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## Study on the Profile of Organic Cotton Farmers of Karimnagar District Of Telangana

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### ABSTRACT

The paper mainly focuses on studying various profile characteristics of the organic cotton practicing farmers of Karimnagar district of Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh state. The variables selected to study the profile of the farmers were their personal profile (age, education, farming experience, decision-making behaviour), economic status (farm size, herd size, organic inputs utilization pattern, annual income) and exposure to extension activities (training received, extension contact). The results revealed that majority of them had primary school education and fell under medium category in terms of age, farming experience, annual income, herd size, training received, decision-making behavior and extension contact. The majority of them had small farm size and high organic inputs utilization pattern. Majority (53.33%) of the organic cotton farmers belonged to middle age group, were educated up to primary school level (41.66%), had medium level of decision making behaviour (48.33%), farming experience (45.00%), small farm size (28.33%) and herd size (40.00%), used high level of organic inputs (48.33%), had medium annual income (48.33%), received medium level of trainings (50.00 %) and had medium level of extension contact (43.33%).

**Keywords:** Organic; Cotton; Farmers; Farming; Profile; Level.

### INTRODUCTION

Cotton is one of the main cash crops grown by the farmers of the state of Telangana Conventionally the farmers are cultivating the cotton crop by adopting more inorganic and chemical-based inputs. It is this habit which has a tremendous adverse effect on the water, soil, environment and even human health. Due to liberalization, privatization, and globalization the agricultural products are being marketed at the international market. To get the remunerative price in this competitive market the farmers should have knowledge on producing chemical residue free products which can very well satisfy the international quarantine laws for export purpose. Under these circumstances, the farmers are being sensitized on the importance of organic farming. Keeping this in view the present paper focuses on unearthing the profile of the farmers practicing the organic farming in cotton cultivation.

### METHODOLOGY

#### 1. Personal traits

The state of Andhra Pradesh and the Telangana region were selected purposively for the study. The district Karimnagar of Telangana region was selected randomly. A sample of 60 organic cotton practicing farmers from six villages of two Manuals of the district was selected randomly under the study.

The variables selected to study the profile of the farmers were their personal profile (age, education, farming experience, decision-making behaviour), economic status (farm size, herd size, organic inputs utilization pattern, annual income) and exposure to extension activities (training received, extension contact). The data from the respondent farmers were collected with the help of schedules and interviews. The data collected were analysed and suitable interpretations were drawn. The statistical techniques like mean, standard deviation, and class interval were followed to analyse the data. Accordingly, the respondents were classified into various groups.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The data were collected from the respondents on three selected profile characteristics viz personal traits, economic status, and exposure to an extension. The data thus collected were analysed and interpreted.

The data were collected wrt age, education, decision making and farming experience of the cotton growers and are given in Table 1.

**Age:** It is evident from the Table 1 that majority (53.33%) of the organic cotton farmers belonged to middle age followed by young (36.66%) and old (10.00%) age.

In the case of organic farmers, this might be due to the rich experience and enthusiasm of middle-aged and young farmers that might have driven them towards organic farming. The unsustainable farming practices and problems of climate might have motivated them towards organic farming. The other reason might be that middle-aged farmers with higher education levels were more likely to recognise harmful environmental effects and thus were more willing to adopt new technologies with lesser impact on the environment. A lower percentage of old aged farmers might be due to their lack of enthusiasm and interest to learn new ways of farming. The results are in confirmation with the findings reported by Narayanaswamy (2005) and Shinde et al (2000).

**Education:** It can be observed that majority of the organic cotton farmers were educated up to primary school level (41.66%) followed by upper primary

**Profile of organic cotton farmers**

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to personal traits (n=60)

Trait	Class	Frequency	Percentage
Age (years)	Young (up to 35)	22	36.66
	Middle aged (36-45)	32	53.33
	Old (>55)	6	10.00
Education	Illiterate	5	8.33
	Primary School	25	41.66
	Upper primary school	13	21.66
	High school	7	11.66
	Intermediate	3	5.00
	Undergraduate	2	3.33
	Postgraduate	5	8.33
Decision-making behaviour	Low (21-27)	21	35.00
	Medium (28-34)	29	48.33
	High (35-41)	10	16.66
Farming experience (years)	Low (5-13)	18	30.00
	Medium (14-22)	27	45.00
	High (23-31)	15	25.00

School (21.66%), high school (11.66%), postgraduate and illiterate (8.33%) and intermediate (5.00%).

The majority of the respondents were educated only up to the primary level as there was a lack of formal education institutions that lead to discontinuation of education at primary level. The same results were presented by Chidananda (2008), Gangadhar (2009) and Madhusekhar (2009).

**DECISION-MAKING BEHAVIOUR**

Taking a rational, realistic and manageable decision on procurement of inputs, obtaining the finance from various sources, searching for a suitable place of market etc are very sensible and challenging tasks.

