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Knowledge and constraints of farmers about organic farming

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Abstract

The study was undertaken to obtain information of knowledge level about organic farming and constraints faced by farmers in organic farming in Anand district of Gujarat state. In the study less than half (44.16 per cent) of the respondent, had high level of knowledge regarding organic farming, while 33.33 per cent of respondents, had very high level of knowledge regarding organic farming. Major constraints faced by farmers are lack of special administrative setup to promote organic farming (60.00 per cent), lack of price awareness regarding and availability of organic food in people (58.34 per cent), lack of marketing network for organic products (54.16 per cent) respectively. In conclusion there is need to be promote extension workers should concentrate to increase the education, attitude and annual income for promotion of knowledge level about organic farming. Subject Matter Specialists, Veterinary Doctors, Agricultural Extension Officers should visit the village and guide them to solve the problem of the farmers.

Keywords: organic farming, attitude, knowledge and income

Introduction

Indian economy is one of the fastest growing economies among the developing countries in the world. Agriculture is the backbone of Indian economy. In India, agriculture contributes about sixteen per cent of total GDP and ten per cent of total exports and also the major source of livelihoods, particularly in the rural areas, where 55 per cent of people have been living.

After the green revolution was launched in India, substantial increase in the production of food grains was achieved through the use of improved crop varieties and higher levels of inputs, fertilizers and plant protection chemicals. But it has now been realized that the increase in production was achieved at the cost of soil health. Organic farming may be defined as a production system, which avoids or largely excludes the use of synthetically compounded fertilizers, pesticides, growth regulators, and livestock feed additive. To the maximum extent feasible, organic farming systems rely upon crop rotations, crop residues, animal manures, legumes, green manures, off-farm organic wastes, mechanical cultivation, mineral bearing rocks and aspects of biological pest control to maintain soil productivity and tilth, to supply plant nutrients and to control insects, weeds and other pests (1980, U.S.D.A.) [6].

Methodology

The present study was undertaken in Anand district of Gujarat state. The list of trained in organic farming farmers was obtained from the Director of Extension's office of A.A.U. Anand, from that list 120 Farmers were selected by random sampling method for this study. Knowledge of the respondents about recommended technology of organic farming was measured with the help of teacher made test, taking the base of scale developed by Jha and Singh (1970) [1] with appropriate modification. The questions were formed on the basis of recommended practices of organic farming with the help of professors of agronomy department B.A. college of Agriculture, A.A.U, Anand. The questions included in the test were objective type and multiple choices in nature. Each question was given the score of one for correct answer and zero for incorrect answer. The possible total score that a respondent could obtain would vary from 0 to 15. The knowledge index was calculated for each respondent with the help of below given formula.

$$Ki = \frac{X_1 + X_2 + \dots + X_n}{N} \times 100$$

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Whereas,

Ki = Knowledge index

$X_1 + X_2 + \dots + X_n$ = total number of correct i.e. Total score

N = Total number of items in the test.

All the respondents were grouped in five categories as under:

Sr. No.	Level of Knowledge	Score
1.	Very Low	1 to 3
2.	Low	4 to 6
3.	Medium	7 to 9
4.	High	10 to 12
5.	Very High	13 to 15

The data were collected with the help of well-structured, pre-tested, Gujarati version interview scheduled through personal contact and data were compiled, tabulated and analyzed to get proper answers for objectives of the study.

Knowledge level of the respondents regarding organic farming.

Knowledge is the cognitive behaviour of an individual. The body of knowledge is the product of learning process. Once the knowledge is acquired, it produces changes in the thinking process of an individual, which would lead to further changes in attitude and helps the farmers in making rational decisions. It is prerequisite for adoption of any agricultural innovation. With this view, attempt has been made to determine the level of knowledge of farmers about organic farming. The data regarding extent of knowledge are presented in Table

Constraints as perceived by farmers in adoption of organic farming, n = 120

Sr. No.	Constraints	Frequency	Per cent	Rank
1.	Lack of special administrative setup to promote organic farming	72	60.00	I
2.	Lack of awareness regarding price and availability of organic food in people	70	58.34	II
3.	Lack of marketing network for organic products	65	54.16	III
4.	Controversy among family members regarding organic farming	61	50.84	IV
5.	There is no special incentive or awards for adopters of organic farming practices	58	48.34	V
6.	Inadequate and untimely supply of organic agricultural inputs	56	46.66	VI
7.	Distance between producer and market or delivery point	54	45.00	VII
8.	Poor contact of extension workers with farmers	50	41.66	VIII
9.	Lack of market facility for organic produced commodity	48	40.00	IX
10.	Lack of publication on proven organic farming practices	35	29.16	X
11.	It is difficult to manage pest & insect damage	21	17.50	XI

As seen from the table major constraints faced by farmers are lack of special administrative setup to promote organic farming (60.00 per cent), lack of price awareness regarding and availability of organic food in people (58.34 per cent), lack of marketing network for organic products (54.16 per cent), controversy among family members regarding organic farming (50.84 per cent), there is no special incentive or awards for adopters of organic farming practices (48.34 per cent), Inadequate and untimely supply of organic agricultural inputs (46.66 per cent), distance between producer and market or delivery point (45.00 per cent), poor contact of extension workers with farmers (41.66 per cent), lack of market facility for organic produced commodity (40.00 per cent), lack of publication on proven organic farming practices (29.16 per cent) and It is difficult to manage insect & pests (17.50 per cent).

Conclusion

In present era Organic farming plays vital role in agriculture development as well as sustainability of environment. There is need to be promote organic farming practices by the government and private agencies to increase knowledge level

Distribution of respondents according to the knowledge level regarding organic farming, n=120

Sr. No.	Level of knowledge level	Frequency	Percent
1.	Very Low (1 to 3)	02	1.67
2.	Low (4 to 6)	10	8.34
3.	Medium(7 to 9)	15	12.50
4.	High(10 to 12)	53	44.16
5.	Very High(13 to 15)	40	33.33
Total		120	100.00

It is observed from the Table.16 that less than half (44.16 per cent) of the respondent, had high level of knowledge regarding organic farming, while 33.33 per cent of respondents, had very high level of knowledge, whereas 12.50,8.34 and 1.67 per cent of respondent had medium, low and very low knowledge regarding organic farming respectively. Thus it can be concluded that 77.49 per cent of respondents had high to very high knowledge of organic farming.

Constraints as perceived by farmers in adoption of organic farming

Constraints in adoption of new technology never end. However they can be minimized. The respondents were requested to express the constraints faced by farmers in organic farming. Frequency and percentage for each constraint were calculated and on that basis of that, the constraints were ranked and presented in Table.

of farmers. Role of extension workers should concentrate to increase the education, attitude and annual income for promotion of knowledge level about organic farming. Subject Matter Specialists, Veterinary Doctors, Agricultural Extension Officers should visit the village and guide them to solve the problem of the farmers.

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