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INVESTIGATION AND ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE IN IRAN

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Abstract

Organic farming is a holistic production management system that enhances agro ecosystem health in terms of biodiversity, the natural cycle of nutrients and microbial and biological activity of soil. Organic farming systems can help to maintain and even improve water quality by reducing the amount of chemicals used in agriculture. In organic farming, chemical fertilizers and pesticides which have chemical compounds are prohibited. The main objective of this study was to investigate and analyse the problems for the development of organic farming and offering effective solutions for its development in West Azerbaijan province in Iran. The population of this research consisted of (N=1171) Farmers who produce organic products in West Azerbaijan province. By using Cochran formula the sample size determined (n=150). This research was carried out using the descriptive-survey research method. The data were collected by questionnaire and processed using factor analysis SPSS21 software. The results showed that the majority of surveyed respondents were older than 50 years, 68 % literate, 47 % of high school, 78% have used of wells and rivers for irrigation. Then the examined items were classified in the form of government support, economy, education and social welfare. The results showed that the factor of government support solutions with eigenvalues of 4.68 was selected as the most important factor from an agricultural perspective. In fact, this factor has explained 25.82 % of the problems of development of organic farming that the sum of these four factors is equal to 65.535 %. According to results in this research the following recommendations have been made: (i)enhancing and establishing the extension-education courses in the field of organic agriculture for farmers and encourage them to participate in these classes; (ii) by using training courses and mass media encouraging farmers to cultivation organic products and;(iii)government support for organic farmers work and for their products insurance; (iv)create and develop local markets for organic products and economic analysis and identification of global markets for export of organic products; (v)create places for the storage of organic products; (vi) provide adequate means of transportation equipped with cold storage facility for organic products and also providing useful information on the management and control of weeds, pests and diseases of agricultural products.

Key words**:** *problems, development, organic agriculture, solution, West Azerbaijan, Iran*

INTRODUCTION

Organic farming is in the event of sustainable agricultural development and is said to the set of operations which are come into force aimed at reducing consumption of abnormal inputs and in it the use of fertilizers and chemical pesticides, synthetic preservatives, synthetic drugs produced by genetically engineered organisms and waste water be excluded. Studies show that the universal acceptance of organic farming is promising that some of its reasons are to increase the concerns about pollution of base resource, food safety, human and animal, as well as more attention to nature and landscape values.

Now passes over three decades of global concerns about environmental protection and about two decades of debate surrounding sustainable development. Before this time, in all development projects, purely economic perspective and the creation of income and greater economic efficiency, were considered. But in the 1970s this mentality in the minds of policy makers and development planners proposed that such economic growth finally contributes to environmental degradation, social inequality, reducing resources and compensation these problems in the long run will cause vast economic losses [9].

Organic farming is in the event of sustainable agricultural development and is said to the set of operations which are come into force aimed at reducing consumption of abnormal inputs and in it the use of fertilizers and chemical pesticides, synthetic preservatives,

synthetic drugs produced by genetically engineered organisms and waste water be excluded. Studies show that the universal acceptance of organic farming is promising that some of its reasons are to increase the concerns about pollution of base resource, food safety, human and animal, as well as more attention to nature and landscape values. [6]. Although the yield on organic farms is usually ten to thirty percent less than non-organic farms, but by planning principles, yield, production and incomes of organic farms can be more than non-organic farms. For example, organic paddies yield have been reported six Tons in the Philippines. Experiences in the field of organic farming projects has shown that in low-yielding areas using organic farming practices the performance enhances two to three times.

Moreover, in developed countries, factors such as the readiness of consumers to buy at a higher price, subsidized by the state and development of ecotourism, provides increased income for organic farming. Studies in developed countries have shown that consumers are willing to pay ten to forty percent more to buy organic products than non-organic products. Today, a large number of chain stores offer organic produce and market is booming for these products and the potential demand exceeds supply.

It is expected supply shortage of organic products demand growth continued in the future so this creates opportunities for developing countries to enter the market and allocate their share of it. In general, the main objectives of organic production systems are optimizing production, improving environmental quality and social welfare [8].

