ResearchPro International Multidisciplinary Journal

Vol- 2, Issue- 2, April-June 2026 ISSN (O)- 3107-9679
Email id: editor@researchprojournal.com Website- www.researchprojournal.com

Perception and Adoption of Organic Farming Practice among Farmers in Bulandshahr

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Article Info: *(Recieved- 05/01/2026, Accept- 02/02/2026, Published- 03/04/2026)*
DOI- 10.70650/rpimj.2026v2i200004

Abstract-

Organic farming has emerged as a **global necessity** in the face of escalating environmental degradation, declining soil fertility, biodiversity loss, and health concerns associated with chemical-intensive agriculture. This study aims to assess the level of awareness and understanding of organic farming practices among farmers in the Bulandshahr district of Uttar Pradesh and to analyse their perceptions regarding the opportunities and challenges associated with its adoption. Bulandshahr was purposively selected for its agricultural significance, and five out of seven tehsils were identified for data collection. A total of 250 farmers were chosen through a simple random sampling method. The research relied on both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were collected using structured interviews to explore farmers' behaviours, while secondary data were obtained from government publications, research articles, and other relevant literature. The findings reveal a generally positive outlook among farmers of Bulandshahr toward organic farming, with a majority recognizing its sustainability, benefits to soil health, and potential to reduce chemical usage. Farmers also acknowledged the growing market demand and environmental advantages of organic produce. However, only a small percentage expressed willingness to adopt organic farming without financial incentives, indicating significant concerns regarding market access, certification challenges, and economic viability. Trust in institutional support and awareness of technical knowledge were also notably limited. The study further identifies several opportunities, including favourable agro-climatic conditions, government support schemes, and strong community networks.

Keywords- Organic, Agriculture, Sustainable, Conventional

1. Introduction

Organic farming is a method of agriculture that focuses on sustainability by minimising or eliminating the use of synthetic inputs like chemical fertilisers, pesticides,

hormones, and feed additives. Instead, it depends largely on natural practices such as crop rotation, crop residues, animal manure, and organic waste from outside the farm, mineral-based rock supplements, and biological processes to supply nutrients and protect plants as much as possible.

In recent years, organic farming in India has been rapidly expanding, fuelled by increasing consumer preference for chemical-free food and supportive government policies promoting sustainable agriculture. By 2020, approximately 2.78 million hectares of land were under certified organic cultivation-about 2% of the country's total net sown area. More than 1.9 million farmers were enrolled under two certification mechanisms, giving India the highest number of organic producers globally. In the same year, organic exports from India reached 1.3 million metric tonnes, worth around 3,500 crore (USD 470 million). While organic farming offers several benefits, it also confronts obstacles like higher production costs, reduced yields, and complicated certification requirements. Government programmes such as the NPOP (National Programme for Organic Production) assist by offering financial incentives and certification support. However, to make organic farming more viable and widely adoptable, there is a need for increased investment in research, cost-effective certification systems, cutting-edge technologies like AI and drones, and more efficient supply chains. Bulandshahr is a prominent agricultural district, covering 4,353 sq. km-about 1.48% of Uttar Pradesh's total area of this, 122.8 sq. km is urban and 4,230.2 sq. km is rural. The district experienced the Green Revolution and is well known for the abundant cultivation of sugarcane, wheat, maize, and potato. The state government has designated the Syana region as a fruit belt, where mango orchards are common. Additionally, the district plays a major role in the "White Revolution," with milk production being a key economic activity. The EOFC (Establishment of Organic Farm Clusters) sub-scheme, part of the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), was implemented across four blocks in Bulandshahr district. The initiative was supported by APOF Organic Certification Agency (Pune) and Sikkim State Co-operative Supply and Marketing Federation Ltd. (SIMFED) to develop organic farm clusters in the Ganga Basin. Farmers in these clusters grew crops without using chemical fertilizers or pesticides, relying instead on bio fertilizers and organic farming methods. Certification inspections were carried out, and the formation of Farmer Producer Organisations was in progress. The scheme led to better crop yields, enhanced soil fertility, reduced farming expenses, improved market prices for produce, and increased farmer incomes. Organic farming in these clusters is expected to deliver significant long-term benefits.

2. Literature Review

Sati, A et al. (2025) research paper "Empowering Hill Agriculture: The Impact of Integrated Farming Systems on Sustainable Livelihoods" examines how Integrated Farming Systems (IFS) can improve the sustainability and livelihoods of hill farmers in Uttarakhand. Using a case-based methodology and supported by field data and literature, it evaluates IFS components like crop-livestock integration, agroforestry, aquaculture, and renewable energy. Findings show that IFS significantly boosts farm productivity, income, and employment while promoting ecological balance. The study concludes that systemic adoption of IFS, aided by policy and infrastructure support, can transform hill agriculture into a resilient and economically viable model.

Askari Bozayeh et al., (2024) the study "Factors Influencing the Attitudes of Rice Farmers in Langrod County towards Organic Agriculture" explores attitudes of rice farmers in Langrod County toward organic agriculture, aiming to identify influencing factors. Using a questionnaire-based survey with 211 participants, descriptive statistics and factor analysis revealed that while most farmers hold

somewhat positive views, key influences include environmental care, product quality, traditionalism, and personal experiences, suggesting potential for targeted policy and education initiatives.

Singh, A. (2022) study on the topic "Understanding the Perception, Constraints and Reasons for the Adoption of Organic Farming" investigates organic farming adoption in Himachal Pradesh under PKVY, based on a survey of 60 farmers. Rising costs of inorganic inputs motivated the shift, while agriculture departments influenced farmer perceptions. Key constraints include low productivity, marketing challenges, certification issues, and crop losses from animals. Findings suggest targeted policy support is essential for sustainable expansion.

Hindustan Times (2022), The Uttar Pradesh government, led by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, has launched a major initiative to promote organic farming and afforestation along the Ganga river in 27 districts, Bulandshar is one the district. The plan encourages farmers within a 10 km radius of the river to adopt chemical-free farming practices with support in training and equipment. Simultaneously, the state aims to plant trees on 6,759 hectares across 503 locations to combat soil erosion, flooding, and biodiversity loss. Building on previous efforts under the Namami Gange Scheme-which already involved over 103,000 farmers-the initiative seeks to further environmental protection while increasing farmers' incomes through organic agriculture.

Malik et al., (2022) study titled "Farmers' Readiness for Organic Farming: A Study of Aligarh District in Uttar Pradesh" assessed Aligarh district farmers' readiness for organic farming based on farm conditions, attitude, and knowledge. Existing practices like livestock rearing, growing pulses/millets, and neem tree use support organic adoption. Farmers showed favourable attitudes, but lacked confidence in implementation. Knowledge was strong for cultural practices but weak for trap crops and bio-agents. Institutional support is needed for awareness, input accessibility, and crop diversification.

Bhattacharyya & SCOPE Organic Informatics, (2021) study "Chemical Farming vs. Organic Farming : A Comparative Assessment" compares chemical and organic farming, emphasizing that while chemical farming dominates globally, its excessive use harms soil, biodiversity, and human health. Organic farming emerges as a sustainable alternative with environmental and economic benefits. However, limited data, especially in India, hinders direct comparisons. The study evaluates both methods on soil health, yield, food quality, and sustainability.

Siddiqui et al. (2015) research on "A Study on Mango Economy of Malda District, West Bengal" studies the mango economy of Malda district, West Bengal, highlighting its agricultural growth and socio-economic dynamics. It reports significant increases in mango cultivation from 1990–91 to 2010–11, driven by mechanization and market demand. However, middlemen dominate marketing channels, limiting farmers' profits. The study emphasizes shifting cropping patterns and the need for better support infrastructure.

Patidar & Patidar (2015) paper titled "A Study of Perception of Farmers towards Organic Farming" explores farmers' perceptions of organic farming in Madhya Pradesh, India, highlighting growing interest due to its environmental and economic benefits. Based on a sample from Khargone district, 67% of respondents viewed organic farming positively. Factors such as age, education, farm size, and social benefits significantly influenced perceptions, indicating strong potential for sustainable agriculture adoption.

3. Objective of the Study

- To assess the level of awareness and understanding of organic farming practices

among farmers in Bulandshahr.

- To analyse the perception of farmers towards the opportunities and challenges of adopting organic farming.

