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A STUDY ON FARMERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS ORGANIC FARMING IN TURMERIC CULTIVATION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ERODE DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

An overview of the various studies reviewed shows that most of the studies pertain to cultivation of turmeric under inorganic method. No study on organic farming in turmeric cultivation could be traced out. Moreover, not a single comprehensive study for turmeric crop covering various aspects such as cost, net return, and problems in both organic and inorganic method of turmeric cultivation. The present study could help farmers, traders, investors and others who need the information for their respective purpose. The result of the analysis of this study would be useful to the turmeric farmers.

KEYWORDS : Organic, Livestock, Organism, Sustainable

INTRODUCTION

Turmeric *(Curcuma longa L)*, the ancient and sacred spice of India known as 'Indian saffron' is an important commercial spice crop grown in India. It is used in diversified forms as a condiment, flavoring and colouring agent and as a principal ingredient in Indian culinary as curry powder. It has anti cancer and anti viral activities and hence finds use in the drug industry and cosmetic industry. 'Kum-kum', popular with every house wife, is also a by-product of turmeric. It finds a place in offerings on religious and ceremonial occasions. The increasing demand for natural products as food additives makes turmeric as ideal produce as a food colourant. Rhizomes are ready for harvesting in about 7 to 9 months after planting.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Rajendran (2008) in his article observes that organic farming is economically viable, environmentally sound and socially adaptable and the invisible positive effects of it on the farm environment are many. For example, continues application of eco-friendly manures enhanced and enriched soil fertility and water use was scientific and the resources were stocked on the farms itself. All these helped to use the crucial resources on a more sustainable basic and to increase in yields that will sustain the farm economy in the long run.

Tholkappian and Rukmani devi (2013) conducted "A study on economic analysis of organic and conventional turmeric cultivation of Erode district in Tamil Nadu" has focused on (i)the social background of organic and conventional turmeric cultivation in study area. and (ii) Economic viability of organic and conventional turmeric cultivation in study area. They concluded that organic turmeric is important in achieving the goal of sustainable agriculture. It has been suggested that organic farming should receive prime attention from all the stakeholders to realize its full potential in increasing profitability and providing the much sought after sustainability of agriculture.

OBJECTIVES

- To study about the factors influencing the farmers to adopt organic farming in turmeric cultivation
- To explore the problems faced by the farmers who cultivate turmeric under organic method.
- To offer suitable suggestions to overcome the problems in organic turmeric cultivation.

SCOPE

Organic farming helps in rejuvenating the degraded soil and ensures sustainability of crop production. Common man and farmers are aware of the hazards from use of chemicals and pesticides. It is a common practice that farmers maintain part of their rice fields without pesticide application for their own consumption. When vegetables are grown in the Kitchen garden, no chemical fertilizers or pesticides are used since the house wife knows that the vegetables are meant for their own consumption. Now, the consumers prefer to consume natural/ethnic foods, particularly organic foods across the world. Moreover, they are ready to pay a premium price for such foods. The demand for organic agricultural products is increasing day by day.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

AREA OF THE STUDY

This study is confined to Erode district only.

SAMPLING DESIGN

The sampling technique selected for the study is simple random sampling. The respondents have been randomly selected from total population.

Sample size: The sample size is 100. The questionnaire were systematically prepared and distributed to the farmers.

SOURCE OF DATA

The data for this study has been collected from primary and secondary sources.

STATISTICAL TOOLS

The following were the statistical tools applied for the analysis of data collected

1. Average score analysis
2. Average Rank analysis

AVERAGE SCORE ANALYSIS

TABLE NO: 1
Factors Influencing Organic Cultivation of Turmeric

Facts	HM	MM motivation	LM	Total	Mean
	3	2	1		
Less input cost	48	40	12	100	
Score	144	80	12	236	2.36
Weed control	45	37	18	100	
Score	135	74	18	227	2.27
Disease control	32	43	25	100	
Score	96	86	25	207	2.07
Soil protection	44	51	5	100	
Score	132	102	5	239	2.39
High yield	38	43	19	100	
Score	114	86	19	219	2.19
Good quality	38	47	15	100	
Score	114	94	15	223	2.23
High price	25	34	41	100	
Score	75	68	41	184	1.84

HM=High Motivation, MM=Medium Motivation, LM=Low Motivation

The above table it is understood that as for as level of motivation is concerned, highest scoring has been given to soil protection, next highest scoring has been given to less input cost followed by weed control, good quality, disease control and high price.

Majority of the farmers are highly motivated with soil protection in the organic cultivation of turmeric.

AVERAGE RANK ANALYSIS

TABLE NO:2

Problems faced by farmers in organic cultivation of turmeric

Problems	Rank 1	Rank 1I	Rank III	Rank IV	Rank V	Rank VI	Total	Mean	Rank
	6	5	4	3	2	1			
Chances for disease attack during initial period	10	30	22	15	14	9	100		
Score	60	150	88	45	28	9	380	3.8	4
Lack of skill in preparing organic manures	20	26	15	18	9	12	100		
Score	120	130	60	54	18	12	394	3.94	3
Lack of organic inputs in the market	32	21	16	12	11	8	100		
Score	192	105	64	36	22	8	427	4.27	1
Lack of government support	12	16	20	22	13	17	100		
Score	72	80	80	66	26	17	341	3.41	6
No organized market for organic turmeric	28	25	18	10	12	7	100		
Score	168	125	72	30	24	7	426	4.26	2
High cost of organic fertilizers	12	18	16	27	16	11	100		
Score	72	90	64	81	32	11	350	3.5	5

The above table reveals that the farmers have assigned first rank to lack of organic inputs in the market, second rank to no organized market for organic turmeric, third rank to lack of skill in preparing organic manures, fourth rank to chances for disease attack during initial period, fifth rank to high cost of organic fertilizers, sixth rank to lack of government support.

Majority of the farmers are ranked first to lack of organic inputs in the market in various problems in organic cultivation of turmeric.

SUGGESTIONS

To increase in quantity of farm yard manure, neem cake, vermicompost, jeevamirtham, panchakaviya would increase the yield of organic turmeric. Hence, the extension infrastructure of agriculture department has to arrange for training programmes to popularise these inputs and also give technical guidance to organic farmers. Also, State Government should provide subsidies for these inputs to attain the productivity level of turmeric.

The Government is to provide storage facilities at minimum cost for the benefits of small and marginal farmers to preserve their products during surplus production and non-remunerative prices in the market.

Regarding technology and development, organic farming training programs are to be organized at all levels to attract marginal as well as small farmers. Implement Organic Farming as a compulsory subject from elementary schools. Model organic farms are to be established.

CONCLUSION

Organic farming is a crop production method respecting the rules of nature. Organic farming is targeted to produce nutritive, healthy and pollution free food. It maximises the use of on farm resources and minimises the use of off-farm resources. Commitment to nature protection is a pre-requisite for practicing organic farming. In organic farming entire system ie. plant, animal, soil, water and micro-organism are to be protected. Organic farming can be a viable alternative production method for farmers, but there are many challenges. One key to success is being open to alternative organic approaches to solving production problems. Determine the cause of the problem, and assess strategies to avoid or reduce the long term problem rather than a short term fix for it.

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