Khaledi and Amjadi [6] in their study showed that unlike most modern methods and technologies, economic factors alone do not have an essential role in the admissions process and the development of organic farming. But also to develop organic farming, the role of other factors such as: awareness, attitudes and personal preferences and technical skills, technological and managerial, social issues, and institutional factors, such as: regulation, markets and government support governments and policy makers must receive serious consideration.

Moradi and co-workers in their study identified factors including farmers' lack of knowledge, lack of government support and guarantees the market for organic products at affordable prices as barriers to organic farming [10].

Hasheminejad and Rezvanfar showed that in front of organic agriculture development, there are obstacles and problems such as lack of proper market, lack of inputs and supportive and helpful organ and no clear standards to produce these products [3].

Sharifi-Moghaddamfar in their study were introduced the major obstacles to the adoption of organic farming including manufacturing, natural, attitude and knowledge, infrastructure, institutional and economic barriers [14].

Khaledi and co-workers also showed that conventional agricultures have little information about the arable areas by organic products, and related institutions related to organic agriculture can be very helpful in providing information for organic Farming. Also, they have shown in their study that lack of knowledge and skills in managing an organic farm, a lack of market opportunities for organic products and a lack of faith and a positive attitude to organic farming, can be obstacles of organic farming [7].

Salazar in examining the obstacles to the development of organic farming among farmers in the Philippines, found that low-income farmers successfully guided to the organic farmers when they have knowledge in the field and receive adequate training in this area and as well, have confidence market inputs [13].

Hatirli and co-workers reported numerous obstacles in their study to switch to organic production among farmers in Virginia that from them we can mention such as things like, uncertainty organic process, lack of marketing information and information about organic production [4].

Parra Lopez mainly attributed the reason of their distance from organic farming to infrastructure and economic factors. In his study, he showed that support for farmers is

an important factor in the adoption and development of organic farming [11].

Khaledi and co-workers also knows the lack of knowledge and skills in managing organic farming as the cause of rejection of organic agriculture by farmers [7].

Despite growing global attention to sustainable agriculture and biologic and with agricultural, geographical, climatic, cultural, historical, social special features and largest in Iran's rich and diverse resources, unfortunately, this type of production system in Iran's agricultural systems have virtually no place.

In this context, the overall goal of this study was to analyse the problems affecting the development of organic farming and provide solutions for its development in West Azerbaijan province that Specific objectives include investigating personal features of farmers and analysing the effect of social, economic, governmental support, training problems and identifying effective solutions in the development of organic agriculture.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this study, research methods are descriptive-survey and survey tools are questionnaires. The survey research is implementation of a questionnaire survey on a sample of respondents who are elected from among the crowd.

And the aim of this study was applied research, Because we used theories, laws and principles and techniques that are developed in basic research to solve executive and real problems and also, this research based on the nature and methods, due to exploring and discovering the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable, it is causal relationship and also due to describing the research variables, was descriptive. Necessary data were collected through observation, interviews, and questionnaires extracted from documents and others like them; and were investigated by using factor analysis techniques in the software SPSS21. The population size of the beneficiary farmers of the investigated province was 207,575 farmers (the city of Urmia, Mahabad, Miando'ab, Oshnavieh, Piranshahr and Naghadeh) that the sample size was calculated using the Cochrane formula and it was equal to 150 beneficiary farmers.

Regarding Data Analysis, it was used descriptive statistics and factor analysis. In conjunction with descriptive statistics, values such as: mean, variance, mode, standard deviation, maximum and minimum values was used and generally can be said to explain the phenomenon and subject of study with an statistical language. Illustration is described in the text.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section with respect to the gender, age, education level, how access to water, the land amount, the production amount, the type of sale market were examined and the results for each of the items listed below have explained in detail.

The average age of studied farmers is 50 years, the highest age among farmers is 70 and the minimum age is 24 years and also, The results also show that most farmers 5.44 percent) are older than 51 years. Most of the surveyed farmers, more exactly 144 people (96 %) were male. Most of the farmers 115 people, (68 %) were literate and 30 people (20 %) are illiterate. Most farmers surveyed (47%) holds a diploma, in fact, between what can be concluded from the table is that the farmers who are literate, 54 of them have a diploma. Most farmers surveyed (52.3 %) providing water supply for agricultural activities use wells and river water. The average of surveyed agricultural land is 2 hectares, the largest land between farmers is equal to 15 hectares and the least is equal to 1 hectare and also, the results show that most of the participants (103 people) have less than 3 hectares of land.

