



## ASSOCIATION OF INDIAN ORGANIC INDUSTRY

# NEWSLETTER

Newsletter No. 8

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Industrial agriculture  
aggravates the  
climate crisis.

**Organic can be part  
of the solution as it  
adopts sustainable  
farming practices that  
capture carbon in the soil.**

by IFOAM - Organics International



### From CEO's Desk



Dr. (Mrs) PVSM Gouri

Dear Readers,

**Greetings from the Association of Indian Organic Industry!**

This edition focus mainly on Natural/Traditional farming, a nature-based farming connecting to the science.

Traditional practices / Natural farming exists in India since ages. In many parts of India farmers still follow traditional farming especially in rainfed areas /semi-arid areas wherein they depend upon the rains where they follow NF as a holistic land management practice that leverages the power of photosynthesis in plants to close the carbon cycle, and build soil health, crop resilience and nutrient density.

We are all aware conventional chemical-based farming is leading to residue in our food affecting the health and well-being of human beings. This is being due to indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers, weedicides and pesticides.

Taking the cognizance of this situation Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during the National Conclave on Natural Farming on 21st December 2021 said that this is the right time to take big steps before the problems related to agriculture become even worse and appealed to farmers across India to adopt natural farming and look for nature-based solutions to provide food security as well as help achieve balance with nature.

The question arises, how can we ensure supply of genuine NF products, how to give assurance to consumers that the product is truly/NF produce? Therefore, for the consumer to choose NF products, there is a need for an assurance mechanism for products to be sold as NF products.

To address these issues, Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) has initiated the process of framing standards for the producers and assurance system for the consumers for implementing Natural farming in the country. MOA has constituted a committee to draw the standards for natural Farming. The committee constituted comprises galaxy of eminent scientists, NF practicing NGOs, farmers and experts. A number of recommendations have emerged from the panel discussion. The recommendations of the constituted committee and other suggested action points will be shared with the respective ministries and organizations for their comments. A number of state holders meeting are also being organized to take the inputs from the stakeholders/farmers in different states before implementation NF in a big way in the country.

This edition also features interesting topics namely organic tea, organic milk, and other information related to organic programs/activities being implemented in different regions.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition and we look forward to your feedback so that we can continuously add value to it.

**With Best Wishes  
AIOI Family.**

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# Success Story of Natural Farming in Andhra Pradesh



**Dr. (Mrs) PVSM Gouri,**  
*CEO and ED, AIOI*

The last two years of the pandemic gave us a glimpse of what we collectively are heading towards- a catastrophe due to exploitation of natural resources, destruction of habitats and ecosystems, climate change and global warming. Agriculture itself accounts for 25% of Green-House Gas emissions. There is a global prevalence of moderate to severe food insecurity that has been slowly on the rise since 2014. Nearly one in three persons in the world (2.37 billion) do not have access to adequate food. Malnutrition in all its forms remains a challenge. Conflict, climate variability-extremes, and economic slowdowns and downturns (now exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic) are major drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition. These reasons are impacting India leading to increased farm distress. It therefore becomes pertinent that we move towards nature-based solutions urgently. Natural farming or farming in harmony with nature has emerged as an alternative to the current external, chemical input intensive agriculture. It is a solution the multiple emergencies and promotes farmers' livelihoods, people's health and environment health.

Natural farming is a holistic land management practice that leverages the power of photosynthesis in plants to close the carbon cycle, and build soil health, crop resilience and nutrient density. The principles of natural farming are universal in nature and can be customized based on local conditions.

## These are;

- Soil to be covered with crops 365 days (living root principle)
- Diverse crops (15 - 20 crops) and trees
- Minimal disturbance of soils
- Integrate animals into farming
- Bio-stimulants as necessary catalysts
- Increase amount and diversity of organic residues
- No synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, weedicides
- Pest management through better agronomic practices and use of botanical extracts
- Use of indigenous seed or farmer's own seeds.



Traditional practices of farming exist in India since ages. In many parts of India, farmers still follow traditional farming especially in the rainfed areas/semi-arid areas wherein they depend upon the rains. These traditional practices, integrated with new age wisdom backed with scientific observations to keep up with the new developments has led to tremendous success.

Demonstrating this is Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (RySS) implementing the Andhra Pradesh, Community-managed Natural Farming (APCNF) programme under the Dept. of Agriculture.

The APCNF programme has knit the technology with the social capital for scale and system level changes. The breakthrough in scaling is through building on community ownership through the women self-help groups (SHGs) and their federations that have been nurtured over the last two decades. The knowledge dissemination and handholding are done via farmer-farmer extension system through the community resource person (CRP) deployed in the village.

