



Discuss the Status of Organic Farming in India. (250 words / 15 M) (GS-3 Agriculture)

Approach:

1. define organic farming.
2. Mention with facts its status in India.
3. Mention how policy initiatives are not bringing greater coverage.
4. Mention coverage under various govt. schemes.
5. Conclusion.

Organic farming is an agricultural process that uses *pest control derived from organic manure and animal or plant waste*. This farming started in response to the environmental suffering caused by chemical pesticides and synthetic fertilizers. It is a new system of agriculture that **repairs, maintains, and improves the ecological balance**.

Status in India: organic farming is in a **nascent stage** – **2.78 Mha** of farmland was under this cultivation as of March 2020. This equals to **just 2% of the 140.1 Mha net sown area** in the country. Only a few states have taken the lead in improving organic farming coverage – **Madhya Pradesh tops with 0.76 Mha** under cultivation, which is **over 27% of India's total organic cultivation area**. The **top 3 states – Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra** account for **about half the area** under organic cultivation. The **top 10 states** account for **nearly 80% of the total area** under organic cultivation.

Sikkim is the only state to become fully organic. Even the top 3 states – MP, Rajasthan, Maharashtra – have **only 4.9%, 2.0% and 1.6% of the net sown area** under organic farming respectively. Few states like **Meghalaya, Mizoram, Uttarakhand, Goa & Sikkim have 10% or more of their net sown area** under organic cultivation. UTs like **Delhi, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Chandigarh have also 10% of their net sown area** under this cultivation. **All other states have less than 10% of their net sown area** under organic farming.

Policy initiatives not translating into greater coverage: Low organic farming coverage exists despite at least 20 states having a policy / scheme w.r.t. organic farming. Many states like **Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland**, etc. have expressed to become **fully natural-farming states**. Some states like **Karnataka & Kerala had organic policy since 2004 & 2010 respectively**, but **only 1.1% and 2.7% of their net sown area** are organically cultivated. However, **Rajasthan**, which recently formulated a policy, has covered a **significant area** within a short time.

Currently, **only 12 states** have their **own state organic certification agency accredited by Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)**. Some states have either developed or are still developing organic brands such as **MP Organic, Bastar Naturals, Jaivik Jharkhand**, etc.

Organic coverage under Govt. Schemes: India introduced **Organic Farming Policy in 2005**.



Of the **2.78 Mha** covered organically, **1.94 Mha is under National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP)**; **0.59 Mha under Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana**; **0.07 Mha under Mission Organic Value Chain development for NE Regions** and **0.17 Mha under state schemes**. This shows **NPOP scheme covers 70% of the organic area**, of which **30% is under conversion**. During **2015 – 2019**, **96% of the total certified organic food** production was under **NPOP certification** and remaining **4% under Participatory Guarantee Scheme (PGS)**. **MP has about 90% of its organic area under NPOP**; while **MP, Rajasthan & Maharashtra collectively have over 80% of their organic area under NPOP**. Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Bihar, and Uttarakhand have covered more by PKVY than NPOP.

Even though India has **very small organic area under cultivation**, but **in terms of organic farmers it stands first**, with **over 1.9 million farmers** which is **1.3% of 146 million agricultural landholders**. To boost organic production, **organic products consumption** should be promoted, a **definite action plan** to encourage growth of organic production with the **support of R&D**, can pave the way for a more sustainable organic cultivation in India.

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