Most surveyed farmers, 90 people (74.4 percent) sale their products in the domestic market and 31 people (25.6 percent) export their products. Most surveyed farmers, 115 people (88.46 percent) have not participated in courses related to organic farming .15

people (11.54) have participated in these courses. Other results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency distribution of personal attributes of farmers

		Frequency	Percent	Mean	Min.	Max.
Age	Less than 30	11	8			
	40-30	28	20.4	50	24	70
	50-41	37	27			
	Up than 50	61	24.5			
Gender	Male	144	96			
	Female	5	3.3			
Education	Literate	115	68			
	Illiterate	30	20			
Education level	Elementary	16	13.9			
	Guidance	12	10.4			
	High school	11	9.6			
	Diploma	54	47			
	Collage Education	22	19.1			
The way of access to water	River	44	29.5			
	Agricultural water well	23	15.5			
	Qanat well	4	2.7			
	River and well	78	52.3			
Agricultural farm amount Hectare	Less than 3	103	69.6			
	4-6	25	16.9	2	1	15
	7-9	12	8.1			
	Up than 10	8	5.4			
Sale products	Domestic market	90	74.4			
	Export	31	25.6			
Participated in courses related to organic farming	Yes	115	88.46			
	No	15	11.54			

Source: Research finding

Prioritize economic problems of organic farming development from the perspective of farmers

As we can see in Table 2 among the economic problems mentioned for organic farming development, the items such as uncertainty of performance and access to the market after delivery (CV = 0.180), low demand for organic products (CV = 0.227) and requires more labour and increased production costs (CV=0.244) respectively, got more importance and value compared to other items.

Table 2. Prioritizing economic problems of organic agriculture development from the farmers' perspective

Variables	Average	Standard deviation	CV	Rank
The uncertainty of performance and access to the good market after de livery	3.96	0.715	0.180	1
Low demands for organic products	3.88	0.881	0.227	2
Requires for more labour and increased production costs	3.72	0.909	0.244	3
The higher costs of organic products vs. not-organic products	3.61	0.892	0.247	4
Long return time of investment	3.53	0.879	0.249	5
The high cost of certification process especially for small holder farmers	3.48	0.925	0.265	6

Source: Research findings

The farmers stated these three items as the most important economic problems of organic agriculture development. As well as the high cost of the certification process, especially for smallholder farmers (CV = 265.0) had less value than the value of the other items.

Prioritize social problems of organic farming development from the perspective of farmers

As we can see in Table 3, among the cited social problems of organic agriculture development, items such as the conservative mood among farmers and producers of

organic products (CV=0.229), non-conforming organic farming with the wishes of farmers (CV =0.245) and misconceptions about converting their farms to organic farming method (CV =0.278) respectively, got more importance and value than others items, it means that agricultures stated these three items namely as the most important social problems of organic agriculture development and also, uncertainty in the decision making about using organic farming (CV =0.346) relative to other items got less importance and value.

Table 3. Prioritizing of social problems of organic agriculture development from the perspective of farmers

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	CV	Rank
The conservative spirit among farmers and producers of organic products	3.70	0.849	0.229	1
Organic agriculture being non-conforming with farmers wants	3.73	0.914	0.249	2
Misconceptions between farmers about transformation of their farms to organic farms	2.97	0.828	0.278	3
Hard access to correct and essential information	3.52	0.798	0.280	4
Absence of local leaders of organic agriculture acceptance	3.29	1.088	0.330	5
Deserving and blaming of organic products users by rural community	3.85	1.318	0.342	6
Uncertainty in decision- making for deployment of organic agriculture	3.60	1.246	0.346	7

Source: Research Findings.

Prioritizing government support problems in the organic farming development from the perspective of farmers

As we can see in Table 4 among the problems of government support in the development of organic farming, items of lack of bank facilities to farmers for the cultivation of organic products (CV =0.234), lack of legal advices from the government to farmers who wish to cultivate organic products or are growing (CV =0.253) giving feasibility from government to farmers for the cultivation of organic products (CV =0.274) respectively, has more importance and value than the other items, it means that the farmers mentioned these three items as the most important government supporting problems in the development of organic farming and also, making desirable the present situation of organic farming by governmental organs(CV=0.434) has less importance and value than other items.