A CRP is a best practitioner of natural farming, who has experienced the benefits and has acquired good technical skills to train a new farmer and most important possesses the zeal to convert others as part of the transformation process. The focus of the programme is on the whole village approach, to convert all the farmers in a village into Natural Farming practitioners. RySS envisages that this will take 3 to 5 years to reach out to all farmers and 3-5 years for each farmer to make the transition. In all it takes 7 - 8 years in a village to achieve universal coverage and transformation.

The practising farmer cum trainer methodology integrated with the women self-help groups has had a multiplier effect making it the largest agroecology programme in the world.

The support of the Agriculture Dept in the transition process has been very positive and this is a very important factor for the success of the programme. Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs) in each village are becoming the focal point of all NF related activities in the village. Government investments have been for capacity building, knowledge dissemination and long-term handholding.

Currently, there are 630,000 farmers enrolled in the programme working in 3730-gram panchayats in Andhra Pradesh. About 1.4 lakh women SHGs and their 5386 federations have been brought under the purview of Natural farming and 10,000 field functionaries, who are farmer trainers are currently, working on village level transformations servicing the institutions and community.

The programme intends to reach all Gram Panchayat by 2024 and all farmers in the State by 2030.



Source: <https://s01.sgp1.digitaloceanspaces.com/large/896079-hqfgjxqfyd-1538047262.jpg>

There is emphasis on building strong evidence in favor of natural farming. A robust science team along with farmer scientists are working towards the science and research aspect. Partnerships with reputed national and international institutions have also been commissioned.

Adding to this is a very significant scientific breakthrough of pre-monsoon dry sowing, APCNF has initiated the concept of 365 days green cover in which a farmer is able to take three crops in a year, even in rainfed conditions in semi-arid areas. This represents a huge paradigm shift since in normal conditions farmers in rainfed situations can take only one crop and have to leave the land fallow for the rest of the year. With the pre-monsoon dry sowing concept, farmers even in semi-arid rainfed lands are now able to grow three crops in a year, with a lot of crop diversity and enhanced biodiversity in the croplands. In the last two years, farmers have come up with various innovations, crop combinations, crop diversifications based on their farming situations to maintain a 365 days green cover.



### **Gujarat Govt Plans to Push for Organic Farming through School Text-Books**

*In a bid to make organic and natural farming popular among the masses, the Gujarat government has taken a different route to develop sensitivity towards chemical-free farming practices among students, parents and larger society. The State education department has stated that it will introduce a special chapter on organic farming in the syllabus of class 9 to 12. The education department has roped-in experts on natural farming practices to prepare the content of the chapter. The aim, according to the State education department, is to make students and parents aware of natural farming and its benefits.*

Read more at:

<https://krishijagran.com/agriculture-world/gujarat-govt-plans-to-push-for-organic-farming-through-school-text-books/>

RySS has also identified enthusiastic Educated Young farmer Practitioners (EYPs) who are young graduate professionals who are doing farming. Some of them have given up 'lucrative' jobs in urban areas to pursue natural farming out of passion. APCNF has initiated capacity building of EYPs in Entrepreneurship, Organic Certification, Food Processing, Branding and Marketing and is enabling them to play roles of farm produce aggregators, primary processor and marketer for local Natural produce.

Marketing and value chains is another area that is extremely crucial and the programme is working towards it. While the focus is on local marketing and consumption, a step towards institutional marketing structure has been through the initiative in 2022 of supplying 1500MT organic Bengal gram (chickpeas produced in 4 districts, i.e. Kurnool, Kadapa, Prakasam and Anantapur) to Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanam (TTD) for making the world famous laddoo prasad of Balaji which now has a GI tag. To further strengthen the marketing initiative, RySS has planned NPOP third party Organic Certification for 5.42 Lakh NF Farmers covering 6.63 lakh acres from 2022 Kharif season.



The programme is working with Resource NGOs, Civil Societies organization and national and international partnerships. Support to scale up NF outside AP is also in full swing with various states and countries coming onboard to undertake natural farming.

The APCNF programme is a live example of how systemic level planetary transformation is possible through collective actions and informed leaderships at all levels. Andhra Pradesh has depicted that with Government support and with grassroots women led initiatives changes are happening. It is through these community led simple interventions that we can solve complex problems of the world. Natural farming is indeed the 'green lining' at the end of the tunnel of climate emergency, farm distress and broken food systems.





# Organic and Natural Farming – Journey Ahead



**Dr. Gagnesh Sharma,**

*Director, National Centre of Organic Farming, Ministry of Agriculture*

Organic farming has come a long way in India during last two decades. From a niche subject it is getting mainstreamed and India has emerged as the largest in terms of producers and the fourth largest in terms of total area under organic cultivation. Since 2004-05, organic farming has grown almost 70 fold in the country. By March 2021, India has transformed more than 30 lakh ha area into organic involving more than 2.8 million farmers. The domestic market and export of organic products have grown at a CAGR of 28% and 23.35% over the past 5 years. Phenomenal growth in exports and double digit growth in the domestic market indicates a bright future for producers. Developing institutional networks for production, promotion, research and marketing are providing the much needed support. Emerging policies of the Government for encouraging reduction in the use of chemicals in the farms and shift of Indian agriculture towards organic or non-chemical methods is indicative of determination of the nation for securing health of our citizens.

