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Research Study on Organic Production

The consumer market in India is increasingly demanding organic produce, especially well off consumers, due to concerns relating to food safety. Keeping this in view, the Government of India is encouraging organic agriculture not only as a strategy to mitigate pollution caused by agriculture, but also as a value addition strategy for farmers. India is also a major exporter of organic produce, particularly fresh vegetables and rice. Despite increase in the land area managed under organic agriculture, in India, supply of organic produce is not enough to meet the potential demand. Farmers are not in a position to realize the extra value gained from the organic produce, though organic horticultural production is more remunerative for smallholders willing to put their labour into farming, as the productivity per land area of organic market gardening is superior to that of conventional horticulture.

In this background, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations took up a Research Study on Organic Production. Part of the Project work was assigned to MANAGE. The role of MANAGE was to undertake a survey on the risk and needs assessment of farmers in India covering their conversion to organic agriculture; translate the survey questionnaire on risk and needs assessment of farmers into the local language; conduct interviews to pretest the translated questionnaire on households producing organic rice, conventional rice, organic vegetables and conventional vegetables; conduct a survey of 300 households (150 organic and 150 conventional) producing vegetables or rice, and enumerate the collected data into a data base.

The three states selected for conducting the survey were Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. As per the terms of reference of the Project pre testing of the questionnaire was carried out in Kalwakurty of Mahaboobnagar district. A sample of 100 farmers including 50 farmers for organic production and 50 farmers for conventional production were selected randomly in each state.