



**CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS ORGANIC PRODUCTS IN  
TUTICORIN DISTRICT**

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**ABSTRACT**

Organic agriculture is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people. It relies on ecological processes. Bio-diversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects. Organic agriculture combines tradition, innovation and science to benefits the shared environment and promote fair relationships and good quality of life for all involved. The study aims to explore the behavior of the consumers towards organic products. Both primary and secondary data were collected. The data are analyzed by using basic research tools available in Excel. The conclusion is derived completely on the basis of the researcher's interpretation and understanding of the consumer's response. The sample for the data collection is decided completely on the convenience of the researcher and supporting the purpose of the study. The sample size for the study comprises of 120 consumers of the proposed area in Tuticorin District.

**INTRODUCTION**

Organic farming is a technique which involves cultivation of plants and rearing of animals in natural ways. This process involves the use of biological materials, avoiding synthetic substances to maintain soil fertility and ecological balance thereby minimizing pollution and wastage. In other words, organic farming is a farming method that involves growing and nurturing crops without the use of synthetic based fertilizers and pesticides.

Also, no genetically modified organisms are permitted. It relies on ecologically balanced agricultural principles like crop rotation, green manure, organic waste, biological pest control, mineral and rock additives. Organic farming makes use of pesticides and fertilizers if they are considered natural and avoids the use of various petrochemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Organic vegetables farming practices is a practice of crop production by making use of cultural and biological methods for the production of healthy and quality vegetables without harming the environment. The harmful effects of chemicals are being noticed on human health and environment since residual concentration in food products and environment have crossed the safer limit due to indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Apart from this, the cost of production due to use of chemical fertilizers and the burden on the small and marginal farmers who are already facing the unstable market prices. Under such circumstances there is an urgent need to find out alternatives to chemicals for organic vegetables production. Thus, mechanical cultural and biological methods become handy measures in producing organic vegetables without harming the ecosystem. Now days, organic production practices are important all over the world in order to make the produce free of pesticide residues and chemical, to minimize soil, water and environment pollution and sustain the soil productivity.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The consumer behavior in organic products are very important because large part of the population still suffers from

undernourishment and infectious diseases, like diabetes, heart disease and cancer that are primarily caused by food and life style of human being. These put large burden of suffering, stress and health expenses on large number of human beings. While pesticides residues in food are only one of the factors contributing to this unhealthy development. So that organically grown food products can play an important role in shifting consumers from conventionally grown food products to organically grown food products. A small but growing number of health-conscious consumers are aware of benefits of organically grown vegetables and willing to pay a premium, provided that products are readily available in better quality. Therefore the popularity of organically produced products has been growing significantly.

### **RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

- To study the consumer's response to organic products in current scenario
- To examine the socio-economic characteristics of organic vegetable consumers
- To analyze the key factors that motivates the customers to choose organic products
- To assess the consumer awareness and preference towards organic vegetables.

## METHODOLOGY

The study is based on Primary and Secondary data, both the data were collected and presented in this research.

**Primary data:** The primary data has been collected by observation, interview and survey method. To collect the primary data various malls and organic product retail outlets of the study area has been visited and the buyers were observed and interviewed with the help of a structured questionnaire.

### Secondary data

The secondary data has been taken from Journal, previous research work of the same or related fields, and ECOCERT India Pvt Ltd, Books and website.

### Sample size:

The sample size of the research involves hundred and twenty consumers that are selected completely on the basis of convenience and supporting the purpose of study.

Convenient sampling method has been used to collect the primary data on the basis of availability of time and respondents, shopping complexes, Malls, retail stores of organic products of and open market were visited to collect

primary data by observation and interview the consumers individually.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

**Table: 1**

**Demographic characters of the consumers**

Sl. No	Characters	Details	Frequency	Percentage to total
1	Gender	Male	55	45.83
		Female	65	54.17
2	Age	Below 25	25	20.83
		26-40	40	33.33
		41-55	30	25.00
		Above 55	25	20.83
3	Marital status	Married	80	66.67
		Unmarried	40	33.33
	Education	Illiterate	03	2.5
		School level	10	8.33
		Graduate	42	35.00
		Post Graduate	65	54.17
4	Occupation	Paid employee	52	43.33
		Home maker	20	16.67
		Business	35	29.17
		Retired	13	10.83
5	Family size	1-4	82	68.33
		5-8	35	29.17
		>8	13	2.50
6	Monthly Income	Rs.10000-20000	25	20.83
		Rs.20000-50000	60	50.00
		Rs.50000-100000	15	12.50
		Above Rs.100 000	20	16.67
7	Monthly expenditure on Organic vegetables	Below Rs.1000	08	6.67
		Rs.1000-2000	12	10.00
		Rs.20000-3000	63	52.50
		Above Rs.3000	37	30.83