Keeping in view the emerging challenges in the non-availability of chemical fertilisers, rising costs of chemical fertilisers and sustainability issues, the world is looking for an alternative to all such organic and synthetic inputs and India is close to finding a solutions. Growing awareness of health and environmental issues among consumers has focused on production of safe food through organic and natural farming which is also emerging as a viable source of rural income and employment generation. Safe and healthy food free from pesticide residues can be produced through organic and natural farming practice. The practices emphasise that all essential nutrients as well as micronutrients required by the crop / plants are present in the soil but are in an unavailable form. All the nutrients required for the growth of plants are available around the root zone of the plants. This can be supported by the fact that out of total plant nutrient requirements, 98-98.5% are derived as air, water and solar energy. The remaining 1-2% is taken from the soil which is available free of cost as it is taken from the live soil that is enriched with these nutrients. Plants use nutrients from the soil through mineralization and billions of microorganisms are available in the soil for assimilation and release.

Similarly, certification has also been a challenge and keeping in mind the complex documentation system needed for third party certification under NPOP, prohibitive cost and institutional management requirements for internal control system under grower groups sometimes beyond the reach of small and marginal farmers without any external support, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare launched a farmer group centric certification system named as Participatory Guarantee System under PGS-India programme.



PGS certification system requires a group of minimum five members within the village or from nearby villages. Documentation systems have been kept limited to just peer appraisal reports twice a year and inspection and decision making is done collectively by the grower group. Regional Councils, authorized by the PGS-National Advisory Committee provide the necessary technical support and endorse decisions made by the groups.

**PGS-India Certification System has the following benefits over third party certification:**

1. Documentation is simple
2. No third party intervention
3. Farmers are owners of the group without any institutional requirements
4. Entire activity is done by the group members
5. Size of the groups is small and members are known to each other
6. Certificate is granted to each and every farmer.

Now, the Government is looking for an alternative in tune with natural farming practices and a Committee constituted for this purpose has been deliberating the subject.

The Govt. of India is promoting natural farming as Bhartiya Prakritik Krishi Padhati (BPKP) as a sub scheme of Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) since 2020-21.



About 6.5 lakh ha area in 11 states, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu are covered under natural farming.

However, currently, no certification system exists in India for natural farming preferred by the market. The existing certification system as elaborated above for organic farming is a bit complex, time consuming and not always affordable to the small and marginal farmers. Hence, a unique, simple, farmer friendly, community based certification system exclusively for natural farming is contemplated. The Committee is likely to come up with a certification system for naturally grown products.

The Government has already initiated steps like steps for formulating and implementing Natural Farming Mission. Stakeholders consultations are going on and some organizations are being strengthened. The National Centre of Organic Farming has been renamed as the National Centre for Organic and Natural Farming. Strengthening of MANAGE Hyderabad for large scale training and extension has also been planned. A number of webinars are going on for creating awareness about natural farming and States have also initiated steps in their policy on natural farming.

The objective is that the domestic consumers should get nutritious food, food should be the basis for good health, every farmer should get a respectable income and the villages should move towards self-reliance. Along with this, the environment should be the protection of water so that agriculture and life are sustainable.



## New Initiatives of AIOI

### AIOI joins hands with RySS as knowledge partner for implementation of organic farming in the state of Andhra Pradesh

#### **IFOAM Organics Europe calls for increased support of organic farming**

The organic food and farming movement analyzed the Common Agricultural Policy 2023-2027 (CAP) of several member states. Their conclusion is that most CAP national Strategic Plans lack ambition and will not contribute to significantly developing organic farming in the EU or to achieving the EU's targets set in the Farm to Fork Strategy.

Read more at: [IFOAM Organics Europe calls for increased support of organic farming - organic-market.info](https://IFOAM-Organics-Europe.org/calls-for-increased-support-of-organic-farming-organic-market.info)

In order to strengthen the Natural farming movement, a consultation meeting on "Planning Natural Farming Certification" was organized on 25th May 2022 at MANAGE, Hyderabad.

This was attended by various stakeholders including officials from Rythu Sadhikara Samstha, implementing the Andhra Pradesh Community-managed Natural farming (APCNF) programme under the Dept. of Agriculture, Govt. of AP, civil society representatives, executives from organic market domain and officials from AIOI.



