

THE EFFECTS OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE IN THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE SECOND DISTRICT OF ORIENTAL MINDORO

Shirley I. Mendoza, Divine Word College of Calapan, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines

Research Team: Darius A. Bermoy, Belinda P. Cleofe, Teresita A. Chavez, Michelle B. Luzon, Cristy F. Melo, Marafe Ocampo, Cornelia C. Perez, Monaliza D. Perez

Research Mentor: Dr. Blesilda Calub

Abstract

This study determined the perception of farmers in the Second District of Oriental Mindoro regarding the effect of organic agriculture to the environment.

The first important factor is the organic farmers themselves, their socio-economic profile, most especially on knowledge and training in organic farming. Methods and processes in terms of land preparation, application of organic fertilizer, seed preparation and farm pest control are also surveyed. All these will hopefully reveal whether there is a bright prospect for organic farming in Oriental Mindoro.

The study made use of the descriptive method of research. The respondents of the study are the 26 rice field farmers using organic method in the Second District of Oriental Mindoro who served as informants and provided the needed data for the study.

The yield per hectare decreased dramatically during the first year of application. It increased by ten percent on the second year and third year. On the fourth year almost 100 percent of the yield prior to the shift to organic farming was restored.

The fertility of the soil was regained through the practice of organic farming. A species of fish returning to their previous habitat was observed.

Organic farming also resulted in clean and normal air condition. People stop complaining about unpleasant odor in the farm.

Furthermore, the freshness of water has been restored. Rusty water has changed to clear water. Fish and other living things were revived.

Executive Summary

This study aims to determine the perception of farmers in the Second District of Oriental Mindoro regarding the effect of organic agriculture to the environment. The first important factors are the organic farmers themselves, their socio-economic profile, most especially on knowledge and training in organic farming. Methods and processes in terms of land preparation, application of organic fertilizer, seed preparation and farm pest control are also surveyed. All these will hopefully reveal whether there is a bright prospect for organic farming in Oriental Mindoro and hopefully throughout the country. At the end, we see the value and good effect of organic agriculture not only to the environment but to life of human race.

Introduction

Organic agriculture had long been introduced in the country. Organic agriculture is a holistic production management system which promotes and enhances agro-ecosystem health, including biodiversity, biological cycles, and soil biological activity. It emphasizes the use of management practices in preference to the use of off-farm inputs or designing the farm in such

a way where nature itself releases its natural chemicals to combat pests or insects, taking into account that regional conditions require locally adapted systems. This is primarily accomplished by using, where possible, agronomic, biological, and mechanical methods, as opposed to using synthetic materials, to fulfill any specific function within the system. (FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission, 1999).

Despite its introduction, not so many farmers have embarked on employing the methods for organic farming in the Second District of Oriental Mindoro. The challenge for the future is to convince as many farmers to adapt organic agriculture.

There is a need to understand why the methods of organic farming or agriculture have not been embraced by farmers at-large. This study is made to determine farmers' perceptions on the effects of organic agriculture on the environment in selected towns in the province of Oriental Mindoro. Although the study is limited only to a few organic farmers within the Second District of Oriental Mindoro, the study could help in convincing more farmers to employ organic farming as the methods can be better explained to prospective organic farmers in terms known to organic farmers who have hands-on experience.

At present, there is nothing written about organic farming practices in the Second District of Oriental Mindoro. Likewise, nothing is written about the perception of organic farmers on the effects of organic farming to the environment. This writer wishes to expose the perceptions and methods in an effort to gain more players in organic farming.

General Objective

To determine farmers' perceptions on the effects of organic agriculture on the environment in the Second District of Oriental Mindoro.

Specific Objectives

- To identify the socio-economic profile of organic farmers in the Second District of Oriental Mindoro:
- To determine the methods and processes of organic farming in the Second District of Oriental Mindoro

References Available upon Request