

Study Of Changing Trends Towards Organic Product And Difficulties In Organic Food Segments- Producer, Seller And Consumer

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Abstract

Organic food is one of the trending practices followed among all age groups within India. Starting from parenting of new born baby parents are trying to provide genuine organic food which really under question. As India is one of the agriculture based country, it is really important to deliver better while producing organic food at all stages till it reaches to ultimate consumer. Consumers in India has accepted the change towards organic food movement and supported it at all levels but various loop holes in production as well as supply of organic food raising questions on authenticity of product. Usually consumer got cheated with unfair practices followed. Producers are trying to opt maximum natural methods for production but few unavoidable situations like polluted water resources, soil and natural chemicals present, perishability in transport, wide market to target. Although lots of difficulties, few times producer and seller managed to facilitate consumer with genuine organic food.

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the main reasons for purchasing organic food is the perception that it is more nutritious and dietary helpful than conventional food. Although there is less difference in organic and conventional foods in respect to the combinations of the various micronutrients (vitamins, minerals and trace elements), there seems to be a slight trend towards higher ascorbic acid content in organically grown leafy vegetables and other food products. There is also a trend towards choosing lower protein concentration but of higher quality in some organic vegetables and cereal crops and food products. Several important directions can be figured for future research; it seems, however, that despite any differences, a well-balanced diet and correct selection can equally improve health regardless of its organic or conventional origin.

There are various myths has been spread by internet, social platforms and wrong consultations from people not trained enough to explore correct use of organic food in diet. It has been observed that various departmental stores are selling various organic food in form of packaging which can last longer than usual shelf life, which is under debate as either it can be organic or conventional. There are less chances that organic food can be stored and preserve longer (except dry beans and cereals). It has been proved that organic food retains its micronutrients only in original form and helpful if consumed in stipulated time. There is need of implementation corrective measures in packaging and selling of organic foods to differentiate them form conventional food. Both food got their own merits and demerits, so organic food must remain in its original form to get maximum micro vitamins in diet.

Aim of Study

To study organic food and its limitations in three segments- Farmer, Seller and consumer.

Objectives of study

- To study changing trends towards organic food
- To understand limitations of organic food & practical difficulties.

Research Methodology

- Exploratory method of research which is focusing of the Change in trends towards packed organic food.
- Secondary data has been compiled from Journal Articles from several relevant sources making the data authentic and trustworthy.

What is Organic food?

The term organic exactly describes food that has been cultivated & harvested or processed without the use of chemicals of any sort i.e. Fertilizers, insecticides, artificial coloring or flavoring and additives. In meat & meat based products and dairy, organic food can mean that no chemicals were part of the feed and water given to the animals.

Classification and labelling of Organic foods

It is based on the percentage of organic content contained within.

95% Organic Content: Only products with at least 95 per cent organic content may be labelled "organic" or bear the "organic" logo. There is need of Certification of product and label should have visible certification body name.

70-95% Organic Content: Multi-ingredient products with 70-95 per cent organic content may have the declaration: "contains xx% organic ingredients." These products are restricted from use the organic logo and/or the claim to be "organic." There is need of Certification of product and label should have visible certification body name.

Less than 70% Organic Content: Multi-ingredient products with less than 70 per cent "organic" content may only contain organic claims in the product's ingredient list. There is no need of certification and restricted from use the "organic" logo but, the organic ingredients contained within these products must be certified by certification body.

Benefits of organic food

- Decreased risk of environmental pollution by slowly degrading pesticides that can lead to food-chain bioaccumulation and persistent residues in body fat.
- Pesticides have been linked to numerous types of cancer in humans: from breast cancer (DDT) to non-Hodgkin's lymphomas and soft-tissue sarcomas (phenoxy herbicides).
- Enhanced soil fertility, which can result in an increased concentration of some minerals and phytochemicals in organic food.
- Decreased soil deterioration via crop rotation.
- Increased farmland biodiversity.
- Reduced exposure of farm workers and livestock to potentially harmful chemical compounds.
- Organic agriculture decreases the amount of nitrogen-containing chemicals that seep into groundwater supplies.

