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## Profile of organic vegetable growers

**AS Pawar and VM Yadav**

### Abstract

Organic farming is getting popular day by day. The pollution in general and poisoning of food, that we eat with harmful chemicals and their effect on human health and environment is making people to look for organic food. NGO's along with successful organic farmers had a big role to play in bringing organic farming to this level today. There are several states in India, which have declared organic policy with an intent to make the entire state organic in the near future. The present study was conducted with regard to profile of organic growers. Major findings of study was 59.00 percent and 86.00 percent of respondent's belonged to marginal irrigated and rainfed land holding category. Majority (60.00) of respondents had medium area under organic vegetables. 43.00 percent of respondents had 6 year experience in organic farming. 75.00 percent had medium extension contact. Near about one third of respondents (35.00%) were noticed in category of medium mass media exposure. 56.00 percent was noticed in medium risk orientation category. 95.00 percent of the respondents belonged to medium category of innovative proneness and medium Economic motivation.

**Keywords:** Organic farming, risk orientation, economic motivation, innovative proneness, mass media exposure

### Introduction

Organic farming was practiced in India since thousands of years. The great Indian civilization thrived on organic farming and was one of the most prosperous countries in the world, till the British ruled it. In traditional India, the entire agriculture was practiced using organic techniques, where the fertilizers, pesticides etc. were obtained from plant and animal products. Organic farming was the backbone of the Indian economy and cow was worshipped (and till today done so) as a God. The cow, not only providing milk but also bullocks for farming and dung, which is used as manure. The growth in organic production has been developing mainly by the increasing international demand. And the domestic market is also strengthening due to a large population and increasing wealth ([www. agriculture information.com](http://www.agricultureinformation.com)).

Many farmers, researchers and policy makers believe that turning to organic farming would mean lower yields and lower profits. Therefore, argument for a premium for organic produce on one hand and consumers would, not wants to pay higher price for organic produce. Hence, the challenge is to develop systems, which will facilitate acceptance of organic cultivation by the farmers and the consumers.

### Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was *ex-post-facto* technique. The present study was conducted in Akola district in Western Vidarbha of Maharashtra state.

Akola Tahasil was purposively selected as many efforts of organic vegetable cultivations had initiated by the Dr. PDKV, Akola including the One year diploma course in organic farming.

The list of organic vegetables growers was obtained from Taluka Agriculture Officer, Akola. From the list, villages having more area under organic vegetables production were selected proportionately. Thus 37 villages were selected for the study.

From the list of selected villages, farmers growing organic vegetables were identified and selected purposively to constitute sample size of 100 respondents and the respondents are 40 for tomato, 9 for green chilli, and 51 for brinjal. To calculate the economics of organic cultivation 3 inorganic vegetables farmer was selected to countercheck. The data was collected with the help of predeveloped interview schedule formulating relevant questions, in accordance with the study objectives.

The collected data were scored, tabulated and analysed by using suitable statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

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## Result and Discussion

The results pertaining to personal, socio-economic and psychological characteristics of organic vegetable growers as presented in Table 1 are discussed below.

### 1. Age

The data in Table 1 revealed that exactly two-third of the respondents (66%) belonged to middle age group, followed by 20 percent of respondents belonged to old age category and only 14 percent of the respondents belonged to young age categories. Thus, it can be concluded that majority of respondents belonged to middle age category.

**Table 1:** Distribution of the respondents according to their age.

Sr. No.	Category	Age (years)	Respondents (n=100)	
			Freq	Percentage
1	Young	Up to 35	14	14.00
2	Middle	36 to 50	66	66.00
3	Old	51 and above	20	20.00
		Total	100	100.00

The results are in the line with the findings of Suresh (2004) [1] who reported that majority of the dairy entrepreneurs were of middle age group.

### 2. Education

A high school level education was availed by 43.00 percent of the respondents. Whereas, 28.00 percent of the respondents had attended college level education.

