



Green Schools Network

ACTIVITY SHEET

October 2009

Why talk about Organic Farming



Increasingly, farmers are becoming aware of the long-term economic, health and ecological benefits of switching to organic farming. Many have seen for themselves the effects of chemical farming — soil erosion and loss of soil nutrients, loss of nutrition in food, and human diseases resulting from the chemicals that inevitably seep into the water table. All these reasons make way for the urgent demand for organic food and farming. Organic farming was not fully embraced till recently due to the widespread belief that it's low-yielding and inputs are very expensive leading to more expensive products. Though organic farmers have to spend a lot of time in improving their land as soil combination and positioning are the key ingredients of organic farming, it's worth investing for its ecological and social benefits.

Name.....

School Name

Class..... Date

Gobar Gyan

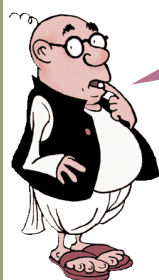
Organic farming is the form of **agriculture** that relies on **crop rotation, green manure, compost, biological pest control**, and mechanical **cultivation** to maintain soil productivity and control **pests**, excluding or strictly limiting the use of synthetic **fertilizers** and synthetic **pesticides, plant growth regulators**, livestock feed additives, and **genetically modified organisms**.



Organic farmers ensure maintenance and replenishment of soil fertility. With the help of compost and biologically- based soil amendments they build a healthy soil structure. It increases its ability to hold water and the plants become healthier. And healthier plants are better fortified to resist diseases and insect.

Ecological Benefits of Organic Farming

1. Organic farming is much better for the environment as the energy consumption is much less than in the chemical farming.
2. It also uses less manorial inputs and completely avoids the synthetic fertilizers which otherwise pollute the soil, water and air.
3. It promotes biodiversity and a great variety of animals and plant interaction on earth.
4. Organic farmers focus on preserving the habitats of all species and their surrounding environment including the air and water.
5. Organic farming releases much less carbon dioxide than other farming system.



*Hi! I am Pandit Gobar Ganesh.
You will find me in Gobar Times—a magazine
that tells you how your everyday life is linked to the
world around you. Hooked, huh? If you want to
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Activity: Grow your own organic food!

1. What do plants need to grow? Find out with the help of the pictures.

With the help of  ,  , the right  and healthy 

A seed has everything it needs to transform itself into a strong, healthy plant.

2. Best place for plants?

Maybe your school has already a school garden or you have a garden at your home. That's great, you can start immediately! If not try to find a place for your garden, which offers all the things plants need.

3. Healthy soil

For the growing of plants you need healthy soil. Remember the Activity Sheet Earthworms from December 2008? You can find it on the green school programs website. This sheet taught how to turn organic waste into vermicompost – a high quality fertilizer and soil conditioner. You can use the compost soil to have healthy soil for your garden.



4. What vegetables do you want to grow?

Whichever vegetables you chose to grow, you have to find out which conditions are best for it. How much water does it need, has it to be placed in the shadow or the sun? Ask for the help of somebody who is experienced in growing vegetables. Maybe you know a farmer, somebody of your family or from your neighbourhood. If you don't know somebody find out with the help of the internet: <http://www.copper-tree.ca/garden/veggies.html> or [http://www.homeandgardensite.com/ ChildrensSite/ vegetable_garden.htm](http://www.homeandgardensite.com/ChildrensSite/vegetable_garden.htm)



Write down the results!

Vegetable	Needs

Where to get the seeds from?

You sometimes find seeds in shops, nurseries or you could go to a farmer and ask him if he can give you some of his own! Make sure that this seeds are not genetically modified as you want to be an organic farmer!

5. Care about your garden!

What does your garden need? If you found a person who can give you tips, ask about what is important. What can you do against pest organism without using pesticides? Do they know some organic fertilizers? Maybe they have some traditional, organic gardening tips! Collect and write them down.

6. Create your own Garden Journal!

Establish a record of your garden's process. It will show you your achievements from month to month and record the changes.

- ☞ Write down every week what you did and what has changed
- ☞ Take pictures of the progress in your garden



This Journal will show you what you have done differently every year and it helps you to understand the changes in your garden. You can evaluate your work and improve it with the help of the journal.



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