

The content of this article was published by [WikiFarmer](#). It has been split into two parts, with the second part to follow shortly.

Summary of Organic Farming

In a few words, organic farming involves growing techniques and methods that seek to protect the environment, humans, and animals, through sustainable agriculture. Producers of organic farming are not allowed to use anything but biological substances for both fertilization and crop protection. As fertilization methods, they mainly use manure, compost, or special organic synthetic fertilizers. As crop protection measures, they mostly use traps and natural predators. This farming method requires a lot of effort and has significantly lower yields than conventional farming. However, the organic producer can market the products at higher prices than the conventional ones.

Organic Farming Definition

According to THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT regulation of Brussels, 27 April 2018, Organic farming is an overall system of farm management and food production that combines best environmental and climate action practices, a high level of biodiversity, the preservation of natural resources, the application of high animal welfare standards and high production standards in line with the demand of a growing number of consumers for products produced using natural substances and processes.

Farmers in organic farming, try to limit all the inputs and use environmentally friendly techniques in their everyday routine. For example, when it comes to soil management, organic farmers rely mainly on crop rotation to minimize soil nutrient deficiencies. They mostly use organic manure in quantities specified by the law, and nitrogen-binding bacteria, as nitrogen boosters.

As far as weed management is concerned, they prefer mulching, hand weeding, and tillage. In many cases, they remove weeds using special equipment, designed especially for organic farming. Organic farmers try to minimize as much as possible the use of synthetic chemicals. Thus, for crop protection, they mainly prefer to take measures, such as traps and natural enemies (predators) for their crop's pests.

How can a farm be certified as Organic?

Organic farming in each country is specifically described and defined by law, and any commercial use of the term 'Organic' is subject to government control. There are specific actions each prospective organic farmer should follow (and avoid) in order to be certified as an organic farmer. Even a slight deviation from the law can result in the termination of organic status.

If you are interested in engaging in organic farming, you can apply to a certification body in your area. In case you meet the standards, after a certain period (for example 3-4 years if you grow trees), you will be approved by the authorities. Those who do follow the rules, then market their products as "Certified Organic" and can display the official organic seal on their packaging, something that generally results in higher prices.

Principles of Organic Farming

According to the IFOAM ([International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements](#)), the Principles of Organic Farming are described below:

1. Organic farming shall sustain and enhance the health of the soil, plants, animals, and humans as one and indivisible.
2. Organic farming should be based on the living ecological systems and cycles, work with them, emulate them and help sustain them.
3. Organic agriculture should build on relationships that ensure fairness with regard to the environment and life processes.
4. Organic farming should be managed in a precautionary and responsible manner to protect the health and well being of current and future generations and the environment.

The general objectives of organic farming are:

- The production of safe and healthy food, free from agrochemical residues
- The overall protection of the environment through sustainable management (protection of soil and aquifers, biodiversity assurance)
- The sustainable use of energy and natural resources (such as water, soil, organic matter)
- The maintenance and the increase of fertility and soil biological activity
- Protecting farmers' health from exposure to harmful chemicals.
- To ensure the welfare and well-being of the animals.

The exact rules and legislation for the production techniques and control measures for organic products depend on national and Community law and may differ from country to country.

However, **some basic practices and methods of Organic Farming are listed below:**

Examples of Organic Farming practices:

- Crop rotation (avoid mono-cropping that gradually results in soil degradation),
- Use of green manure
- Use of manure and vegetable residues (compost),
- The recycling of organic materials
- Use of alternative plant protection (natural enemies) and nutrition products
- Use of local animal varieties and local animal breeds adapted to the particular conditions of the area
- Maintenance of a high standard of animal welfare
- Avoid any use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) as well as products produced by or with GMOs.