The middle school level education was availed by 19.00 percent respondents and only 10.00 percent of the respondents have attended up to primary school level education.

No respondents were under the categories of illiterate and functionally illiterate.

**Table 2:** Distribution of the respondents according to their education.

Sr. No.	Category	Education (std.)	Respondents (n=100)	
			Freq	Percentage
1	Illiterate	No formal schooling	-	0.00
2	Functionally literate	Can read and write	-	0.00
3	Primary education	1 <sup>st</sup> to 4 <sup>th</sup>	10	10.00
4	Middle education	5 <sup>th</sup> to 7 <sup>th</sup>	19	19.00
5	High school	8 <sup>th</sup> to 10 <sup>th</sup>	43	43.00
6	College	Above 10 <sup>th</sup>	28	28.00
		Total	100	100.00

The more number of respondents have middle level education.

The results were in line with the findings of Jayale (1992) [2] and Srinivasreddy (1995) [3].

### 3. Family size

Family Size plays important role in adoption of organic vegetable cultivation as it requires more manpower for adopting the cultivation practices. Hence, the variable was considered in the present study. It was observed from the present study that majority of the organic vegetable growers (76%) had small family size i.e. up to 4 members followed by medium (18%). Only 6.00 percent respondents belonged to large farming size.

**Table 3:** Distribution of the respondents according to their Family size.

Sr. No.	Family size	No. of Members	Respondents (n=100)	
			Freq	Percentage
1	Small	Up to 4 members	76	76.00
2	Medium	5 to 6 members	18	18.00
3	Large	Above 6 members	6	6.00
		Total	100	100.00

The present situation of continuous fragmentation of family for self growth might have favoured results.

The findings of Rangi *et al.* (2002) [4] was found to support the similar situation.

### 4. Land holding

Around two-third of the respondents (46%) were noticed in

semi-medium land holding category. Large/Big farmers (14%), small (12%) and medium (24%) and lastly least percentage (4%) were marginal category were observed. In between Dryland (41%), Irrigated (59%), and Rainfed (86%) were observed.

**Table 4:** Distribution of the respondents according to their Land holding.

Sr. No.	Category	Respondents (n=100)			
		Frequency		Percentage	
		Irrigated	Rainfed	Irrigated	Rainfed
1	Marginal (Up to 1.00 ha)	59	86	59.00	86.00
2	Small (1.01 to 2.00 ha)	26	14	26.00	14.00
3	Semi-medium (2.01 to 4.00 ha)	14	0	14.00	0.00
4	Medium (4.01 to 10.00 ha)	1	0	1.00	0.00
5	Large/ big (Above 10.00 ha)	0	0	0.00	0.00
	Total	100	100	100.00	100.00

The similar situation of small holdings distribution was also noticed in the findings of Jayale (1992) [2], Srinivasreddy (1995) [3], Karpagam (2000) [5] and Shashidhara (2003) [6].

### 5. Area under organic vegetables

From the Table 8 it can be seen that 60.00 percent of the respondent had 0.124 to 1.45 ha area under organic vegetable cultivation, followed by 22.00 percent of the respondents who

had 1.5 to 2 ha area under organic vegetable cultivation. Less than 0.124 ha land was under vegetable cultivation of 18.00 percent of the respondents.

**Table 5:** Distribution of the respondents according to their area under organic vegetables.

Sr. No.	Category	Respondents (n=100)	
		Freq	Percentage
1	Small Up to 0.124	18	18.00
2	Medium 0.124 to 1.45	60	60.00
3	Large 1.45 to 2	22	22.00
	Total	100	100.00
Mean = 0.7891 S.D. = 0.66			

**6. Experience in organic farming**

It was observed from Table 9 that 43.00 percent of the respondents had 5 – 6 years of experience in organic farming. Little more than one third (35.00%) had experience up to 2 years whereas, 22.00 percent of the respondents had 3-4 years of experience in organic farming.

