



Organic Farming in India

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Why in News

India ranks 1st in number of organic farmers and 9th in terms of area under organic farming.

Key Points

- **Indian Scenario Regarding Organic Farming**
 - **Sikkim** became the first State in the **world** to become **fully organic in 2016**.
 - **North East India** has traditionally been organic and the consumption of chemicals is far less than the rest of the country.
 - Similarly the tribal and island territories have been traditionally practicing organic farming.
 - The major organic exports from India have been **flax seeds, sesame, soybean, tea, medicinal plants, rice and pulses**.
 - There was an increase of nearly 50% in organic exports in 2018-19, touching Rs. 5151 crore.
 - Commencement of exports from Assam, Mizoram, Manipur and Nagaland to UK, USA, Eswatini and Italy have proved the potential by increasing volumes and expanding to new destinations as the demand for **health foods** increases.
- **Government Initiatives to Promote Organic Farming**

- **Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Region (MOVCD)**
 - Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Region (MOVCD-NER) is a **Central Sector Scheme**, a sub-mission under **National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)**
 - It was launched by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare in 2015 for implementation in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.
 - The scheme aims to develop certified organic production in a value chain mode to link growers with consumers and to support the development of the entire value chain.
- **Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)**
 - Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana, launched in 2015 is an elaborated component of **Soil Health Management (SHM)** of major project **National Mission of Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)**.
 - Under PKVY, Organic farming is promoted through adoption of organic villages by cluster approach and Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) certification.
- **Certification Schemes**
 - **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** is the food regulator in the country and is also responsible for regulating organic food in the domestic market and imports.
 - **Participatory Guarantee System (PGS):** PGS is a process of **certifying organic products**, which ensures that their production takes place in accordance with laid-down quality standards. **PGS Green** is given to chemical free produce under transition to 'organic' which takes 3 years. It is mainly for **domestic purpose**.
 - **National Program for Organic Production (NPOP):** NPOP grants organic farming certification through a process of third party certification for **export purposes**.
 - **Soil Health Card Scheme** has led to a **decline of 8-10% in the use of chemical fertilizers** and also raised productivity by 5-6%.
- **Agri-export Policy 2018**

Focus on clusters and Marketing and promotion of “Produce of India” have positively impacted the organic farming in India
- **One District - One Product (ODOP)**
 - The programme aims to encourage more **visibility and sale of indigenous and specialized products/crafts of Uttar Pradesh**, generating employment at the district level.
 - The presence of aggregators is imperative to bring about economies of scale for the small and marginal farmers.

- **PM Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PM FME)**
 - The **Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI)** launched the **PM FME scheme** as a part of '**Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan**'.
 - It aims to bring in new technology, apart from affordable credit to help small entrepreneurs penetrate new markets.
- **Zero Budget Natural Farming**
Zero budget natural farming is a method of chemical-free agriculture drawing from traditional Indian practices.

Organic Farming

- According to FSSAI, 'organic farming' is a system of farm design and management to create an ecosystem of agriculture production **without the use of synthetic external inputs** such as chemical fertilisers, pesticides and synthetic hormones or genetically modified organisms.
- **Organic farm produce** means the produce obtained from **organic agriculture**, while **organic food** means food products that have been produced in accordance with **specified standards for organic production**.

Way Forward

- Natural farming is not a new concept in India, with farmers having tilled their land without the use of chemicals - largely relying on organic residues, cow dung, composts, etc. since time immemorial. This is also in sync with the **Sustainable Development Goal 2** targeting 'end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture'.
- Hence with **greater awareness** and **capacity building** of the producers in compliance with international standards, Indian organic farmers will soon be reinforcing their rightful place in global agri trade.

Source: PIB