Organic Collection, Cultivation and Processing of Medicinal, aromatic and natural dye plants for household food basket security

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Role of Agriculture and Rural Development

- Food security - net importer of food
- Income generation for the rural population
- Household food security - nutrition for children
- Rural-urban mitigation - unemployment
- Natural resource management and conservation
- Biodiversity protection
- Climate change - global warming concerns
Government’s approach to Organic Agriculture development.

- Way of farming, use the best and cheapest technology available to produce without long term damages to soil and without economic losses to the farmer.

- Organic promotion with a well packaged information, technical support and a capacity to support the farmers through the whole value chain.

- Local market development with consumer education and potential suitable markets establishment needs high priority.

- Promoting the use of traditional foods to increase use

- In-situ and ex-situ conservation - National Biodiversity Centre

- Environment and biodiversity is Bhutan’s strength - cannot compete with others in production - find value - bio-explorations? Geographical indication? - need capacity
Core interest of NOP

• Promoting OA through low cost technology that reduces external inputs

• Safe food production in a holistic integrated manner as practised by the farmers

• Conservation of soil, water, environment and local varieties and species and biodiversity

• Documentation of local knowledge

• Enhance the sustainability of agriculture

• Find ways to conserve traditional food and medicinal plants by adding value and find markets
Organic agricultural policy

• No official policy on organic farming, But Organic is the unofficial policy for the country for agriculture in the long term

• National Framework for Organic Farming in Bhutan, MOA

• Other policies that favour organic agriculture are:
  • The Forest and Nature Conservation Rules of Bhutan, 2000
  • The Biodiversity Act, 2004 (no GMO)
  • IPM - The Pesticide Act of Bhutan, 2000 (IPM)
  • The Water Act – draft
  • The Food Safety Act - being developed
  • The CBNRM framework for Bhutan, 2002
  • The Cooperatives Act of Bhutan 2001
  • The NGO act of Bhutan 2001
  • Gross National Happiness
  • Brand Bhutan- Organic

Subsidy for agriculture is less than 0.3% of agriculture GDP,
Programmes of organic promotion

- Low cost and low technology based on natural resources - on farm production of inputs to reduce cost of production
- Research to find alternative practical solutions for problems
- Education and awareness and capacity building - Health and environment, soil, sustainability, biodiversity and ecological balance,
- Rural areas focused on productivity improvement, food security and bio-diverse food basket
- All primary extension to be organic knowledge first
- Home gardens for nutrition
- Open pollinated seed production
Organisation and structure of the organic sector

- National Organic Programme, MOA is the driving force behind organic development
- Bhutan Agriculture and Food Regulatory Authority (BAFRA) to regulate
- National Organic Standards and Organic sector development strategy under drafting process
- A system of organic certification regulation/guidance to be developed
- Pesticide Act to be reviewed - All chemicals to be phased out and alternative bio-pesticides and bio-controls to be explored
- IPM and organic agriculture to be the basis of farming with a view to make the whole country organic in the future - Gross National Happiness
Market development

• Little but a growing awareness of organic food
• No or little premium in domestic market
• Lemon grass oil and cheese certified or export market
• Red rice exported, not certified
• Marketing of Natural wild collection and (MAP and NWFP)
• Need to focus on high value and low volume - transport and labour costs high
• Export market research and trials
• Develop local market based on local origin and link to eco-tourism
• Brand development needed
• Geographical Indicators for indigenous cvs. And spp.
• Certification not a high priority for now
Support for organic programme besides RGOB

- EU-ASSP, Research, production, education, capacity building
- SNV- TA, capacity building
- IFAD/FAO-OMADP (Trongsa and Zhemgang)
  - OMADP- Organic Production of Underutilized Medicinal, Aromatic and Natural Dye Plants for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods (GCP/RAS/208/IFA)
Goal of the project -IFAD/FAO-OMADP

Improvement in nutrition, health and food security of rural populations in South Asia through organic local farming systems that incorporate MADPs.

Purpose

- Conservation and sustainable collection of MADPs by selected rural communities
- Training of small and marginal farmers to incorporate MADPs within their farming systems using organic methods.

- Priorities of production-
  - Household food needs
  - Saving seeds (Community seed bank)
  - Specific target crop for market- income generation
• Local value addition to MADP produce and movement up the value chain for enhanced incomes.

• Initiation of an organic dye plants inventory and package of practices for dye plants.

• Product development and marketing of MADPs through community enterprise for viable and sustainable collective income generation.

• Networking of researchers, extensionists, producers and traders working with organic MADPs.

• Capacity building of staff and among producers to value add and increase income-generating capacity.

• Organise groups for efficient production, utilisation, transport and marketing
Traditional Natural dyes
nettles

Dyed nettle yarn
Tashi Delek

Thank You