It was found that majority (48.33%) of the organic cotton farmers had medium level of decision-making behaviour followed by low (35.00%) and high (16.66%).

This is in cognizance with the results of Madhushekar (2009) and Gangadhar (2009).

**Farming experience:** The results indicate that majority of the organic cotton farmers had a medium level of farming experience (45.00%) followed by low (30.00%) and high farming experience (25.00%).

Since the majority of the organic farmers were middle aged with a primary level of education afterward they were engaged in farming. So their level of farming experience was also medium. Definitely, the farming experience is an important factor which influences the farmers to accept, evaluate and experiment the innovative technologies on their farms. This is in conformity with the works of Navasakthi (2005) and Madhusekhar (2009).

## 2. Economic status

The economic status of the farmers was studied taking into consideration the farm size, herd size, organic inputs used and annual income.

**Farm size:** It is indicated that majority (36.66%) of the organic cotton farmers had small farm size followed by marginal (35.00%) and large (28.33%) showing thereby that the majority of organic cotton farmers were small farmers. Since marginal farmers cannot experiment with the new technologies and large farmers go on practicing the usual practices simply ignoring the new innovations these were only the small farmers who had adopted organic farming. In fact, farm size is one of the important factors which influences the adoption behaviour of the farmers. The results are in accordance with the observations of Kumar (1998), Niemyer and Lombard (2002), Savitha (2009) and Shanti Nirmala (2010).

**Herd size:** While studying the herd size it was found that majority (40.00%) of the organic cotton farmers had medium herd size followed by small (38.33%) and big (21.66%) size. However, it is mandatory that for organic farming herd size should be bigger. But here it was found that majority of the growers had medium herd size which could be due to their economic level as the majority of the farmers were small farmers and thus possessed an only medium number of heads. The results are in accordance with the findings of Savitha (2009).

**Organic inputs utilisation pattern:** It is evident that majority (48.33%) of the organic cotton farmers used a high level of organic inputs followed by low (26.66%) and medium (25.00%) level.

Naturally the adoption of organic farming demands more and frequent application of organic inputs hence the organic cotton farmers had a high level of utilisation of organic inputs. These results pofile of organic cotton farmers

Table2. Distribution of respondents according to economic status (n=60)

Trait	Class	Frequency	Percentage
Farm size (ha)	Marginal (1)	21	35.00
	Small (1.1-2)	22	36.66
	Large (>2)	17	28.33
Herd size (no of heads)	Small (4-9)	23	38.33
	Medium (10-15)	24	40.00
	Big(16-21)	13	21.66
Organic inputs utilization	Low (14-17)	16	26.66
	Medium (18-21)	15	25.00
	High (22-24)	29	48.33
Annual income (,000 rupees)	Low (0-1)	21	35.00
	Medium (2-3)	29	48.33
	High (4-5)	10	16.66

are in agreement with the findings of Navadekar (2004) and Gangadhar (2009).

**Annual income:** It can be observed from that majority (48.33%) of the organic cotton farmers had medium annual income followed by low (35.00%) and high (16.66%).

The majority of the organic cotton farmers had medium annual income whereas the conventional cotton farmers had high annual income. This trend indicates that the returns from the organic farming had not been realized. These findings are in accordance with the observations of Madhusekar (2009) and Chidananda (2008).

### 3. Exposure to extension activities

The profile of the growers wrt exposure to extension activities was studied based on their frequency of participation in training and extension contact and the data are given in Table 3.

**Training received:** Majority (50.00%) of the organic cotton farmers received the medium level of training followed by high (38.33%) and low (11.66%) number of training. It indicates that the farmers were not much aware of the training programs conducted by various agencies and their importance. There is need to inculcate the spirit of attending the training programs in the farmers. Special training programs may be designed to suit the needs and

Tabl3 3. Distribution of respondents according to extension contact (n=60)

Trait	Class	Frequency	Percentage
No of training attended	Low (6-8)	7	11.66
	Medium (9-11)	30	50.00
	High (12-14)	27	38.33
Extension contact (no of contacts)	Low (12-17)	15	25.00
	Medium (18-23)	26	43.33
	High (24-29)	19	31.66

Interests of cotton farmers. The same results were found by Suneetha (2003), Navasakthi (2005), Madhusekhar (2009) and Gangadhar (2009).

**Extension contact:** Majority (43.33%) of the organic cotton farmers had a medium level of extension contact followed by high (31.66%) and of low (25.00%).

It indicates that growers were not much in contact with the extension functionaries which is otherwise very important especially while using critical inputs. This is in line with the findings of Subramaniam (2000), Sivanarayana et al (2008), Gangadhar (2009) and Shanti Nirmala (2010).

### CONCLUSION

The analysis of profile characteristics of organic cotton respondents indicates that majority of them had primary school education, fell under medium category in terms of age, farming experience, annual income, herd size, training received, decision-making behavior and extension contact had small farm size and organic inputs utilization pattern.

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