Table 4. Prioritizing of government backups in organic agriculture development from the perception of farmers

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	CV	Rank
Lack of banking facilities for farmers for cultivation of organic products	4.36	1.012	0.234	1
Lack of legal deliberation from government to farmers who wants to cultivate organic products ar who are cultivating these products	3.52	0.840	0.253	2
Giving facilities from government to farmers for cultivating organic products	3.39	0.929	0.274	3
Lack of organs and companies producing the essential needs for cultivating organic products	3.41	1.119	0.328	4
Attracting farmers reliance about managing suggestions of government to beneficiary farmers of organic products	3.28	1.197	0.364	5
Making available situation of farmers appropriate by governmental organs	2.78	1.208	0.434	6

Source: Research Findings

Prioritizing training problems of organic agriculture development from the perspective of farmers

As we can see in Table 1-5 among the mentioned training problems of organic agriculture development, the items such as lack of information about organic farming (CV=0.299), Lack of training and promotion courses about the method of production and marketing of organic products (CV =0.302), lack of qualified experts to assist and educate farmers about organic farming (CV =0.324) respectively, got the most importance and value than the other items. It means that farmers mentioned these three item as the most important training problems of organic agriculture development and also, The lack of awareness of the harmful use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides (CV =0.385) has less value and importance than the other items.

Table 5. Prioritizing of educational problems of organic agriculture development from the perspective of farmers

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	CV	Rank
Lack of information about organic agriculture	3.56	1.067	0.299	1
Lack of educational and promotional courses about the way of producing and marketing of organic products	3.56	1.075	0.302	2
Lack of proficient experts for helping and educating of farmers about organic agriculture	3.45	1.122	0.324	3
Educational courses about organic agriculture for enhancing the farmers information's not being disposed	3.34	1.156	0.346	4
Not visiting the farms which is cultivating with organic agriculture method	3.32	1.181	0.355	5
Not being informed about disadvantages of using chemical fertilizers poisons and toxins	2.92	1.124	0.385	6

Source: Research Findings

Prioritizing effective solutions in the development of organic farming from the perspective of agriculture:

As we can see in Table 6, among the effective approaches in the development of organic farming, items such as making organic products affordable to buy by consumers (CV =0.235) adoption some measures to support producers in marketing line and delivering organic products to market (CV=0.239), lack of qualified experts to assist and educate farmers about organic farming (CV =0.271) respectively, got the most importance and value than other items. It means that, farmers mentioned these three items as the most important effective solution in organic agriculture development and also, observing the proper packaging method of organic products for market (CV =0.328) got less importance and value than the other items.

Table 6. Prioritizing the efficient solution in organic agriculture development from the perspective of farmers

Variables	Average	Standard deviation	CV	Rank
Making affordable buying organic products by users	3.44	0.809	0.235	1
Direct supervision of government on presentation of organic product to users	3.62	0.868	0.239	2
Adopting measures for supporting producers in marketing and delivery to market for organic products	3.68	0.999	0.271	3
Providing and establishing facilities for easy access of users to the organic products	3.18	0.984	0.309	4
In forming about the importance of using healthy food products in health and growth of children	2.98	0.934	0.314	5
Presence of offering and administrator companies of organic products	3.18	1.008	0.317	6
Presence of experts for cooperation and helping and educating farmers in all stages of production and sell	3.09	1.1	0.356	7
Publishing press, radio and TV and some papers for informing about organic agriculture	2.96	1.056	0.357	8
Observing the appropriate method of organic products packaging for offering to marking	2.94	1.118	0.382	9

Source: Research Findings

Factor analysis is a general name for some multivariate statistical methods whose main purpose is to summarize the data. It checks the internal consistency of a large number of variables and ultimately, classifies and explains them in the form of limited public factor.

Table 7. KMO Amount

KMO and Bartlett's test	1217.341
KMO	0.760
Sig.	0.000
DF	153

Source: Research Findings

In this research, because the independent variables are not measurable, they will be analysed in factor analysis method and grouped in four clusters and depending on the type of questions, they cluster solutions in the economic, social, educational and supportive of the government.