4. Methodology

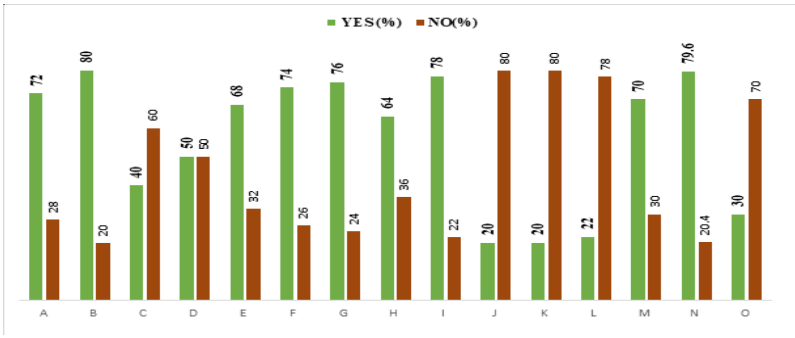
The present study was conducted in the Bulandshahr district of Uttar Pradesh, which was selected purposively due to its agricultural significance. Out of the total seven tehsils in the district, five tehsils were chosen for data collection based on their accessibility and relevance to the study objectives. From each selected tehsil, 50 farmers were randomly selected from various villages, making use of the simple random sampling technique to ensure unbiased representation. Thus, the total sample size comprised 250 farmers from across the Bulandshahr district. The study is based on both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were collected through structured interviews with the selected farmers, focusing on their behaviour and perceptions toward organic farming. Secondary data were gathered from published reports, government documents, research articles, and relevant literature to support and contextualize the findings. This mixed-method approach ensured a comprehensive understanding of farmers' attitudes and behaviours toward the adoption of organic farming practices.

Table 1: Behaviour toward Organic Farming of 250 Farmer

Question Code	Statement	Yes	No
A	I believe organic farming is more sustainable than conventional farming.	180	70
B	Organic farming is beneficial for the long-term health of the soil.	200	50
C	I feel confident in my knowledge of organic farming practices.	100	150
D	Learning about organic farming is important for all farmers.	125	125
E	Organic farming can help improve the quality of the crops I grow.	170	80
F	I believe organic products are safer for consumers than chemically grown products.	185	65
G	Organic farming requires more effort than conventional farming.	190	60
H	I am open to replacing chemical fertilizers with organic alternatives.	160	90
I	I feel that I need proper training before I can practice organic farming.	195	55
J	Even if there is no price premium, I would still consider adopting organic practices.	50	200
K	I believe that organic farming can meet the food demands of my community.	50	200
L	I am willing to reduce the use of chemicals for the benefit of the environment.	55	195
M	The risks involved in shifting to organic farming discourage me.	175	75
N	I am motivated to learn more about organic farming from experts and experienced farmers.	199	51
O	I trust the information provided by government and NGOs about organic farming.	75	175

Source: *Author Composition*

Figure 1: Analysis of Farmer Behavioural Responses in Percentage



Source: *Author Composition*

4.1 Interpretations and Key Findings

Above study shows that a significant majority (72%) of respondents believe that organic farming is more sustainable than conventional farming, indicating a strong recognition of its long-term environmental benefits. Likewise, 80% of the participants agreed that organic farming is beneficial for soil health, suggesting that farmers are well aware of its positive ecological impacts.

When it comes to knowledge, 60% of the respondents (150 individuals) admitted they are not confident in their understanding of organic practices, reflecting a gap in awareness and education. This is supported by the 78% (195 individuals) who expressed the need for proper training before adopting organic methods.

The importance of learning about organic farming was equally acknowledged, with 50% agreeing and 50% neutral or disagreeing-indicating a split opinion, possibly reflecting differences in education or exposure. Around 68% (170 out of 250) believe that organic farming can improve crop quality, while an even higher 74% believe organic products are safer for consumers. This reflects a positive attitude towards the quality and health implications of organic produce.

