ABSTRACT

The principles of organic agriculture are guides to tailor organic practices to each individual farming location as organic farming systems fall into similar categories as those of conventional agriculture i.e. mixed, livestock, stockless and horticulture. Farmers’ apprehension towards organic farming in India is rooted in non-availability of sufficient organic supplements, bio fertilizers and local market for organic produce and poor access to guidelines, certification and input costs. Capital-driven regulation by contracting firms further discourages small farm holders. An integrated effort is needed from government and nongovernment agencies to encourage farmers to adopt organic farming as a solution to climate change, health and sustainability issue. The study was conducted to find out the major constraints in adoption of organic farming. The study was based on the inferences of 120 sampled participants collected during training programme on organic farming. Based on the mean values, the constraints were ranked and it was observed that ‘unorganized organic market for organic growers’ was ranked first with the mean score of 2.69 out of maximum possible score of 3. The last constraint for not practicing organic farming was ‘organic registration process is costly and complicated’ with the mean score of 1.61.

Key words: Organic farming; Constraints; Future strategies;

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the mean values, the constraints were ranked and it was observed that ‘unorganized organic market for organic growers’ was ranked first with the mean score of 2.69 out of maximum possible score of 3, while other constraints in order of importance were
'low premium for organic produce' (2.46), 'lack of knowledge about organic farming' (2.11), 'no subsidies for organic farming' (2.08), 'difficult to get organic fertilizers' (2.05), 'large quantity of organic inputs are required' (2.02), 'difficult to manage insect–pest and diseases' (2.0), 'time consuming' (1.98), 'lack of labour force' (1.82) and 'organic registration process is costly and complicated' (1.61), respectively. Therefore, the suitable strategies and action plan should be prepared to combat these constraints so that farmers can be able to adopt organic farming at large scale to sustain their livelihood (Table 1). The first constraint for not adopting the organic farming was 'unorganized organic market for organic growers'. The farmers did not know the place of markets where organic produce were sold. 'Low premium for organic produce' was ranked as second constraint because the farmers believed that if they go for organic farming there would be yield loss and there was no fixed premium for organic produce over inorganic produce. 'Lack of knowledge about organic farming' especially on different sources of nutrients was perceived as third constraint. Farmers perceived 'no subsidies for organic farming' as a fourth constraint. Since most of the farmers’ belonged to small and marginal category they expected some financial help from the Government side. ‘Difficult to get organic fertilizers’ was perceived as fifth constraint as there was shortage of organic manures so farmers’ faced the difficulty in getting organic fertilizers. Farmers perceived ‘large quantity of organic inputs are required’ as the sixth constraint. Farmers’ felt that handling inorganic fertilizers were easy since they were applied in small quantities when compared to organic manures. Farmers perceived ‘difficult to manage insect–pest and diseases’ as a seventh constraint because they felt that pest and disease management was very difficult through biological methods. ‘Time consuming’ was the eighth, as they feared that if they go for organic farming they won’t be able to devote time to other activities. ‘Lack of labour force’ was the ninth constraint. Farmers’ felt that organic farming will consume more labour force in comparison to inorganic farming. The last constraint was ‘organic registration process is costly and complicated’ Similar kinds of finding were reported by Jaganathan et al. (2010).

CONCLUSION

An overview of this study shows that there are a number of constraints impeding Indian farmers, especially small farm holders from adopting of Farmers’ apprehension lies in non-availability of sufficient amount of organic supplements, bio-fertilizers and local market for organic produce. Additionally, lack of access to guidelines, certification and input cost coupled with capital-driven regulation by contracting firms strongly discourage small farm holders who constitute over 70% of farming community in India.

REFERENCES


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