Factor analysis of farmers' perspective on the problems of development of organic farming in Western Azerbaijan province.

According to Table 1-7, we can see that the KMO value is equal to 0.760 and sig =0.000 showing the fact that the internal consistency of the data was appropriate and Bartlett 's statistic is significant at 5% level that represents the data for input to factor analysis is very appropriate.

According to Table 8 , the results of the factor analysis of variables related to farmers' views in the province of West Azerbaijan on the most effective approach in the development of

organic farming shows that the maximum amount is particularly relevant to first factor and is about 4.680 and 25.822 percent and includes variables such as the high cost of the certification process, especially for smallholder farmers, organic products being more expensive than non-organic products, lack of legal advice from the government to farmers who wish to grow organic products, or farmers who are cultivating these products, lack of inputs producing organs and companies for the cultivation of organic products, optimizing the current state of organic farming by government agencies, providing facilities from the government to farmers for the cultivation of organic products, gain the trust of farmers by offering the administration advises to the beneficiary farmers of organic products. The second factor with special values equal to 2.803 and 15.571 variance percent, explained effective approaches in the development of organic farming and includes variables such as Long return time of investment, require more labour and more production costs, the uncertainty of the performance and post-delivery good market access, low demand for organic products, nonconforming the organic farming with the wishes of farmers, hesitation in deciding to use of organic farming and lack of banking facilities to farmers for the cultivation of organic products.

Table 8. Clearing and explaining factors

Factors	Special amount	Variance percent of special amount	Percent of all factors
1	4.680	25.822	25.822
2	2.803	15.571	41.570
3	2.322	12.955	54.525
4	1.982	11.010	65.535

Source: Research Findings

Table 9. Factors and along items related to each factor with their coefficient amount

Factor names	Variables	Coefficient amount
(1) Government Supporting factors	Expensive and high costs of certificating process specially for smallholder farmers	0.656
	Organic products being expensive more than non-organic products	0.658
	Lack of legal deliberations from government to farmers who wants to cultivate organic products or who are cultivating these products	0.649
	Lack of organic and companies producing the essential needs for cultivating organic products	0.758
	Making available situation of farmers appropriate by governmental organs	0.781
	Giving facilities from government to farmers for cultivating organic products	0.780
	Attracting formers reliance about managing suggestions of government to beneficiary formers of organic products	0.730
	Giving facilities from government to farmers for cultivating organic products	0.655
(2) Economical factors	Long return time of investment	0.601
	Require for more labour and increased production casts	0.608
	Uncertainty of performance and access to the good market after delivery	0.757
	Low demands for organic products	0.656
	Organic agriculture being non-conforming with farmers wants	0.534
	Uncertainty in decision-making for deployment of organic agriculture	0.618
	Lack of baking facilities for farmers for cultivation of organic products	0.544
(3) Educational factors	Misconceptions between farmers about transformation of their farms to organic farms	0.755
	Hard access to correct and essential information	0.647
	Lack of educational and promotional courses about the way of producing and marketing of organic agriculture	0.722
	Lack of proficient experts for helping and educating of farmers about organic agriculture	0.655
(4) Social factors	The conservative spirit among farmers and producers of organic products	0.617
	Deserving and blaming of organic products users by rural community	0.621
	Lack of local leaders for acceptance of organic products	0.630
	Making available situation of formers appropriate by governmental organs	0.503
	Not being informed about disadvantages of using chemical fertilizers and poisons (toxin)	0.521

Source: Research Findings

And other factors with eigenvalues and variance percent of them can be seen in Table 1-8 that, considering the studied items, we called them State support factors, economic factors, educational factors and social factors respectively and the sum of these factors is equal to 65.536 percent and it expressed this subject that these factors explain 65.535 percent of the factors affecting effective approach in the development of organic farming.

In Table 9 we can observe the related items to any of factors that its load factor in a greater than 0.5 is meaningful for that item. In fact, the factor load is explaining correlation

between an original variable and its related factor.

CONCLUSIONS

The basic problem of organic farming is probably lack of a good market for organic products because consumers know organic products as luxury goods and high prices due to higher production costs causes that consumers will prefer non-organic products that the government can reduce these costs and make prices come down for organic products that this results are consistent with the results of Asadi and Naderi research 1 Most farmers believe that organic products can have a negative impact on customers as they believe that organic products are expensive for them and also believe that organic fruit in flavour and usefulness are in a lower place than other fruits, and domestic consumers in general tend to consume foods that are not organic.