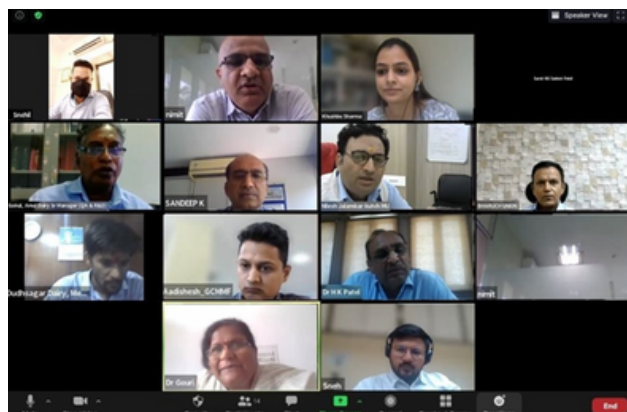
The meeting was chaired by Shri T Vijay Kumar, Executive Vice-chairman, RySS Govt. of AP.

In the current year RySS is working with 630,000 farmers under natural farming covering 3730 Gram panchayats in all 26 districts across Andhra Pradesh. For certification in the initial phase for 2022-23, RySS plans to facilitate NPOP third party group certification to 5.42 lakh natural farming practitioners in the state. This will cover 6.63 lakh acres (all districts) of land under organic certification.

AIOI is brought onboard to help facilitate this. AIOI would be working with RYSS as knowledge partner and provide technical support for implementation of Organic. Natural Farming certification in AP in lines with NPOP norms.

### AIOI has join hands with Amul (Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation), Ananda as Knowledge Partner for Organic Products

Amul, India's largest food products marketing organisation has now ventured into Organic Products business in a big way to provide Certified Organic dairy products in the Indian Market in 2022.



Amul emerged as the driving force behind India's white revolution, which made India the world's largest producer of milk and milk products. As a cooperative owned by 36 lac milk producers of Gujarat, it aims to encourage the farmer members in taking up organic agriculture production by establishing a supply chain of their produce by efficient marketing and quality certifying infrastructure across the country.

AIOI as the knowledge partner to Amul has imparted and successfully completed a 30 hrs digital capacity building training in organic products to its officials from their Federations and Cooperatives.

The training focussed on the various-contours of NPOP covering, NPOP standards of production requirements, Certification process, Regulatory requirements, for marketing in the domestic and export markets, Verification of documents and sourcing the certified organic products in the supply chain, as well as Labelling & packaging for marketing the organic dairy produce.

# New Initiatives of AIOI

## 1. AIOI is a member of MoA &FW Committee on Natural farming

Ministry of Agriculture and Family Welfare (MoA & FW) constituted a Scientific Committee on “Drawing standards for certification systems for Natural Farming Products” proposed to be implemented under the “Prakritik Kheti Programme” (PKP). At their invitation, AIOI is supporting the Ministry as a member of the Committee. The standards on natural farming are under development.

## 2. AIOI is a member of the FSSAI Expert Committee on Organic Foods

## 3. AIOI initiates capacity building programmes

AIOI has been giving training to the NPOP accredited Certification Bodies for updating their Quality Management Systems as per ISO 17065 and NPOP requirements focussing on assessment of certification operations for compliance with NPOP, EU and US NOP, testing of organic products related to traces of chemical compounds, MRLs and audit trails, internal annual audits, investigation and detection of non-conformities.

## 4. AIOI initiated capacity building programmes for aspiring organisations in establishing certification programmes under NPOP

## 5. AIOI Certificate Course on Skill and Entrepreneurship Development in Organic Products

With an aim of promoting Atmanirbhar Bharat, entrepreneurship and empowerment for employment in organic Industry, AIOI, in alliance with Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University (PJTSAU) initiated a 6-month online certificate course in October 2021. This course will be career and market oriented for graduates and post-graduates in agriculture, food engineering, environment sciences and applied sciences.

Two batches have rolled out and are ready to serve the organic industry. The third batch commences in July 2022.





# Sundarban Organic Women Dairy Cooperative: Driving Sustainable Food System in India



**Dr. Sabyasachi Roy**

*Senior Manager (Cooperative Services), National Dairy Development Board, Kolkata*

Sundarbans region is located in South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal in India. It is also the world's largest mangrove forest and UNESCO World Heritage site. In Sundarbans, people live in the riverine islands which are generally low lying land masses with challenging geographical conditions. The livelihood of the rural families includes paddy cultivation, fishing, forest honey collection, dairying and poultry. The area is resource poor and because of limited livelihood opportunities, rural men generally migrate to Kolkata and urban areas for work.

In this backdrop, Sundarban Cooperative Milk & Livestock Producers' Union Limited was registered in 1997. However, due to operational issues, the organization never worked well and got closed in 2014. In order to support the small and marginal farm families of South 24 Parganas district, the Government of West Bengal, with technical support from the National Dairy Development Board, re-started operations of Sundarban Cooperative from 1st November 2015 with a decision to develop an all women dairy producers' cooperative.

