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## Research Article

# ATTITUDE OF THE FARMERS TOWARDS ORGANIC VEGETABLE FARMING

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### ABSTRACT

Organic farming is the need of the hour to protect the human being and also the environment. The present study is focused on the farmers attitude towards organic vegetable farming .the study confined to the central Kerala. A sample of 30 conventional farmers and certified farmers certified under INDOCERT were selected through purposive sampling method. Data collected through primary survey by using pre tested schedule. The data were analyzed with the help of indices and kruskka wallis test was applied to test the significance. Comparison between the attitude of the conventional and organic farmers revealed that conventional farmers have a neither favorable nor unfavorable attitude towards organic farming. Farmers have favorable attitude towards organic farming. Conventional farmers were having least favorable attitude towards market demand and easy sale of vegetables and also in the case of practical feasibility of adoption in which organic farmers were expressed highly favorable attitude

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### INTRODUCTION

Organic farming as an approach to sustainable agriculture tries to decrease environmental problems and possible health hazards caused by the residues from pesticides Organic agriculture is the most dynamic and rapidly growing sector of the global food industry (Ellis, Panyakul, Vildoza, & Kasterine, 2006). The yields from organic agriculture are not less than from conventional agriculture (Ramesh, Singh, & Subba, 2005). Badgley et al. (2006) showed organic food can fulfill the demands for food and sustain the environment.

#### Objective

To identify the attitude of farmers towards organic vegetable cultivation.

### METHODOLOGY

The objective was analyzed through the primary data collected from 30 conventional farmers from central region of Kerala viz, Thrissur, Palakkad and Ernakulum and 6 organic farmers certified under INDOCERT. The data were collected F on a 5 point scale of Likert summated rating by selecting 12 attitude related variables. An attitude index was constructed by giving weightage to 5 points ranging from 5 to 1 (most favorable to least favorable). For the purpose of interpretation index score was rated as Less than 30- Unfavorable (UF) 30-50 –least favorable (LF) 50-70 –Neither favorable nor unfavorable

(F\UF) 70-90 – Favorable (F) 90 and above- Highly favorable (HF). Moreover Kruskal wallis test was also employed as a tool.

### ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

The term attitude refers to the degree of positive or negative affect towards a psychological object. Here the focus of the study is on to analyze the attitude of farmers towards organic vegetable farming.

The analysis of attitude of conventional farmers towards the organic vegetable practices highlights that the farmers having highly favorable attitude towards the statements related to improve the fertility of soil, environmental friendly, health protecting and improve the quality of vegetables. Whereas, their attitude was least favorable towards the aspects like market demand, easy to sell, practical feasibility and low financial risk. Their attitude towards the cost of cultivation is unfavorable. The composite index (64 percent) shows that in general they have neither favorable nor unfavorable towards organic vegetable farming.

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Table 1 presents the details of attitude of farmers towards organic vegetable farming

**Table 1** Attitude of conventional and organic farmers towards organic vegetable farming

|     | variables  | Index | Score | Index | Level of attitude | H      | Asymp.sig |
|-----|--|-------|-------|-------|-------------------|--------|-----------|
| 1.  | Organic farming improves fertility status of the soil                  | 100   | 150   | 100   | HF                | 0.000  | 1.000     |
| 2.  | Organic farming is more easy than conventional farming                 | 44    | 78    | 52    | FUF               | 11.780 | 0.003     |
| 3.  | Only good quality seeds of known source can be used in organic farming | 84    | 113   | 75.33 | F                 | 4.164  | 0.125     |
| 4.  | Organic farming practices are environmental friendly                   | 100   | 150   | 100   | HF                | 0.000  | 1.000     |
| 5.  | Organic fertilizer used in farm does not affect one's health           | 100   | 150   | 100   | HF                | 0.000  | 1.000     |
| 6.  | Use of organic farming practices is improves quality of vegetables     | 90    | 141   | 94    | HF                | 2.492  | 0.288     |
| 7.  | There is high market demand for organic vegetables                     | 40    | 74    | 49.33 | LF                | 2.148  | 0.342     |
| 8.  | Organic vegetables can be sold easily                                  | 60    | 73    | 48.67 | LF                | 4.204  | 0.119     |
| 9.  | Total Organic farming cost is less than conventional farming cost      | 20    | 30    | 20    | UF                | 0.000  | 1.000     |
| 10. | Adoption of organic farming practices is practically feasible          | 60    | 51    | 34    | LF                | 0.207  | 0.902     |
| 11. | Adoption of organic farming practices involves no financial risk       | 38    | 54    | 36    | LF                | 1.481  | 0.477     |
| 12. | Organic vegetables will get premium price                              | 52    | 88    | 58.67 | FUF               | 2.030  | 0.362     |
|     | Composite index  | 64.67 | 1152  | 64    |                   |        |           |