**Table 6:** Distribution of the respondents according to their experience in organic farming.

Sr. No.	Category	Respondents (n=100)	
		Freq	Percentage
1	Small (Upto 2 years.)	35	35.00
2	Medium (3 to 4 years.)	22	22.00
3	Large (5 to 6 years.)	43	43.00
	Total	100	100.00

This might be due to motivation by the organic farmers club formed in the district.

**Table 8:** Distribution of the farmers according to their frequency of Extension contact

Sr. No	Source of information	Contact					
		Regular		Occasional		Never	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
<b>A) Formal Source:</b>							
1.	Gramsevak	76	76.00	21	21.00	03	03.00
2.	Agriculture assistant	64	64.00	31	31.00	05	05.00
3.	Agriculture supervisor	60	60.00	29	29.00	11	11.00
4.	Mandal Agril. Officer	44	44.00	30	30.00	26	26.00
5.	Taluka Agril. Officer	37	37.00	21	21.00	42	42.00
6.	Agriculture university scientist	55	55.00	42	42.00	03	03.00
<b>B) Informal Source:</b>							
7.	NGO	32	32.00	50	50.00	18	18.00
8.	Progressive farmer	80	80.00	16	16.00	04	04.00
9.	Neighborhood/farmer/relatives/friends	100	100.00	00	00.00	00	00.00
10.	Krishi seva Kendra	96	96.00	04	04.00	00	00.00

The advantages of being the members of organic farmer clubs, the respondents might have benefited for greater exposing of extension activities.

The results were in line with the findings of Angadi (1999) [7]

**8. Mass Media exposure**

The results revealed that 35.00 percent of the respondents belonged to medium mass media use category, followed by low (31%) mass media use category. Whereas only 24 percent of the respondents belonged to high mass media use category.

**7. Extension contact**

The overall distribution of respondents in extension contact shows that, majority of respondents (75.00%) had medium extension contact. The data in the Table 10 shows that, 17 percent of the respondents had more extension contact whereas, only 8.00 percent of the respondents had less extension contact.

**Table 7:** Distribution of the respondents according to their extension contact.

Sr. No.	Category	Respondents (n=100)	
		Freq	Percentage
1	Less (Up to 8.91)	8	8.00
2	Medium (8.91 to 13.99)	75	75.00
3	More (above 13.99)	17	17.00
	Total	100	100.00
Mean = 11.45 S.D. = 2.54			

The details distribution of the respondents according to frequency of contact with various extension personnel for getting the information on recommended package of practices of organic vegetables is presented in Table 8.

It could be noted that more than 50 percent of respondents (60.00%) regularly used to contact the Agril. Assistants working at village level. The majority of the respondents had also contacted Gramsevak (75.00%) and Mandal officers of Panchayat Samiti (44.00%) and Taluka Agril. Officer (37.00%). It was also noted that farmers contacted Agriculture university scientist were 55 percent and near about all farmers were contacted neighbor’s and Krishi Seva Kendra for information and advice about recommended package of practices of organic vegetables. It is to noted that the respondents never used to contact with Taluka Agril. Officer (42.00%), for the information about recommended package of practices of organic vegetable.

**Table 9:** Distribution of the respondents according to their mass media exposure.

Sr. No.	Category	Respondents (n=100)	
		Freq	Percentage
1	Low	31	31.00
2	Medium	35	35.00
3	High	24	24.00
	Total	100	100.00
Mean = 9.10 S.D. = 1.66			

Further detailed analysis of mass media use depicted in Table 10 shows that, a high percent of the respondents (90%) possessed television, followed by radio possession among 56 percent farmers. Newspaper and farm magazine were subscribed by 21 percent and 8 percent of the respondents respectively. With respect to use of media for different purposes, the majority of respondents were found to fall in regular user category for general purpose in all the media like radio (51.00%) television (82.00%), newspaper (32.00%) and

farm magazine (32.00%). With respect to agricultural purpose large number of listeners (58.00%) was occasionally listening to agriculture programs. However, regular watching of agriculture programs on television was noticed to the extent of 72.00 percent. Whereas, comparatively a high percent of newspaper readers (47.00%) and farm magazine readers (60.00%) were found to have never read the agricultural information.