Sundarban cooperative is the first organic women dairy producers' cooperative initiative in South Asia. The operational area of the cooperative is South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal. The key innovation of the cooperative is that it decided to support the women producer members by promoting and procuring indigenous varieties of paddy and pulses, oilseeds, fruits, vegetables, wild mangrove forest honey, etc. in addition to indigenous cow milk.

The vision of the cooperative is to ensure prosperity and happiness among the women producer members, employees, supply chain actors and consumers while mainstreaming organic farming for sustainable development.

During the first five years of operation, the cooperative was able to organize the women farmers from different villages and the officers & staff into a closely knit group, and they are together building a strong organic cooperative.



### Its major achievements are as follows:

- At present, there are 90 village level women dairy cooperative societies covering over 4500 women farmers,
- First organic women multi-commodity producer cooperative in India, procuring indigenous cow milk, wild mangrove forest honey, rice, pulses, etc.,
- Has an established system for organic input and extension services, including supply of fodder seeds, azolla, mineral mixture, dewormers and facilitating vaccination and artificial insemination services,
- It has developed women Jaibo Monitors (Organic Monitor) for promotion and monitoring of organic farming and ethno-veterinary medicine in the societies,
- First dairy cooperative in India to market milk based traditional sweetmeat or Bengali Mishti by opening speciality outlets in Kolkata under the brand Sundarini Naturals,
- Training and capacity development of the women farmers and employees,
- Implementation of government schemes and programmes with outlay of more than USD 500,000, including National Dairy Plan Phase I, IFOAM Asia, etc.

### Sundarban Cooperative Driving Sustainable Food System Development:

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), a sustainable food system delivers food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generations are not compromised.

Sundarban Cooperative's food system is sustainable as the operations and activities of each stakeholder, including support service provider are commercially viable.



#### **Kerala Forest Development Corporation Switches to Organic to Produce Cash Crops**

Kerala Forest Development Corporation (KFDC) is looking into new ways to sell the spices it produces in domestic and international markets, including organic cardamom. "We have taken the e-commerce route to market the organic cardamom cultivated in the forest lands of Munnar, Gavi, and Nelliampathy divisions, for which a new packaging design has been created," said Prakriti Srivastava, Managing Director of KFDC. Currently, the company produces approximately six tonnes of this wildlife-friendly organic material, which it intends to market under the brand name Vanopahar.

Read more at:

<https://krishijagran.com/agriculture-world/kerala-forest-development-corporation-switches-to-organic-to-produce-cash-crops/>

### The cooperative is:

- Ensuring fair and transparent procurement system for milk, agro and allied produce through computerized procurement system in the societies, wherein price is determined based on quality of the produce, acknowledgement slip is provided and payment is made every 10 days into the bank account
- Maximizing profits for the farmers by ensuring higher price than market for milk and other agro produces supplied by them
- Providing input and extension services to the farmers at reasonable cost.





### Social impact

Sundarban Cooperative is being recognized as an instrument of change to bring out gender equality, better nutrition and healthcare, socio-economic and socio-cultural transformation.

The cooperative is:

- 100% women-led organic producer organization that ensures gender equity, where not only farmers, even the staff of dairy societies and plant workers are women
- Providing opportunity for financial independence and better status of women farmers
- Encouraging young women to join the organic cooperative movement
- Increased women members' participation in government's developmental programmes, viz. Digital India campaign, etc.
- Ensuring reduction in food loss and waste as women farmers are extremely careful in proper handling of food
- Promoting wholesome healthcare of farm families through Anthroposophic doctors
- Reducing forced migration of the male family members

### Environmental impact

Sundarban Cooperative has initiated organic farming and multi-commodity food basket as a means to develop the status of women farmer members.

The cooperative is:

- Promoting certified organic farming that is environment friendly and ecologically sustainable
- Focusing on "Farmers First", but also conscious about consumers
- Promoting production of green fodder, bio-fertilizers and bio-pesticides
- Ensuring use of eco-friendly (non-plastic) products in the value chain
- Promoting affordable and clean energy – solar electricity and biogas for cooking at home
- Has planned to set-up a biogas slurry processing centre for the production of organic fertilizers
- Assuring responsible waste and effluent disposal
- Promoting biodiversity and afforestation by planting variety of 100,000 trees



### Conclusion

In summary, Sundarban Dairy Cooperative is an organizational innovation of being a multi-commodity women producers' cooperative in one of the most difficult geographical conditions in the world. However, the cooperative has taken up this challenge as an opportunity by initiating organic movement to sustain the fragile ecology and gainfully employ the women and their families and thereby developing a sustainable food system in the region.

As a result, the cooperative has been awarded nationally by National Dairy Development Board of India and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry and internationally by IFOAM Asia.



