

Organic farming practices followed by the cotton growers in Dhule District

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ABSTRACT

Cotton is the most important commercial crop playing key role in economic and social affairs of the world. It is backbone of our textile industry. The characteristics of education, land holding, annual income, socio-economic status, social participation, extension contact and sources of information did have highly significant and positive relationship with knowledge. Similarly, education, land holding, annual income, social participation and extension contact had highly significant and positive relationship with adoption of organic farming practices. The systematic efforts on the part of extension agency are required to promote the technical knowledge of organic cotton growers about the critical important practices. This can best be done by arranging demonstrations, seminars, field tours etc. on different aspects of organic farming.

INTRODUCTION

Cotton is most important commercial crop in economic and social affairs of the world. In India, all the four cultivated species of cotton are grown. There are nine major cotton growing states *i.e.* Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Maharashtra Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. In India, cotton occupies less than 5 per cent of cultivated area but represents the estimated 54 per cent of agricultural pesticide use and same pesticides are treated as "highly to extremely hazardous to human life". The intensive use of agro-chemicals have damaged our ecosystems. Besides, the productivity of many crops has not shown proportionate improvement in the last 10-15 years despite the increased use of chemical inputs. Similarly, extensive use of pesticides has not reduced the losses due to pests. The overall growth and development of agriculture was quite impressive and remarkable particularly 60's and 70's till 90's. However, the success story of Green Revolution proved to be only a short term phenomenon. The growth rate of agriculture and allied sectors remained more or less stagnant at 2.5 per cent to 3.1 per cent during the period of 1983 to 1997, and started declining there after.

Cotton is the most important fibre crop of India playing a dominant role in its agrarian and industrial economy. Maharashtra is the major cotton growing state and the main cotton growing districts of Maharashtra are Jalgaon,

Dhule, Nandurbar, Akola, Amaravati, Nagpur, Yawtmal, Wardha, Buldana, Aurangabad, Nanded, Parbhani, Jalna and Nasik.

In many developing countries like India, there are agricultural systems that fully meet the requirements of organic agriculture. Organic culture considers the medium and long term effects of agricultural interventions on the agro-eco system. It aims to produce food while establishing an ecological balance to present problems of soil fertility or pests.

Government of India took several initiatives and policy measures to introduce sustainable agriculture. Organic awareness programmes are conducted to create awareness among farmers about the advantages of organic agriculture.

Cotton productivity in India is quite low (467 kg/ha) as compared to world standards (723 kg/ha). The awareness of growing organic cotton is increasing with the promotional support of the Government and active participation of several NGOs. There is considerable scope for increasing productivity of cotton and improvement in its quality, while achieving reduction in cost of production of cotton in the country.

The area under organic cotton production in Dhule district is large as compared to other districts in Maharashtra, and it is increasing day by day. Organic farming is an innovative type of farming. Hence, this study has wide scope.

Key words :

Organic farming,
Cotton growers

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