

# Organic farming for sustainable livelihoods in developing countries? The case of cotton in India

Frank Eyhorn

Organic farming has experienced considerable growth, not only in industrialized countries. Is it primarily an approach to safeguard consumer health and the environment, or can it also contribute to poverty reduction in developing countries?

Drawing on 3 years of research on organic cotton farms in the Maikaal bioRe® project in central India, this book assesses the potential and the constraints of organic farming for improving rural livelihoods. It further integrates lessons learnt in other organic cotton projects in Asia and Africa, making it the presently most in-depth and comprehensive work on the socio-economic impact of organic farming in a developing country. The research builds on a conceptual frame that allows investigating rural livelihoods in a holistic and interdisciplinary way. The book not only addresses scientists in the fields of rural development and tropical farming systems, but also provides recommendations for practitioners and policy makers.

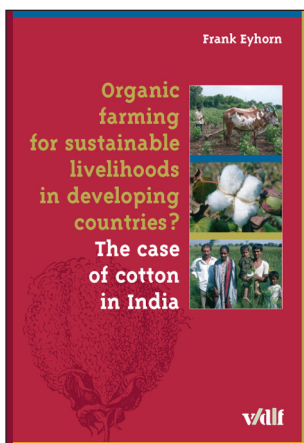
*“Dr. Frank Eyhorn’s research on organic cotton grown in the central state of India is a pioneering work. It paves the way for the possibility of chemical-free, environment- and health-friendly sustainable farming, involving lower costs and yielding higher returns to the farmers. The model is capable of being replicated globally.”*

Sri Sompal, former Chairman of the National Commission for Farmers and Minister of State for Agriculture and Water Resources, India.

*“That the organic production of cotton provides benefits not only for the environment and human health, but also for the socio-economic situation of farmers, is the main message of this well-documented comparative study of conventional and organic farming. It is a significant and motivating message for furthering the use of organic production methods in developing countries.”*

Dr. Joan S. Davis, Environmental Chemist, Eawag: Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Sciences & Technology.

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