# Organic Tea Cultivation - An Overview



**Dr. Biswajit Bera**

*Research Directorate, Tea Board India, Kolkata*

## Introduction

Conventional farming is being practiced based on use of agrochemicals, inorganic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides etc. with the aim of producing more crop / food following efficient agronomic practices. In case of organic farming, inputs are organically certified bio-products (bio-pesticides and bio-fertilizers). It has been observed that the initial cost of organic farming or conversion of conventional farming to organic farming is comparatively more. However, after 3-4 years of establishment of organic farming, the cost-benefit ratio is gradually maintained by producing quality organic produce. There are many reports/scientific publications on food quality under organic practices/ cultivation (Palit et al, 2008).

There is a public perception that demand for organic foods is increasing due to health concerns over excessive use of agrochemicals in conventional farming. Although there are reports that organically grown crops/foods are having more health beneficial properties, the scientific findings have not found significant differences between organic products and conventionally grown plant products. A lot of critical research in this area needs to be done before coming to concrete conclusions.

## Overview of Organic tea cultivation

There are several tea growing countries, for instance, India, Sri Lanka, Kenya, China, Japan, Bangladesh, Indonesia that produce organic tea. In India, organic tea production during 2019-2020 was 6211 MT valued at about Rs 338 billion, which slightly declined to 6164 MT valued at about Rs 345 billion.

There are three Tea Research Institutes (TRIs), namely, DTRDC for Darjeeling area, Tea Research Association for North East India, UPASI-TRF for South India. These institutes have been conducting organic tea research initially with external funding support (CFC, Netherland) in collaboration with three model organic farms in different plantation areas.

Tea Board of India has been helping the tea industry in the form of subsidy for organic certification as well as for participation, with Tea Research Institutes and Industry Associations, in International meetings/seminars organized by FAO-IGG from time to time.





Priority is given to help tea industry to address problems in tea cultivation using bio-fertilizers and bio-pesticides. It has been reported that commercial produced bio-products available in the market are not of high quality due to which the organic tea planters are not happy. Hence testing facilities for bio-products are also given due importance to guide planters accordingly.

Salient findings of such projects have yielded important scientific information which is being disseminated to the organic tea producers in the form of guidelines and recommendations. Marketing and economics including cost benefit ratio of organic tea cultivation are other areas which deserve attention in order to establish benefits of organic farming and to encourage tea planters go for organic farming in the future.

#### ***Moringa – a super food for mitigating malnutrition***

*Right from the ancient times down to modern era, human beings passed through a series of research and experiments to fully utilize the natural potential of agricultural sector especially in terms of food items. Living close to nature in thinly populated areas four to five centuries back, the mankind usually banked upon fresh meat, fruits and vegetables and water flowing through rivers, brooks and streams.*

*But time changed and in recent centuries, the earth not only witnessed mounting population load but also rising need of edibles.*

Read more at:

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Health/656606-Moringa--a-super-food-for-mitigating-malnutrition>

Biochemical parameters linked to quality of tea has been studied in general for both organically produced tea and conventionally produced tea. It is yet to establish the difference between the two categories of tea with special reference to health benefits. In this regard, IIT-Kharagpur has conducted a study which showed that organically grown tea has shown improvement in quality parameters such as crude fibre, starch and polyphenol content. Organic tea has shown higher antioxidant properties due to the presence of higher content of polyphenol. Pharmacological studies on diarrhoea control using green tea extract obtained from organically produced tea has proved to be more effective than the tea produced from inorganic fertilizer management system of tea cultivation.



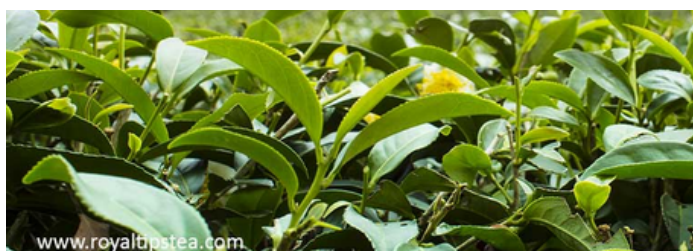
Use of bio-fertilisers and organic inputs in organic tea farming is very crucial in order to get success for enhancing tea production and quality improvement. Ancient tea cultivation in India was organic in nature. However, during the green revolution (1950-1960), use of chemical fertilisers was largely recommended and as a result yield of tea increased from 1000 kg/ha (mid 1950s) to 2000 kg/ha (2010-2020 and recent years). However, increased and indiscriminate use of chemical fertilisers in tea during last more than 50-60 years have led to the overall deterioration of soil health, ecological diversity and environmental quality etc. This necessitates looking for alternate strategy like switching over to organic farming maintaining soil productivity by using natural resources.

**Nutrient management** in organic tea demands sustainable eco-friendly system of tea cultivation wherein microbes and site specific natural and locally available carbonic nutrient sources play important role. Different types of bio-inputs such as organic manures, compost, bio-fertilisers, crop rotation etc in compliance with both national and international standards are essential requirements for organic agriculture. It has been found that application of vermin-compost along with phosphate solubilising bacteria (PSB) and nitrogen fixing bacteria (*Azospirillum*) has enhanced the growth of tea plants and improved the physico-chemical and biological properties of soil.

