness among people will enhance the demand of organic farming and consumer may prefer to pay higher prices for organic products*

**Keywords:** organic farming, perception

### INTRODUCTION

The present day of self sufficiency in food grain production may not last longer unless we develop a sustainable agricultural system which maintains and improves soil fertility and productivity with greater acceptance of biological principles so as to assure adequate/more food production in future. Besides plants are more prone to pests and diseases in intensive agriculture, use of chemicals can have residues on the produces in the soil and in ground water.

Organic farming practices that reduces the pressure on land, water and bio-diversity without adverse effect on agricultural production and nutritive value of food comprise, includes judicious use of organic manure, viz. farm yard manure, compost, crop residues, vermicompost etc. Thus, study on perception of farmers about organic farming was felt necessary with following objectives.

### OBJECTIVES

(1) To study the personal and socio-economic attributes of

the farmers

(2) To know the perception of farmers about organic farming

### METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Patan district of Gujarat state. Out of nine talukas, four rain fed talukas viz; Harij, Sami, Shankheswar and Radhanpur were selected purposively. Two villages from each taluka were selected randomly. Fifteen farmers from each village were randomly selected. Thus, 120 farmers were selected for present study. Teacher made perception test was developed to know the perception of farmers about organic farming. The data were collected through personal interview. The data were analyzed with appropriate statistical method. The variables were measured using appropriate scales and procedure adopted by other researchers. The statistical tools used to analyze data were percentage, mean, S.D., mean score and ranking.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

## Personal and socio-economic attributes

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their personal and socio-economic attributes

n = 120

Sr. No.	Attributes	Classification	Frequency	Percent
1	Age	Young (Up to 35 years )	26	21.70
		Middle (35 to 50 years)	56	46.70
		Old (above 50 years)	38	31.60
2	Education	Illiterate	08	06.70
		Primary (1 <sup>st</sup> to 8 <sup>th</sup> std.)	64	53.30
		Secondary (9 <sup>th</sup> to 10 <sup>th</sup> standard)	33	27.50
		Higher secondary (11 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> standard)	10	08.30
		Graduates	05	04.20
3	Family Size Mean= 5.85 S.D. =2.168	Small ( Below 4 members)	11	09.20
		Medium (4 to 8 members)	99	82.50
		Big (Above 8 members)	10	08.30
4	Experience of organic farming Mean= 12.19 S.D. =8.717	Less Experience ( Below 4 years)	20	16.70
		Medium Experience (4 to 20 years)	81	67.50
		High Experience (Above 20 years)	19	15.80
5	Land holding	Marginal farmers (Up to 1.00 ha)	09	07.50
		Small farmers (1.01 to 2.00 ha)	20	16.70
		Semi medium farmers (2.01 to 4.00 ha)	22	18.03
		Medium farmers (4.01 to 10.00 ha)	44	36.70
		Big farmers ( Above 10.00 ha)	25	20.80
6	Cropping intensity Mean=176.65 S.D. =41.615	Low ( Below 135%)	20	16.70
		Medium (135 to 218%)	85	70.80
		High (Above 218%)	15	12.50
7	Irrigation method	Flood irrigation	14	11.70
		Bed irrigation System	80	66.70
		Sprinkler irrigation System	15	12.50
		Drip irrigation System	11	09.20
8	Annual Income Mean= 201483 S.D. = 133464	Low ( Rs. Below 68000/- )	02	01.70
		Medium (Rs. 68000/- to 335000/-)	103	85.80
		High (Above Rs. 335000/-)	15	12.50
9	Occupation	Farming	17	14.20
		Farming + Other business	5	4.20
		Farming + Animal Husbandry	93	77.50
		Farming + Service	01	8.00
		Farming+ Service + Animal Husbandry	04	3.30

The data depicts in table -1 show that maximum (46.70 %) respondents were found in the middle age group followed by old age (31.60%) and young age group (21.70%). The 53.50 per cent respondents were having primary level of education followed by secondary level (27.50%) and higher secondary level (8.30%). Only 4.20 per cent respondents were graduates. The 6.70 per cent farmers were found illiterate. The 82.50 per cent organic farmers had medium family size while 9.20 per cent organic farmers possessed small family size. Remaining 8.30 per cent organic farmers had big family

size. The majority (67.50 %) of the organic farmers were found to have 4 to 20 years of experience in organic farming while, 16.70 per cent had less experience i.e. below 4 years. Only 15.68 per cent of them had above 20 year experience. The 36.70 per cent of the farmers were medium farmers followed by big farmers (20.80 %) semi medium farmers (18.30 %), and small farmers (16.70%). Only 7.50 per cent of them were marginal farmers. The majority of the organic farmers (70.80%) had medium level of cropping intensity. On the other hand, 16.70 per cent organic farmers had low

