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Opportunity and challenges for organic vegetable cultivation

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INTRODUCTION

The advantages of organic farming over conventional farming include greater employment of human labour, lower cultivation costs, higher profits, better input use efficiency, lower risk, and increased income, increased self-reliance and livelihood security for farmers, as well as preservation of the environment and soil health. The sole reason Indian agriculture has long been sustainable is due to the minimal external input variables. The primary problems with organic farming are certification, marketing, and policy support all contribute to yield decline in organic farming. Additionally, organic farming limits the use of off-farm inputs since it results in residue on food and negative environmental impacts, whereas it encourages on-farm inputs that helped organic agriculture succeed. Going "back" to traditional farming practises is not what organic farming entails. It is the fusion of every sustainable strategy discovered to achieve the goals of sustainable agriculture. These agricultural approaches forbid the use of any synthetic inputs as they cause erosion, water shortages, salivation, soil pollution, genetic erosion, and other environmental problems and include intercropping, mulching, integrating crops and animal manures, and more. They cause erosion, water shortages, salivation, soil pollution, genetic erosion, and other environmental problems. In addition, the uncontrolled use of synthetic chemicals widenspreads the use of chemical pesticides and fertilisers, which affects both ecological diversity and human health. There is an urgent need to increase the sustainability of farming systems, which might lead to improved farmer lives. Organic farming is one of the most widely acknowledged alternative agricultural systems to the traditional one. Organic farming covers a wide range of production techniques that are friendly to the environment and require considerable support in the form of grants, agricultural extension services, and research. Additionally, it was found that boosting productivity via the use of farm and family labour

per unit of land rather than expanding the area under cultivation would be more important to meet the rising demand for food grains in the years to come.

Need for organic farming

In contrast to agrochemicals, which are made from fuel and are not renewable, organic agriculture may be a viable option for farmers who are more concerned with the ecological balance in the now and in the future. The price will rise in the future. Products made using organic materials are well-liked all across the world. The farmers market aids in the regional and national commercialization of organic goods. In addition, it is anticipated that the retail sales of organic goods would increase steadily over the ensuing years at a pace of around 20% annually. Therefore, the population growth in the next generations would be to both stabilise and expand agricultural productivity in a sustainable way. Scientists have so concluded that once the "Green Revolution's "high input utilisation reached its optimum level and is now sustained with declining dividends, it has exceeded that threshold. Therefore, it is necessary to preserve a natural equilibrium at all costs in order for life to survive.

Beneficial aspects of organic farming

Crops are grown using only organic methods in organic farming. Favourable to the natural environment. The scientific method of organic farming is frequently advantageous in many respects and perhaps more profitable in contrast to conventional and chemical agriculture. The key advantages are as follows:

- Compared to traditional farming, organic farming is far more profitable and reduces production costs by up to 25%. Additionally, using organic agricultural techniques decreases erosion by 50%, increasing productivity by 5 times in 5 years.
- In low-lying areas, organic farms sustain a lot of wildlife, improving the ecosystem as a whole and groundwater, both of which are helpful for agricultural activities.
- Food grown organically has a higher nutritious content than food grown using old traditional techniques. Some of the most significant advantages for organic food users include a decrease in the chances of bodily negative consequences including heart attacks, cancer, and strokes.
- As we are all aware, agriculture supports life whereas organic farming saves our life. Organic farming helps family farmers of all sizes, lessens the toxic load, keeps chemicals out of the air, water, soil, and our bodies, produces healthy soil, and improves flavour and taste. It also encourages biodiversity.

Challenges during adoption of organic farming

- When starting an organic farm, farmers go through numerous obstacles. Among them, some are the key restraints, such as the high cost of organic inputs, the requirement for certification, the limited market for organic products, and the poor yield and low pricing. In addition, there is a slight demand for organic

products, a drawback to employing organic methods, a higher risk of production, and a lack of consolidated land ideal for organic farming.

- Another issue is that, in the process of adopting organic farming, socioeconomic limits are the biggest issue, followed by infrastructure, technology, and situational issues. It requires more labour than conventional production does. On the one hand, the cost of labour has grown, which raises the price of organic food. Indian agriculture has not yet been able to get organic cultivation into the spotlight. If these issues are not handled, they might have a severe impact on the agricultural sector at the policy, commercial, and infrastructure levels, as well as the growth of organic farming, in addition to lowering the quality of organic food products. However, it is more necessary to address these concerns in order to protect the financial stability of the agricultural industry.
- One of the biggest problems is that the pest and weed species have evolved as a result of the widespread use of pesticides and other chemicals to control weeds and insect pests. The biggest challenge in switching from conventional to organic farming.
- Government-supported organic farming has precise organic criteria for crops, animals, wild-crafted goods, and the processing of agricultural products. Farmers must be certified before their produce and products may be labelled "organic."
- Since 2000, the National Organic Standards of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have provided guidance on organic farming, and there are several authorised organic certifiers around the nation.

Opportunity for organic farming

In different parts of the nation, Indian soil is blessed with a variety of naturally viable organic forms of nutrients that are useful for organic crop development. The wide variety of climates and eco-systems contribute to a sustainable ecosystem. India's traditional farming system is highly developed, with inventive farmers, huge arid plains, and minimal chemical usage. Long-term subsistence farming has been practised in the rain-fed tribal, northeast, and mountainous parts of the nation, where agriculture utilizes very few chemicals; such places are organic by default. The rain-fed, tribal, north-east, and hilly parts of India might be taken into consideration; agriculture production in these areas is still mostly along traditional eco-friendly lines, thus educating the farmers about organic farming practises may not be too challenging. Given the availability of organic infrastructure, the low usage of chemical farming practises, the limit on public expenditure, and the minimal effort required for conversion, it appears that organic farming may be gradually adopted. The possible places and crops that meet the aforementioned requirements might be researched and included in organic agriculture. In terms of soil fertility stability, diversity of microorganisms, plants, and animals, increased carbon sequestration, and less energy reliance, organic farming techniques are environmentally sustainable. Organic farming might help meet population needs and create additional jobs for rural residents: Organic farm serves five families, whereas a

conventional farm of a comparable size might only provide one family with some seasonal work options.

CONCLUSION

After the introduction of modern agricultural methods, which used high inputs that had a negative impact on soil texture, long-term persistence in nature, and persistent pesticide residue in food that endangered human and animal life, organic farming became more and more popular. There is less government support for the promotion of organic farming than there is for conventional agriculture in the form of subsidies, agricultural extension services, and official research since organic agriculture has been overlooked in agricultural policy. If encouraged properly, organic farming in India will advance significantly.