

ORGANIC FARMING AND ITS BENEFITS FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

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Agriculture is central to human survival - it provides food and fuel and other ecosystem services, is an important source of livelihood, and plays a crucial role in economic development. Agriculture is, however, also a major source of environmental degradation, contributing to climate change, depleting freshwater resources, degrading soil fertility and polluting the environment through fertilizer and pesticide use. Food production is critically dependent on the very natural resources it is degrading. Sustainable food security therefore requires not only that all people at all times have access to sufficient and nutritious food, but also that this food be produced with minimal environmental impact.

Organic farming is rapidly growing in developing countries of the world. It makes healthy soils, healthy plants, healthy food and healthy environment along with crop productivity.

Organic farmers use biological fertilizer inputs and management practices such as cover cropping and crop rotation to improve soil quality and build soil organic matter. By increasing the amount of organic matter in the soil, organic farmers enhance the soil's ability to absorb water, reducing the impacts of drought and flooding. Improving soil organic matter also helps it to absorb and store carbon and other nutrients needed to grow healthy crops, which, in turn are better able to resist insects and diseases [2].

There are a lot of benefits of organically grown food:

1. Organic farming does not contain any chemical. This is because organic farmers don't use chemicals at any stage of the food-growing process. Organic farmers use natural farming techniques that don't harm humans and environment.

2. Organic farming does not make use of poisonous chemicals and pesticides. Studies reveal that a large section of the population fed on toxic substances used in conventional agriculture have fallen prey to diseases like cancer. As organic farming avoids these toxins, it reduces the sickness due to them.

3. Lower prices: There is a big misconception that organic food is relatively expensive. The truth is it is actually cheaper because they don't require application of expensive pesticides, insecticides. In fact, you can get organic food direct from the source at really reasonable prices.

4. Organic food often tastes better than other food. The sugar content in organically grown fruits and vegetables provides them with extra taste.

5. Organic farming methods are eco-friendly. In commercial farms, the chemicals applied infiltrate into the soil and severely contaminate it and nearby water sources. Plant life, animals, and humans are all impacted by this phenomenon. Organic farming does not utilize these harsh chemicals so; the environment remains protected.

6. Organic plants have greater metabolic and structural integrity in their cellular structure than conventional crops. This enables storage of organic food for a longer time [1].

So, organic farming has to be encouraged on a wider scale to provide nutritious and healthy food to each and every citizen of the country. Strategies for promoting organic farming have to be implemented. Organic farmers should be trained for producing healthy and nutritious food without using chemical fertilizers, pesticides.

References

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