

Is Organic Farming Better for The Environment or Depletion?

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“What’s the use of a fine house if you haven’t got a tolerable planet to put it on.”

– Henry David Thoreau

It’s strange how whenever I peep through the latest news on agriculture, I found one unstoppable debate going on all day long till forever: It’s about organic vs conventional farming and specifically how both impact our environment and the climate.

Agriculture, in general, contributes to around 25 percent of annual carbon emissions globally as per the data uncovered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

What does this mean?

While people are boasting in favor of organic farming or against it, organic agriculture’s impact on the environment is not null.

I read and researched a truckload of articles on the same, but one thing was missing on almost all: It’s the negative effects of organic farming on the environment.

You will find countless articles on why organic farming is better for the environment.

<http://www.fao.org> > [organicag](#) > [oa-faq](#) > [oa-faq6](#) ▼

Organic Agriculture: What are the environmental benefits of ...

Air and climate change. **Organic agriculture** reduces non-renewable energy use by decreasing agrochemical needs (these require high quantities of fossil fuel to ...

<https://www.thebalancesmb.com> > ... > [Organic Farming](#) ▼

How Organic Farming Benefits the Environment

How **Organic Farming Benefits the Environment** - Reduced Exposure to Pesticides and Chemicals · **Organic Farming** Builds Healthy Soil · Combatting Erosion · Fighting ...

<https://ota.com> > [organic-101](#) > [environmental-benefits-...](#) ▼

Environmental Benefits of Organic | OTA

Moreover, by prohibiting the use of petroleum-based fertilizers and absorbing carbon dioxide from the air, **organic agriculture** helps to reduce our carbon ...

<https://www.livemorezone.com> > [do-more](#) > [benefits-of...](#) ▼

7 Environmental Benefits Of Organic Farming - Live More Zone

12-Apr-2021 — Promotion of Biodiversity: **Organic farming** reduces harmful chemical pesticides and fertilizers, which wash off the significant flora and fauna.

<https://www.beyondpesticides.org> > [why-organic](#) > [envi...](#) ▼

Environmental Benefits of Organic Agriculture — Beyond ...

Higher SOC levels then increase fertility and the soil's ability to endure extreme weather years. **Organic agriculture** relies on non-chemical ways of maintaining ...

And yes, organic farming, at some point, is favorable for the environment. But this is just one side of it.

In today's guide, you will learn exactly whether organic farming is better for the environment and to what extent including the negatives that are not much discussed publicly.

Without further ado, let's begin.

Is Organic Farming Better for The Environment?

No methods of production in agriculture are fully resilient in reducing carbon emissions and greenhouse gases.

And organic farming is no exception.

With several types of agriculture methods put into practice, some may be less harmful to the environment than others.

But in the end, each type has some benefits and drawbacks when it comes to preserving our environment.

One of the biggest arguments that I have heard on agriculture is the connection between organic farming and environmental impact.

A while back, I published a definitive listicle on the environmental benefits of organic farming where I discussed 8 ecological advantages of organic farming on our environment.

In that guide, I pointed all sorts of positives about organic farming including:

- No-till method
- Improving livestock health through organic pastures.
- Reducing carbon emission through carbon sequestration.
- Etc.

While all these positive pros of organic farming truly help enhance our environment, there are some major flaws of organic farming that depletes the environment to a significant amount.

One of the opposing researches points out that as organic farming does not indulge in using synthetic pesticides and fertilizers, it requires an additional amount of land to grow the same amount of crops (source).

This is genuinely a thing to worry about because if every farmer turns organic, then the lack of land area in the ever-growing population would be the biggest concern.

Another related barrier is that not every farmer affords to invest in extra land just to find out that the crop production will still be the same.

So, you see, there are a lot of factors that weigh in.

This makes it so hard even for the great scientists and thinkers to confirm whether organic farming truly helps preserve and grow our environment.

But there are certain pros and cons of organic farming that can give you and me an estimate of whether organic farming is more good than bad or the exact opposite.

