

## Perception and adoption of organic farming practices among mulberry cultivators

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### ABSTRACT

The study was conducted purposively in selected three taluks of Kolar. The study revealed that cent per cent of the mulberry cultivators perceived organic manures as more useful, followed by composting of organic wastes (96.67%), organic mulches and green manures (81.67%) and intercropping (75.83%). Cent per cent of the farmers completely adopted organic manures, followed by composting of organic wastes (95.83%) and intercropping (73.33%). Majority of the mulberry cultivators have not adopted vermicompost (70.83%) and bio-fertilizers (65.83%). Out of seven characteristics selected for the study, five viz., education, land holding, social participation, risk orientation and decision making ability had significant relationship with perception and adoption. Besides this, innovative proneness had significant relationship with perception. Thus, it is necessary to intensify the extension educational programmes such as trainings, discussion meetings, demonstrations, field visits etc., for needed perceptual changes in mulberry cultivators. This will enable the farmers to adopt organic farming practices which inturn will help in the production of quality cocoons and pollution free environment.

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### INTRODUCTION

Crop production by using fertilizers and chemicals indiscriminately and injudiciously has resulted in pollution of soil and environment. Further, chemical farming undetermined the natural mechanism operating in the ecosystem. On account of environmental concerns and food safety, organic farming has regained momentum in the recent past. The methods in organic farming entails significant restrictions on the use of the fertilizers and chemicals. It avoids use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides and relies on maximum use of legumes, green manures crop residues, animal manure, vermicompost, bio-fertilizers etc., The need of plant nutrients have to be met through these organic or in combination of them with inorganic fertilizers. It is considered to be sustainable and safe for environment. In addition, much of the organic technologies are cheap, user friendly and suitable for small and marginal farmers.

The success of organic farming depends on how the farmers perceive and adopts. In this context, the present study was undertaken to assess the perception of mulberry cultivators about the usefulness of organic farming practices, to study the adoption level of organic farming practices by mulberry cultivators and to find out the relationship between characteristics of mulberry cultivators with

their perception and adoption level of organic farming practices.

### METHODOLOGY

Expost-facto research design with two stages and random sampling method were used for this study. At the first stage, out of five taluks of Kolar district, three were purposively selected on the basis of maximum area under mulberry cultivation. The villages having maximum area under mulberry were listed and two villages from each taluk were selected purposively. In each village, a list of mulberry cultivators was prepared separately and 20 farmers from each village were selected randomly, thus making a total sample of 120. The data were collected with the help of structured pretested interview schedule and analysed for drawing conclusions.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings obtained from the present study are presented below:

#### Perception of mulberry cultivators regarding organic farming practices:

The results presented in Table 1 indicate that cent per cent of mulberry cultivars perceived organic manures as more useful followed by composting of organic waste

### Key words :

Perception, adoption, Organic farming practices, Mulberry cultivators

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Sr. No	Organic farming practices	More useful		Useful		Less useful	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Use of organic manures	120	100	--	--	--	--
2.	Composting of organic wastes	116	96.67	04	3.33	--	--
3.	Organic mulches and green manures	98	81.67	18	15.00	04	3.33
4.	Intercropping	91	75.83	15	12.50	14	11.67
5.	Vermicomposting	60	50.00	42	35.00	18	15.00
6.	Application of bio-fertilizers	62	51.67	36	30.00	22	18.33

Sr. No.	Organic farming practices	Adoption level					
		Complete adoption		Partial adoption		Non-adoption	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Use of organic manures	120	100.00	--	--	--	--
2.	Composting of organic wastes	115	95.83	05	4.17	--	--
3.	Organic mulches and green manures	06	5.00	48	40.00	66	55.00
4.	Intercropping	88	73.33	15	12.50	17	14.17
5.	Vermicomposting	14	11.67	21	17.50	85	70.83
6.	Application of bio-fertilizers	--	--	41	34.17	79	65.83

(96.97%), organic mulches and green manures (81.67%). The possible reason might be that the mulberry cultivators felt that these practices were most useful for them. The findings are in conformity with the that of Balasubramanian and Perumal (1989).

#### **Adoption level of organic farming practices by mulberry cultivators:**

It was observed that cent per cent of the mulberry cultivators adopted organic manures in their mulberry garden (Table 2). Great majority of mulberry cultivators adopted composting of organic wastes (95.83%) and intercropping (73.33%). Vermicompost and bio-fertilizers applications are important as use of modern practices for higher production in mulberry. However, more than 65 per cent of farmers did not adopt these practices. This might be due to the lack of complete knowledge regarding these practices. The complexity involved during the initial stage of establishment for vermicompost and non-availability of bio-fertilizers in the market on time may be the possible reason. Similar findings were also reported by Patel *et al.* (2003).

#### **Relationship between characteristics of mulberry cultivators with their perception and adoption level:**

It is evident from Table 3 that farmer's age was not related with their perception and adoption of organic farming practices. Education, land holding, social

**Table 3: Relationship between characteristics of mulberry cultivators with their perception and adoption level of organic farming practices**

Sr. No	Name of the variable	Perception ('r' values)	Adoption ('r' values)
1.	Age	0.109	0.112
2.	Education	0.346**	0.431**
3.	Landholding	0.392**	0.423**
4.	Social participation	0.431**	0.316**
5.	Innovation proneness	0.358**	0.124
6.	Risk orientation	0.469**	0.413**
7.	Decision making ability	0.362**	0.395**

\*\* indicates significance of value at P=0.01

participation, risk orientation and decision making ability exhibited positive and significant relationship with perception and adoption. Besides this, innovative proneness had significant relationship with perception. Similar findings were reported by Balasubramanian and Perumal (1989), Dikle *et al.* (1992), Padmaiah and Ansari (1997) and Loganandhan and Singh (2003).

#### **Conclusion:**

The study revealed that majority of the mulberry cultivators perceived that organic farming practices as more useful. But the practices like, vermicompost, application of bio-fertilizers and use of organic mulches and green manures were not adopted by the mulberry cultivators. Out of seven characteristics six and five

characteristics have significant and positive relationship with perception and adoption of organic farming practices respectively. Hence, it is necessary to intensify the extension educational programmes such as trainings, discussion meetings, demonstrations, field visits etc., for needed perceptual changes among the mulberry cutlivators. This will enable the mulberry cultivators to adopt organic farming practices which will inturn help in quality cocoon production and pollution free environment.

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