Disadvantages of Organic Foods

- Although organic farmers use naturally occurring pesticides (e.g. Sulfur, copper) organic food cannot be guaranteed pesticide-free.
- There is potential for chemical cross-contamination via shipping, wind, water leaching or residual pesticides found in water or soil.
- Organic foods may be more susceptible to microbiological contamination.
- Some organic foods are more expensive than conventionally grown foods.
- Use of animal manures for fertilizer may increase the risk of food-borne illness.
- The dependence on nitrogen-fixing, green-manure crops uses large amounts of land.

Limitations of Organic food

Price of Organic food is cheapest when bought directly from a farmer or producer, via any scheme which includes box scheme, farmers market or farm shop. Costing involved in Buying local, organic food will often cost less than the non-organic equivalent. Unfortunately, it is difficult for most of us to access organic food directly from the producer and therefore it tends to be more expensive than the basic non-organic equivalent in the market brought by reseller.

Items such as organic cereals, flours, milk & milk products, vegetables, bread and butter can be cheaper. If you do compare prices, you may actually find that many organic brands are cheaper than their conventional equivalents. Besides nutrition, people choose organic food for taste, to avoid pesticides and a concern for the environment. The organic movement is trying to promote better soil in long run, this can contribute to overall soil quality.

There are high quality, wholesome foods around that do not come with organic certification – such as gir cow milk, freshly made soya meals, various papads made of traditional cereals such as nachani, ragi and many more. But with so much organic stuff in the market, it is hard for the average consumer to sift authentic organic produce from something that may be just cashing in on the trend. So how does one make sure what we are eating is genuinely chemical-free? It is not simple, but there are a few checks to do for better clarification.

The first difference we need to mark that all available organic food in the market is not 100% organic. Labelling plays an important role in identifying this difference. "You must look for the 100% organic label on the produce," advises Jayram H.R., Founder, Green Path Organization, an organic experience center in Bangalore. "While it is difficult to find 100 % organic food in the market, it is definitely possible to get 100% organic food in India. Unless the product clearly says 100% organic, you will need to look for the certification standards of the label on your food to understand exactly how organic the food is. As per international standard of declaring anything organic requires it to be strictly chemical and pesticide-free but India few rules are not followed. The Telangana State Seed & Organic Certification Authority recently tested a sample of organic food in India to find that almost all the samples contained chemical residues.

Price is secondary factor as there is no real reason for organic food to be more expensive than non-organic, there is hardly any difference in the cost of normal and organic farming.

II. OBSERVATION

- Organic food has been came up as a new trend in food industry and became popular since decade. Many people opting it as status symbol or dietary need but it has been boomed in market very fast.
- Organic consumer perception and sellers' market segment has various ups and downs which make organic food expensive. There is a huge gap between demand and genius supply of organic food has been manipulated by few middleman.
- Farmers are facing issues related polluted groundwater & natural chemical compounds present in organic fertilizers, food contaminations happens in transport facility, higher level of perishability due to no pesticides used and many more.

- There is lots of loop holes in labeling and packaging of organic food, which makes consumer confuse about ultimate selection of genuine product. Products are labeled wrongly without proper certification. This has increases fake products in market which consumers can't really check.

III. SUGGESTIONS

- An education and informative sessions need to be arranged for farmers, this can educate them for better organic food production and effective utilization of natural resources.
- Monitory practices followed by seller middle man, while acting in between farmer or producer and consumer must be controlled by government authorities with law enforcement and legal safeguarding of both.
- Direct producer to consumer movement should be run more effectively.
- Certification authority and their surveillance for check must be followed correctly with minimization of loopholes in certification.
- Hygienic packaging and safe transport must be given equal importance and attention while working on organic food betterment.
- Organic and non-organic food are just varieties of food; what we include in diet as per individual preferences, none should be given excessive importance neither to be overlooked. Both food has their steak in gastronomy and better option is only solution than elimination of any.

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