However, 76% (190 individuals) feel that organic farming requires more effort than conventional methods, suggesting labour and input intensity could be a barrier to adoption. Despite this, 64% are open to replacing chemical fertilizers with organic alternatives, and 78% are motivated to learn from experts—indicating a readiness to transition if supported properly. A substantial portion, 80%, feel discouraged by the risks involved in shifting to organic farming, and only 20% said they would adopt organic practices even without a price premium, revealing economic concerns as a key constraint.

Most farmers (80%) do not believe that organic farming alone can meet the food demands of their community, reflecting scepticism about its scalability and productivity. Similarly, 70% do not trust government and NGO information on organic farming, indicating a credibility gap that could affect policy implementation. On a more encouraging note, 78% (195 respondents) are willing to reduce chemical use for environmental benefits, showing a strong environmental ethic among the majority.

4.2 Opportunities in Organic Farming

a) Fertile Agro-climatic Conditions: Bulandshahr's favourable climate and fertile alluvial soil provide ideal conditions for growing a variety of organic crops such as wheat, pulses, vegetables, and sugarcane.

b) Increasing Market Demand: There is growing awareness among consumers in nearby urban centres like Delhi and Noida about organic products. This creates a promising market for organic produce from Bulandshahr.

c) Government Support: Various schemes under the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) and Mission Organic Value Chain Development encourage farmers to

adopt organic practices by offering financial and technical assistance.

d) Health and Environmental Benefits: Organic farming helps improve soil fertility, reduces water contamination, and promotes biodiversity, making it attractive for environmentally conscious farmers.

e) Low Input Cost (Long-term): After the initial transition period, organic farming can lower input costs due to reduced dependence on chemical fertilizers and pesticides, especially for farmers using farm-made compost and natural inputs.

f) Community Collaboration Potential: Bulandshahr's strong village-level farmer networks can facilitate the formation of organic producer groups and cooperatives, boosting bargaining power and market access.

4.3 Challenges in Organic Farming

a) Lack of Awareness and Training: Many farmers in Bulandshahr are unfamiliar with organic practices or lack technical knowledge about pest management, composting, and certification processes.

b) Certification Difficulties: Obtaining organic certification is time-consuming and expensive, particularly for smallholder farmers who lack institutional support.

c) Transition Period Risk: The shift from conventional to organic farming takes 2-3 years, during which yields may decline and market premiums are not guaranteed-posing economic risks for farmers.

d) Limited Market Linkages: Despite growing demand, farmers face difficulties in accessing assured organic markets due to middlemen, lack of storage, and weak distribution channels.

e) High Labour Intensity: Organic farming is more labour-intensive, especially in practices like manual weeding and preparation of organic inputs, which may not be feasible for all farmers.

f) Insufficient Input Availability: There is limited access to quality organic seeds, bio fertilizers and bio pesticides in rural areas of Bulandshahr, discouraging adoption.

5. Conclusion

The study conducted in Bulandshahr district highlights a moderately high level of awareness and a generally positive perception of organic farming among farmers. Most respondents acknowledged the sustainability of organic farming, its benefits for soil health, and its potential to reduce chemical use in agriculture. Farmers also recognized the health and environmental advantages of organic produce, particularly in light of increasing market demand in nearby urban areas. However, despite these favourable perceptions, the findings indicate significant gaps in knowledge, limited trust in institutional support, and economic uncertainties-especially in the absence of price premiums or assured markets. This reveals that while the intent to adopt organic farming exists, it is often hindered by a lack of practical support and awareness.

The study also brings forward key opportunities and challenges shaping the organic farming landscape in Bulandshahr. Fertile soil, favourable agro-climatic conditions, growing consumer awareness, and government schemes like PKVY provide a strong foundation for scaling up organic farming. However, systemic issues such as lack of training, costly certification processes, inadequate market linkages, and labour constraints continue to act as major barriers. Addressing these challenges through targeted training programs, easier access to certification, improved input availability, and better infrastructure for marketing and storage could significantly accelerate the adoption of organic farming in the region, ensuring both ecological sustainability and improved livelihoods for farmers.

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Cite this Article

'Dr. Amit Kumar Tripathi; Ashok Kumar', "Perception and Adoption of Organic Farming Practice among Farmers in Bulandshahr", ResearchPro International Multidisciplinary Journal (RPIMJ), ISSN: 3107-9679 (Online), Volume:2, Issue:2, April-June 2026.