**Source: Primary data**

The demographic analysis shows that among all the respondents 54.17 are female, It also indicates that women are more inclined towards the purchase of organic products in comparison to men. On the basis of income the consumers with average household income between the range of Rs.20,000-50,000 are more interested in buying the organic products. As per the consumers are concerned, the table reveals that the consumers of age group of 26-40 years are dominant buyers of organic products in the current scenario and contrastingly, the people who are below 25 that is the youth are having the least affinity towards the organic market. As per the Table 1, it has been observed that education plays a major role in the acceptance of the concept of organic products. The data reveals that more educated consumer is more aware and interested to shift their consumer base towards organic products.

**Table: 2****Purchase frequency of organic products among the respondents**

Purchase Frequency	No of Respondents	Percentage to total
2-3 times in a week	25	20.83
3-4 times in a month	35	29.17
Once a month	47	39.17
Few times a year	13	10.83
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary data**

The above Table 2 shows the purchase frequency of the consumers who are aware of organic products as well as consuming them. According to the data, 39.17% of the consumers purchase organic products once in a month and 29.17% of them purchase 3-4 times a month which reveals that there is still scope for improvement in the marketing strategies to position the organic products and capture the market to increase the purchase frequency of organic products.

**Table: 3****Preferred location to purchase organic products**

Location of purchase	No of Respondents	Percentage to total
Shopping Malls	35	29.17
Organic retail stores	32	26.67
Producers farm	30	25.00
Open market	23	19.16
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary data**

From the above Table 3 It is revealed that the preferred locations where the consumer purchases the organic products. Among all the prescribed locations, shopping Malls is the most popular location for the purchases scoring 29.17% of the respondents and organic retail stores that are specialized in organic products scores 26.67% as the popular destination to purchase organic product. This also indicates that consumers are more likely to purchase organic products of reputed brands which assure safety and are certified.

**Table: 4****Opinion towards price of organic products**

Opinion towards Price	No of Respondents	Percentage to total
Expensive	43	35.83
Low	25	20.83
Moderate	37	30.84
Compromising on account of quality	15	12.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source Primary data**

The above Table 4 shows that 35.83% of the respondents think organic products are expensive which also indicates that high price of the organic products is one of the main barrier for the marketer to capture a large market share. It has been found from the study that high price of the organic products is due to the high cost of production and storage to sustain the benefits of them products to increase their product life.

**Table: 5**  
**Opinion of organic products**

Opinion about Organic Products	No of respondents	Percentage to total
Good	27	22.50
Very good	65	54.17
Don't know	25	19.17
Can't differentiate	05	4.16
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary data**

The above Table 5 shows that 54.17% of respondents opined the organic products as very good and 22, 50% of them opined the organic products as good.

**Table: 6**  
**Consumer preferences towards organic vegetables**

Preference	No of Respondents	Percentage to total
Taste	17	14.17
Health benefits	69	57.50
High Quality	34	28.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary Data**

The above Table 6 shows that the consumers are more inclined towards the organic products due to the health benefits

and nutrition value, quality and of the products. The figure supports the fact health, taste. High quality forms a set of motivation factors common among 85% of the consumers.

## **FINDINGS AND ECOMMENDATIONS**

The study found that the consumers have very less information about the availability of the products that is the locations from where they can easily purchase the organic products. This results in a huge barrier in the organic market. The marketers involved in selling organic products must review their logistic supply strategies and should pay more attention towards intensive marketing so that the organic products can be made available within the convenient reach and time to attract more consumers.

## **CONCLUSION**

The consumer concern on organic vegetables is safe, quality and nutrition. It is becoming important across the world, which has provided growing opportunities for organic vegetables in the recent years. Both, consumers and farmers are now slowly and gradually shifting back to organic farming in Tuticorin District. It is believed by many people that organic farming is healthier. Though the health benefits of organic food are yet to be proved, consumers are willing to pay

premium price for the same. Organic farming therefore provides a better alternate to chemical farming.

## REFERENCE

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