

Overview : Organic Farming In India

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Organic farming is not new to our country. The farmers of ancient India are known to have evolved nature friendly farming systems and practices such as mixed farming, mixed cropping and crop rotation. It is increasingly being recognized as an important alternative to the form of agriculture, which is highly dependent on chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Reasons for promoting organic farming include lower damage to environment/environment sustainability, reduction in chemical contamination, promotion of health and food safety and higher consumer awareness. India has export potential in this sector and there are some initiatives on this regard from the Indian government. Recently Sikkim has been declared as the first organic state of India. The Indian government is keen to promote organic farming and exports of organic products. A National Project on Organic Farming was launched during 10th plan with an outlay of Rs 115 crore. This scheme was continued in 11th Plan with an outlay Rs 101 crore. The earlier scheme “National Project on Development and Use of Bio-fertilizers” has been merged with the “National Project on Organic Farming”. It is evident from limited short-term research findings that many crops respond better to organic management particularly after an initial conversion period of 2-3 years. Organic farming can significantly contribute to improving the livelihoods of small holders as it generates higher incomes and involves less risk.