**Role of microbes** in organic farming has been found to be immensely important. Different types of beneficial microbes present in soil, particularly, near the rhizosphere region of plants play a very crucial role for the breakdown of insoluble form of ingredients / organic supplements to the soluble form which are accessible to the plant system.

### Some random thoughts

Although it is not mandatory that all tea plantations should opt for organic tea cultivation, there should be a balanced approach considering the rationale of organic farming. Organic farmers should be encouraged and rewarded so that others will also follow organic practices. More importantly, there should always be a sincere attempt by the planting community to reduce use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides and strike a balance of both types of farming practices.



### **BIOFACH to be held from 26 to 29 July**

*A new date for the biggest gathering of the international organic food community has been set in order to meet multiple requests from registered exhibitors and enable all participants to plan with confidence. The decision to postpone the trade fair pairing and the accompanying BIOFACH Congress this year was taken on a one-off basis in close consultation with the exhibitors.*

*BIOFACH and VIVANESS 2022 has been postponed to 26 to 29 July. Several exhibitions and congresses have been held again at the Exhibition Centre Nuremberg since September 2021, subject to a robust hygiene strategy, and exhibitors and visitors have responded extremely positively and with a sense of responsibility. Nevertheless, the current developments in the Covid-19 pandemic are causing uncertainty for many exhibitors at BIOFACH and VIVANESS*

*Read more at:*

*<https://www.ifoam.bio/news/biofach-be-held-26-29-july>*



### Conclusion

Organic tea has great potential in the future due to higher antioxidant properties.

Agronomic/ cultural practices of both types of farming do not have much differences, but use of essential ingredients plays a very important role deserving due attention by the planters. Another important area is certification system, which is already in place and should be strengthened further for production, domestic consumption and export of organically produced tea.



## New Members of AIOI Family

- **Amul (Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation), Anand**

Amul is an Indian State Government Cooperative based at Anand, Gujarat. It was formed in 1946 under the Ministry of Cooperation, Govt. of Gujarat. The company currently specializes in a variety of dairy products, baked foods, frozen & prepared foods. Amul emerged as the driving force behind India's white revolution, which made India the world's largest producer of milk and milk products. In August 2019, Amul became the first Indian dairy company to enter Rabobank's top 20 Global Dairy Companies list.

Amul has now ventured into Organic Products business to provide Certified Organic dairy products in the Indian Market in 2022.



The Taste of India

- **AB Mauri, Kochi**

AB Mauri based in Cochin, Kerala is a processor and exporter of a variety of customized spices, spice blends and seasonings. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of Associated British Foods Plc., a global player in the food and food service arena. It has 7,000 employees across 55 plants, presence in 34 countries, sales in over 90 countries and an annual turnover of 1 billion Euros.

Their product range encompasses the entire spectrum of spices and seasonings processed and blended as per the requirements of the buyer.



- **Plant Lipids Pvt. Ltd., Kochi**

Plant Lipids based in Kochi, Kerala is a manufacturer and exporter of essential oils, spice oleoresins, natural food colours, whole and ground sterilized spices and condiments. Their products are manufactured along strict quality guidelines and are certified under NPOP & other globally recognized standards. They supply more than 500 products to over 80 countries worldwide. Their manufacturing facilities comply with ISO 9001:2008, ISO 22000:2005, Spice House Certification, Kosher, Halal, etc.

The company works closely with farmers in sustainable models for community and social development, ensuring farm to fork traceability, good ground in renewable energy and have been recognized in India for good environmental practices.



- **Eko Guarantee Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi**

With the objective of developing environment friendly products, Eko Guarantee Pvt. Ltd. has ventured into certification in 2017. It was established by agronomists. They work with small and marginal farmers in the state of Maharashtra and facilitate adoption of sustainable farming systems.

They are also working as the Regional Council for Participatory Guarantee Scheme (PGS) under NCOF, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare and are utilizing the PKVY scheme in the states of Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Bihar and Gujarat. Eko Guarantee Pvt. Ltd. started non-GM and organic foods, textiles, livestock and cosmetics certification under private standards in 2019.



- **M/s Organic Ledger, Haryana**

Organic Ledger powered by Blockchain and IoT is a new-age software company, It is designed as the one scan provenance solution to ensure complete traceability, transparency, and trust in the Organic Industry.

Organic Ledger solution enables the organic brands to build trust and showcase the authentic product story to their end consumers, eventually helping the consumers to understand the details of their chosen brand/product.

It aims to build long-lasting trust and confidence in the organic ecosystem by providing a platform where everyone will be able to access transparent and reliable information on the origin, supply chain, and quality of their organic products.



