



**KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY**  
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# ORGANIC FARMING IN INDIA

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## Introduction

As per the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP), organic agriculture is a system of farm design and management that creates an ecosystem that can achieve sustainable productivity without the use of artificial external inputs such as chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

## Significance of Organic Farming in India

### **1.Environmental Sustainability**

Enhances soil fertility and microbial health by avoiding chemical fertilizers.

Reduces water pollution from pesticide/fertilizer runoff.

Example: Sikkim's complete shift to organic (2016) improved biodiversity and eco-tourism.

### **2.Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation**

Increases soil organic carbon, improving carbon sequestration.

Organic soils show better resilience to droughts/floods.

Example: Organic paddy in Kerala demonstrated higher tolerance during heavy rainfall.

### **3.Health Benefits**

Minimizes chemical residues in food, ensuring safer nutrition.

Growing urban demand for organic fruits, vegetables, and baby foods.

Example: FSSAI's Jaivik Bharat (now being unified into a single logo) boosts consumer trust in certified produce.

### **4.Export Potential & Foreign Exchange**

Organic agri-exports crossed \$665.96 million in 2024–25 (mainly soy products, pulses, spices, essential oils).

Example: Indian organic turmeric, ginger, and rice have strong demand in EU & US markets.

### **5.Farmer Income Diversification**

Organic produce fetches price premiums in niche domestic & global markets.

Example: Madhya Pradesh's organic soybean clusters under PGS-India ensure higher returns to smallholders.

### **6.Promotion of Traditional Knowledge**

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Plot A P.127, AF block, 6 th street, 11th Main Rd, Shanthi Colony, Anna Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600040

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Revives indigenous practices like jeevamrit, panchagavya, and vermicomposting.

Example: Andhra Pradesh's Community Managed Natural Farming (CMNF) integrates traditional inputs with scientific validation.

## **Challenges in Organic Farming in India**

### **1. Yield Gap During Transition**

Farmers often experience lower yields in the first 2–3 years due to loss of chemical input support.

Example: Studies in Madhya Pradesh's soybean belt show 15–20% yield drop in the initial conversion phase.

### **2. Certification Issues**

Third-party certification (NPOP) is costly and time-consuming.

Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) faces trust and record-keeping challenges.

Example: Smallholders in Odisha's tribal clusters struggle to maintain online PGS records.

### **3. Market Access & Price Premiums**

Organic products don't always fetch higher prices due to weak marketing and consumer awareness.

Example: Farmers in Uttarakhand report selling organic grains in conventional mandis at normal MSP rates.

### **4. Input Bottlenecks**

Limited availability of bio-fertilizers, quality compost, and bio-pesticides.

Example: Farmers in Rajasthan's PKVY clusters face shortages of vermicompost and neem-based pesticides.

### **5. Residue Contamination & Mixed Farming Landscapes**

Drift of chemical sprays from neighbouring fields can cause residue failures.

Example: Export consignments of Indian organic spices to EU have been rejected due to pesticide traces.

### **6. High Conversion Period & Lack of Risk Support**

Mandatory 2–3 year conversion period without assured premium pricing discourages adoption.

Example: Farmers in Haryana reducing organic area (2025 reports) due to income instability.

### **7. Weak Infrastructure & Logistics**

Lack of dedicated organic mandis, storage, cold chains, and branding support.

Example: Organic pineapple from North-East loses value due to transport and storage issues.

## **Government Initiatives on Organic Farming**

### **1. National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP, 2001)**

Implemented by APEDA (Ministry of Commerce & Industry).

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lSets standards for production, certification, and accreditation of certification bodies.

lFacilitates exports of organic produce (recognized by EU, USA, etc.).

## **2.Participatory Guarantee System – India (PGS-India, 2011)**

lImplemented by Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare.

lLow-cost, community-based certification system for small and marginal farmers.

lExample: Tribal farmer groups in Odisha and North-East widely use PGS clusters.

## **3.Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY, 2015 onwards)**

lSupports cluster-based organic farming (50 acres/group).

lProvides financial assistance for organic inputs, certification, and marketing.

lExample: Odisha rolled out PKVY Phase-III (2024-27) for 1300 clusters.

## **4.Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER, 2015-16)**

lFocused on value chain development of niche crops (ginger, turmeric, pineapple, black rice).

lExample: Nagaland's organic ginger exports to EU.

## **5.National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA, 2014 onwards)**

Includes promotion of organic manure, bio-fertilizers, vermi-composting, and soil health management.

### **Conclusion:**

Organic farming in India holds immense promise for ensuring sustainable agriculture, safe food, climate resilience, and enhanced export potential. However, challenges of yield gaps, certification hurdles, and market linkages must be addressed through policy convergence, farmer support during transition, strong traceability, and consumer awareness. With schemes like PKVY, MOVCDNER, and the Unified India Organic logo (2025), India is steadily moving towards a holistic model that blends traditional wisdom with modern certification and marketing systems. The way forward lies in scaling successful models like Sikkim's organic transformation and Andhra Pradesh's natural farming initiative, making India a global leader in eco-friendly and farmer-centric agriculture.