**Table 10:** Distribution of the respondents according to their frequency of mass media exposure.

Sr. No.	Type of Mass media exposure.	Subscriber		Frequency of use					
		Freq	%	Regularly		Sometimes		Never	
				Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
<b>a.</b>	<b>Radio</b>	56	56.00						
	General			51	51.00	44	44.00	5	5.00
	Agriculture			37	37.00	58	58.00	5	5.00
	Vegetable cultivation			00	00	02	02.00	98	98.00
<b>b.</b>	<b>Television</b>	90	90.00						
	General			82	82.00	14	14.00	4	4.00
	Agriculture			72	72.00	22	22.00	6	6.00
	Vegetable cultivation			23	23.00	56	56.00	21	21.00
<b>c.</b>	<b>Newspaper</b>	21	21.00						
	General			33	33.00	20	20.00	47	47.00
	Agriculture			32	32.00	23	23.00	45	45.00
	Vegetable cultivation			29	29.00	36	36.00	35	35.00
<b>d.</b>	<b>Others (Agril. Magazine)</b>	8	8.00						
	General			32	32.00	8	8.00	60	60.00
	Agriculture			24	24.00	7	7.00	69	69.00
	Vegetable cultivation			21	21.00	28	28.00	51	51.00

The more inclination towards audio-visual type of programmes and possession of TV sets might be the reasons for the situation.

These results were in accordance with the findings of Shashidhara (2003)<sup>[6]</sup> and Moulasab (2004)<sup>[8]</sup>.

**9. Risk orientation**

The distribution of the respondents according to their risk orientation is presented in Table 11.

**Table 11:** Distribution of the respondents according to their risk orientation.

Sr. No.	Category	Respondents (n=100)	
		Freq	Percentage
1	Low	25	25.00
2	Medium	56	56.00
3	High	19	19.00
	Total	100	100.00
Mean = 14.53 S.D. = 2.29			

Table 14 shows that more than one half of the respondents (56.00%) belonged to medium risk orientation, followed by low risk orientation (25%) and 19 percent respondents had high risk orientation.

The similar results were noticed in the study of Shashidhara (2003)<sup>[6]</sup>.

**10. Innovative proneness**

From the Table 15 it can be seen that 53.00 percent of the respondents had more innovative proneness, followed by 32.00 percent of the respondents who had small innovative proneness. Whereas, 15.00 percent respondents had large innovative proneness.

**Table 12:** Distribution of respondents according to their innovative proneness.

Sr. No.	Category	Respondents (n=100)	
		Freq	Percentage
1	Small	32	32.00
2	Medium	53	53.00
3	Large	15	15.00
	Total	100	100.00
Mean = 8.55 S.D. = 5.93			

The possible reasons might be that, the respondents might have taken more interest to learn new ideas to make organic farming more profitable.

The results were in contrast with the findings of Kumar (1998)<sup>[9]</sup>.

**11. Economic motivation**

The data in Table 16 indicated that 41 percent respondents fall under medium category of economic motivation, followed by 36.00 percent of respondents fall under small and 23.00 percent respondent had large economic motivation. Thus, it is concluded that majority of the organic vegetable growers had medium level of economic motivation.

**Table 13:** Distribution of the respondents according to their economic motivation.

Sr. No.	Category	Respondents (n=100)	
		Freq	Percentage
1	Small up to 1.08	36	36.00
2	Medium 1.09 to 17.92	41	41.00
3	Large Above 17.92	23	23.00
	Total	100	100.00
Mean = 9.5 S.D. = 8.42			

The inclination of the respondents to take up successful organic farming with the available facilities might have favoured the situation.

The results were in contrast with the findings of Ramesh Babu (1987)<sup>[10]</sup> and Srinivasreddy (1995)<sup>[3]</sup>.

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