cropping intensity. The 12.50 per cent organic farmers had high cropping intensity. The majority of the organic farmers (66.70%) had adopted bed irrigation method followed by 12.50 per cent using sprinkler irrigation system. The 11.70 per cent organic farmers were found irrigating their crops through flood irrigation method. Only 9.20 per cent organic farmers had adopted drip irrigation system. The 85.80% and 12.50% farmers had their income of ₹ 68000/- to ₹ 335000/- and above ₹ 335000/- respectively. Only 1.70 per cent of the respondents were having the income below ₹ 68000/- per year. The majority (77.50%) farmers had farming + animal husbandry as occupation. The 14.20 per cent, 8.00 per cent and 4.20 per cent farmers had farming, farming + service and farming + business as their occupation, respectively. Only 3.30 per cent farmers had farming + service + animal husbandry occupation.

**Perception of farmers about organic farming**

The result in Table -2 indicate that majority (84.20%) of the respondents were having medium level of perception. On the other hand, 10.80 per cent of respondents falls under the category of low level of perception. Only 5.00 per cent respondents were found having high level of perception about organic farming.

**Table 2 : Distribution of the respondents according to their perception of organic farming n=120**

Sr. No.	Category	Number	Per cent
1	Low ( Below 44 score)	13	10.80
2	Medium (44 to 49 score)	101	84.20
3	High (Above 49 score)	6	05.00

Mean= 46.57 S.D.=2.58

**Perception of farmers about futures scope of organic farming**

The statements indicating perception were enlisted on three point continuum viz. Agree, Neutral and Disagree. For positive sentence, score given was 3,2,1, respectively and for negative sentence, the score was 1,2,3 respectively. Then, mean score of statements were calculated and ranked accordingly. The data regarding farmers’ perception are presented in table 3.

**Table 3 : Statement wise perception of farmers about future scope of organic farming n=120**

Sr. No.	Perception	Mean Score	Rank
1	Sustainable agriculture will depend on organic farming.	3.00	I
2	Problems in conventional farming will lead farmers toward organic farming.	2.98	II
3	Low input cost and higher net return may attract farmers toward organic agriculture.	2.94	V
4	Requirement of huge quantity of organic manure will be big problem.	1.37	XI
5	Use of chemical fertilizers will not be stopped or will not be reduced in future.	2.97	III
6	Government support for organic farming will be increased.	2.97	III
7	Research institutions will focus on organic farming research.	2.95	IV
8	Increased health consciousness among people will enhance the demand of organic products.	3.00	I
9	Consumers will prefer to pay higher prices for organic products.	2.98	II
10	Export opportunities for organic products will promote organic farming.	2.98	II
11	Organic farming will benefit only to big farmers and market players.	2.75	IX
12	Monopoly of certification agencies may create difficulties for farmers.	2.81	VII
13	Premium price may not be available in future.	2.79	VIII
14	There may be possibility of adulteration in organic products	1.5	X
15	Farmers will sell their produce on their own credibility and honesty.	2.93	VI
16	Organic farming as a movement will vanish after some time.	2.81	VII

The data in table 3 reveals that sustainable agriculture will depend on organic farming and increased health consciousness among people will enhance the demand of organic products ranked 1<sup>st</sup>. The perception of farmers towards problem in conventional farming will lead farmers toward organic farming, consumers may prefer to pay higher prices for organic products and export opportunities for organic products will promote organic farming ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>. The statements use of chemical fertilizer will not be stopped

or will not be reduced in future and government support for organic farming will be increased ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> as perceived by the farmers. The statements research institutions will focus on organic farming research, low input cost and higher net return will attract farmers toward organic agriculture and farmers will sell their produce on their own credibility and honesty ranked 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> respectively. The perception

of farmers towards monopoly of certification agencies may create difficulties for farmers and organic farming as a movement will vanish after some time ranked 7<sup>th</sup>. The statements premium price may not be available in future, organic farming will be benefited to big farmers and market players only, possibility of adulteration in organic products and requirement of huge quantity of organic manure will be big problem ranked 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> respectively.

## CONCLUSION

Majority of the respondents were middle aged, having education up to primary to secondary level. Majority of them had medium family size and had medium experience of organic farming. Maximum farmers had medium to big land holding with medium level of cropping intensity. Majority of the respondents were having medium annual income and farming with animal husbandry as a occupation. Majority of the respondents were having medium level of perception of organic farming. Majority of the respondents perceived that future scope of sustainable agriculture will depend on organic farming and increased health consciousness among people

will enhance the demand of organic farming and consumer may prefer to pay higher prices for organic products.

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