**Table 2** Attitude of organic farmers towards organic vegetable farming

| Sl. no | Statements   | Score | Index | Level of attitude |
|--------|--|-------|-------|-------------------|
| 1.     | Organic farming improves fertility status of the soil                  | 30    | 100   | HF                |
| 2.     | Organic farming is more easy than conventional farming                 | 30    | 100   | HF                |
| 3.     | Only good quality seeds of known source can be used in organic farming | 30    | 100   | HF                |
| 4.     | Organic farming practices are environmental friendly                   | 30    | 100   | HF                |
| 5.     | Organic fertilizer used in farm does not affect one's health           | 30    | 100   | HF                |
| 6.     | Use of organic farming practices is improves quality of vegetables     | 30    | 100   | HF                |
| 7.     | There is high market demand for organic vegetables                     | 28    | 93.33 | HF                |
| 8.     | Organic vegetables can be sold easily                                  | 27    | 90    | HF                |
| 9.     | Total Organic farming cost is less than conventional farming cost      | 12    | 40    | LF                |
| 10.    | Adoption of organic farming practices is practically feasible          | 30    | 100   | HF                |
| 11.    | Adoption of organic farming practices involves no financial risk       | 30    | 100   | HF                |
| 12.    | Organic vegetables will get premium price                              | 27    | 90    | HF                |
|        | Composite index  | 334   | 92.78 |                   |

Source: Primary data

In the case of attitude of organic farmers towards organic farming, farmers were highly favorable towards Organic farming as it is improves the fertility of the soil. The continuous use of organic inputs is helped to improve the fertility. Organic farming requires prior soil treatment. In conventional and organic the soil treatment is important. But in the case of organic farming it is more carefully managed. Good quality seeds are needed for the organic cultivation is

strongly agreed by the farmers. Attitude of the farmers towards environmental aspects of organic farming are also highly favorable. Organic farming will help to make better soil conditions by removing the chemical contents in the soil. The statement of organic fertilizers and pesticides are not affect one's health is strongly agreed by the organic farmers. Organic farming practices are needed for ensuring the quality of vegetables. Because it is more nutritious and poison free . Organic farming can replace the conventional farming. But the farmer should wait for a time period of two or three years to become stable in the organic farming. Organic farmers were highly favorable for the consumer demand and the consumers can purchase organic vegetables readily from the farm. Adoption of organic farming is also supported by the organic farmers. Organic farmers favored that organic farming can earn more profit. The unfavorable attitude is indicated by the farmers for the statement of organic vegetables is cheaper than ordinary vegetables. It means the prices of the organic vegetables are more than ordinary vegetables and the cost of organic farming is more when compared to conventional farming.

Comparison between the attitude of the conventional and organic farmers revealed that conventional farmers have a neither favorable nor unfavorable attitude towards organic farming. Farmers have favorable attitude towards organic farming. Conventional farmers were having least favorable attitude towards market demand and easy sale of vegetables and also in the case of practical feasibility of adoption in which organic farmers were expressed highly favorable attitude.

**Findings**

1. Conventional farmers were having highly favorable attitude towards statements related to improve fertility of soil, environmental friendly, health protecting and the quality of vegetables. But their attitude is least favorable to market demand, practical feasibility and low financial risk. Moreover their attitude towards cost of cultivation is unfavorable.
2. Organic farmers were having highly favorable attitude towards majority of the selected attitude variables. They have least favorable attitude towards only for cost of organic farming.
3. Comparison between the attitude of the conventional and organic farmers revealed that conventional farmers have a neither favorable nor unfavorable attitude towards organic farming. Farmers have favorable attitude towards organic farming.

**CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

The analysis and findings of the study throw light on the attitude of both conventional and certified organic farmers towards organic vegetable cultivation. The study highlights the difference in the attitude among organic and conventional farmers. Organic farmers seemed to be highly favorable towards most of the selected variables except for cost of cultivation whereas conventional farmers are unfavorable towards many of the selected variables. It may be due to lack of awareness towards the organic farming and its advantages with respect to market demand and consumer acceptance therefore it is very much necessary to have organizing

awareness campaign towards organic vegetable farming. Institutional support as per the farmer's opinion is very less for encouraging organic cultivation. As both conventional and organic farmers agreed that cost of cultivation is very high for vegetable cultivation government can provide subsidy to the farmers at the initial stage of the adoption of organic cultivation.

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