Before discussing these positives as well as negatives, it would be my bad to believe that the term organic simply means **environmentally friendly**.

Impact of Organic Farming on The Environment (Facts)



Positive effects of organic farming on the environment

I have pressed up to the benefits of organic farming on the environment in one of the previous articles.

Therefore, I would quickly summarise what I already wrote in that article.

You can have a look at the article [from here](#) to gain all the information on the same.

- Organic farming helps lessen the algae blooms and bad bacteria.
- Carbon sequestration and proper crops residue management assist in reducing the carbon impact on the environment.
- No use of GMOs helps in proper crop pollination and therefore makes the existing climate favorable for the crops.
- The use of organic pesticides (and not synthetic fertilizers) makes it easy to manage and eliminate pests and diseases.
- More manpower and less machinery (technology) help organic farmers emit less energy from their farms and thereby putting less pressure on the environment.

These were some of the positive effects.

In fact, there are many.

As said earlier, have a look at the article linked above for more information on positives.

With that said, let's move on to the dark side of organic farming from an environmental perspective.

Negative effects of organic farming on the environment

While some studies have shown a positive correlation of organic farming to the environment, there are some who believe that its impact on the environment is worse than the conventional method.

One study, for instance, reports that organic farming does more harm than good to our environment and climate by using a significant portion of land area for growing the exact amount of crops and thereby wasting more natural resources (source).

Even worse, many field researchers confirm that raising livestock organically is much more complex than it appears to be.

According to Researchgate, global milk production contributes to anywhere between **48 – 65%** of emissions mainly due to Methane gas.

BBC, in one of their articles, said that though organic farms thrive better in improving soil health and water quality, but perform worse when it comes to protecting our environment.

The main blame again goes to the large land area used and the higher amount of methane emissions released from the cattle.

Another problem:

No matter whether the pesticide is synthetic or organic, the damaging effects of both exist.

Just because organic farming uses natural pesticides does not mean it is 100% safe.

This is where the matter starts getting complicated.

A study done and articulated in one of ScienceDaily's articles shows how some organic pesticides are more harmful to the environment than synthetic ones. (source).

One of the reasons behind this is that while some of the organic fertilizers are prepared using harmless herbs, some of them use elements like **Elemental Sulphur, Copper Sulphate**, etc which makes it more dangerous.

Another study found some traces of organic pesticides on the **80 percent of food** analyzed (source).

Terrifying.

Similarly, many studies keep fighting in proving one another wrong.

In this world full of complexities, it is somehow difficult for a concerned consumer like you and me to decide what's most suited for us and the environment.

That's why I would like to end up with a conclusion that will help you get something useful out of this article.

Conclusion

There is no direct answer to whether organic farming is better for the environment or not. Many institutions and research foundations are still on the verge of finding out the actual truth.

But, we have some incomplete data and facts (that I disclosed in this article) that can help us define the good, bad, and ugly sides of organic farming for the environment.

Rather than simply believing in and following the positive and negative side of organic farming statistics, the best thing is to put things into the right perspective and seeing them as it is.

So, instead of covering the negative sides of it, admit them.

The same goes for the beneficial impact.

Both organic and conventional farming contributes to climate change and environmental pollution to some extent.

But both also help in healing it.

Organic farming does that through carbon sequestration on the land and conventional farming by using the less or adequate land area in growing more crops.

Thus, looking at the positive outlook for both methods is a profound measure.

What's the best thing to do?

Not representing one as a better alternative than the other.

If you are an organic farmer or willing to build a career in organic farming, try to minimize the wastage on your side. The same goes for being a conventional farmer.

Also, focussing on increasing biodiversity and other eco-friendly measures rather than sole profits will also help to a large degree.

Hopefully, you learned something new from this guide.

Now, it's your turn.

Tell me, have you come across any unique information that justifies the causes of organic farming on the environment?

Also, you are more than welcome to share your thoughts and viewpoints regarding this article.

Either way. Let me know by leaving a comment below right now.

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