## Announcements



**Association of Indian Organic Industry  
&  
Professor Jayashankar Telangana State  
Agricultural University**



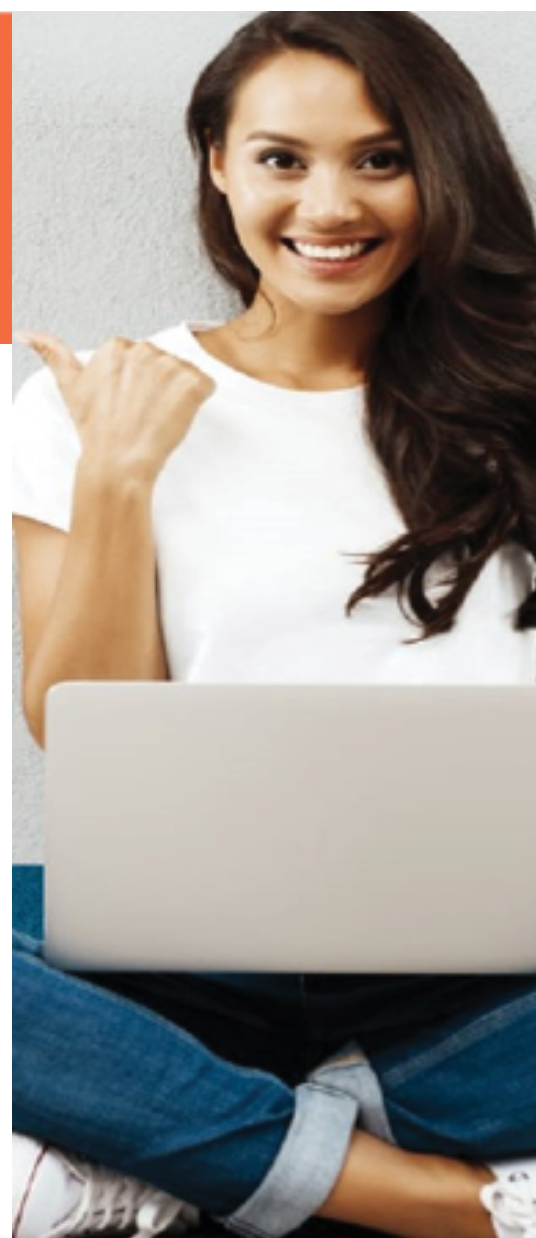
**Announces the commencement of 3rd short term online certificate course for entrepreneurs' development and empowerment for employment in Organic Industry.**

AIOI Certificate Course on Entrepreneurship Development in Organic Products is a professional course targeted to cater to the needs of organic industry. The information, guidance, practical training and course completion certificate will provide the participant with several opportunities in the industry like:

- » Auditing for assessment of organic programmes
- » Opportunities for organic certifications
- » Quality assurance executive and quality managers in organic foods and farm industry
- » Position in new product development
- » Organic agriculture consultants and many more

### Eligibility:

- » Graduates and graduating students (final year) in Life Sciences and Applied Sciences.
- » Students completed Diploma in Agriculture.
- » Candidates appearing for final exam in Bachelor's degree / equivalent qualification or awaiting their results, are also eligible to apply.



**The course will be for 40 hours**

**Duration : 4 months**

**For further information, contact us at**

**[memberservices@aioi.org.in](mailto:memberservices@aioi.org.in)**

**Next Batch starting from July 2022 | Commencement of Registration : 1<sup>st</sup> June 2022**



## Announcements



ASSOCIATION OF INDIAN  
ORGANIC INDUSTRY

# Quality Management Training Programme



### Topic of Interest:

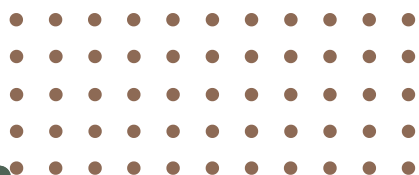
- Updating Quality Management as per ISO17065
- Risk Assessments
- Non-conformities
- Corrective actions required
- Inspection & Certification
- Requirements as per NPOP, EU and NOP Certifications

Mode of Training : Hybrid Mode



Limited seats available for this training programme. Enroll Now !

**Registration Link: <https://forms.gle/T63UkAuQgV8gGEBE9>**



Memberservices@aioi.org.in  
Corporate@aioi.org.in



91-11-43602167

## Announcements



### ONLINE TRAINING ANNOUNCEMENT

**FOR ASPIRING  
ORGANIC  
CERTIFICATION BODIES  
IN JUNE-JULY 2022**



AIOI is organizing a 30 Hours online Training on  
“Development and Establishment of Organic certification  
programmes for compliance to NPOP Standards, NOP & ISO 17065.”

*Interested organizations/companies may apply at [aioi.org.in](http://aioi.org.in)*

For more information contact us at:

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[Corporate@aioi.org.in](mailto:Corporate@aioi.org.in)

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