This requires a culture among domestic consumers to familiarize consumers with the benefits of organic products has encouraged them to use organic products and these results are consistent with the results of Ghorbani and co-workers [2]. Most farmers believe that the high cost associated with the production of organic products and also selling these products in the domestic market due to consumer's perspective is not affordable and users prefer to buy non-organic products with lower prices and this is not nor the problem of users neither the producers, but is the problem of high costs paid for producing organic products. If government supports farmers

And the farmer does not incur high production costs

It could be the same price or a little more to reach consumers, in fact, as the developed countries are doing and the results of this investigation are consistent with the results of Ghorbani and co-workers [2] and Karimi and co-workers [5] studies.

Most farmers believe that government support in the field of organic farming is not in a manner that consistent with the wishes of farmers. Farmers are always looking for ways that produce their product at a low cost and sell them in a reasonable price and market their product fit and active that In the case of organic products has been not this way, in fact, government put organic farming on the farmers so that they produce organic products with their own cost, time and work and then also, try to sell it. Unfortunately, organic agriculture in our country still has not been replaced and mostly only try in producing better quality work and are unaware that excessive use of agricultural pesticides and the excessive use of the land would have lots of problems for future agriculture.

Farmers misconceptions about organic farming should be resolved by reducing the production costs and create favourable market etc ... that these results agrees the results of Karimi and co-workers [5] and Popzen and Sheri [12] From the perspective of farmer's state aid in relation to organic farming practices can transform this industry into a major economic hub. State aid must be such that farmers do not have any problems and can survive and succeed in this way. Long-term loans with low interest could be successful in agriculture. Assistance and government policies to improve the situation of organic farming can be very influential. Reduce production costs through subsidies to farmers and facilitate market conditions, one of the important problems in this context, can shed light on the role of government and its policies. Government as a project executive and creator of the right conditions for doing works, has a tremendous role in this context that the research results agrees Karimi and co-workers [5] and Popzen and Sheri [12] research results.

Training is an issue of great importance for a farmer, because every day studies grow in the field of agricultural and information and technologies be more and more and better so that training and awarding one farmer can be an important task for improving agriculture. So that farmers can improve their industry with all up to date facilities.

And organic farming is something that requires education and explanation because farmers are farming for years in non-organic and traditional farming way. Always when inserting a new technology or any new idea in

society, it is essential to enhance the knowledge in society. In fact, until our farming community are at the lower level related to the marketing knowledge, will not be able to adopt new technologies in the areas of production for making its products market - friendly.

Because accepting it requires a series of skills and the skills acquired through training and education. Creation schools and counselling to increase knowledge and skills among farmers and getting to know the advantages and disadvantages of organic farming and how to work, can be important and useful in this regard.

To fix the problems in the field of trade, organic products certification standards and criteria development and implementation is necessary. Training agricultural extension workers to promote organic farming as well as promoting public awareness is essential. Research centres need to solve technical issues, economic and social strategy and reassuring new, cooperative efforts to take action. In fact, we can say that planners by providing solutions in the field of agriculture should facilitate the export of organic agricultural products, supporting leading farmers in organic farming, Informing and Carry out promotional activities to use existing capacity in the country, directing agricultural research from chemical fertilizers to organic and biological fertilizers special attention to organic farming in agricultural research and strategic plans and appropriate pricing system for organic products provides areas for development and promotion of the sustainable agricultural system that the results of this research is consistent with the results of Karimi and co-workers [5] and Popzen and Sheri [12] researches.

Some recommendations:

(i)Extension-education courses in the field of organic agriculture for farmers and encourage them to participate in these classes

(ii) Training farmers to promote cultivation organic farming through the mass media and public organizations.

(iii)Government support for organic farmers work, their products insurance,

(iv)Create and develop local markets for organic products and economic analysis and identification of global markets for export of organic products,

(v)Create places for the storage of organic products

(vi)Provide adequate means of transportation equipped with cold storage facility for organic products

(vii)Provide useful information on the management and control of weeds, pests and diseases of agricultural products.

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