

Organic Farming Thrives in India as Growers Revert Back to Traditional Methods

By [Julie Wilson](#)

Global Research, June 08, 2015

[Natural News](#) 7 June 2015

Region: [Asia](#)

Theme: [Biotechnology and GMO](#)

Thousands of farmers throughout India are reverting back to traditional farming methods as the consequences of Western agriculture have begun to negatively impact the region's food and water supply, and the health of its people.

More than 40 years after the "Green Revolution," a period in which India's agricultural yields skyrocketed following the introduction of commercial farming techniques, growers are returning to traditional, organic methods that date back to centuries ago.

In a last-ditch attempt to save the country's weakened resources, and the health of its people, India has emerged as a global leader in organic farming, as they've welcomed 600,000 certified producers.

The benefits of the "Green Revolution" lasted less than a decade before threatening India's food and water supply

In the 1970s and 1980s, the "Green Revolution" introduced farmers in the state of Punjab to synthetic fertilizers, high-yield seeds and irrigation, which transformed the country into an economic powerhouse, allowing them to produce enough wheat and rice to feed a once-starving population.

Through the use of commercial agriculture, which included the use of synthetic fertilizers such as urea and phosphate, Punjab produced nearly two-thirds of the country's wheat and rice in the 1980s and 1990s, lining the pockets of farmers as gross incomes rose nearly 10 percent in just one year, [according](#) to Al Jazeera.

While offering a sense of hope to a country that was once in turmoil, it soon became clear that the West's version of farming was not sustainable. Because the seeds were high-yield, they required a lot of water, more water than was naturally available through rainfall, causing farmers to begin drilling in fields, searching for water for irrigation.

The state's water supply became threatened due to the constant drilling, as well as contamination caused by the large amounts of chemicals that were increasingly being poured into the soil.

State of Punjab, where commercial agriculture was first introduced, now has the country's highest cancer rates

As the damage to the state's water supply continued to threaten the region's soil and

waterways, a public health crisis was declared in Punjab in the 1990s, just 20 years after growers were essentially forced into commercial agriculture techniques that were backed by U.S. advisers who were supported by giant seed companies like Monsanto.

Research began to emerge linking the widely used chemicals to severe health issues such as “premature aging, skeletal issues and threats to children’s health,” reports Al Jazeera. Punjab now has the highest rate of rate of cancer, according to J.S. Thakur, a researcher at the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research in Chandigarh.

“This is an issue of health, of environment, of future generations”

Unhealthy and unsustainable, commercial agriculture has begun to be replaced by many Punjab growers who say they don’t need chemicals anymore. Tired of the “vicious cycle of chemical-based [farming](#),” some farmers in Punjab are using crop-rotating methods, which balance the soil by planting crops that leave nitrogen for future crops to consume.

Organic farming can initially be much more difficult, because farmers do not receive government subsidies for chemical fertilizers, but once their fields have grown naturally fruitful, their earnings are higher, as they can sell [organic](#) produce for much more.

Some organic farmers in Punjab have increased their income from \$391 per acre to at least \$469 per acre, in addition to saving money on pesticides. Today, thanks to the awakening of many farmers, Punjab now has approximately 1,500 hectares of certified organic land.

In an effort to reverse environmental damage caused by commercial farming, India’s government is beginning to encourage natural farming by lending its support for the Ministry of Agriculture’s [organic farming](#) plan, which is aimed at improving soil health.

Others are more skeptical about the government’s reported new attitude towards organic farming. “There is no subsidy, no shift,” said Devinder Sharma, an agricultural researcher, who says there aren’t any examples of the government subsidizing organic farming.

“No one is thinking on how to subsidize organic farming and move away from chemicals. There’s just no political will.”

The original source of this article is [Natural News](#)

Copyright © [Julie Wilson](#), [Natural News](#), 2015

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Julie Wilson](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in

print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca