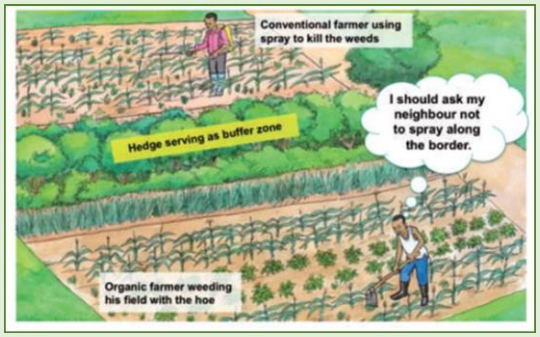
- **Mitigating Contamination Risks**

a) Pesticides:

To avoid pesticide drift from neighbouring fields onto the crops, organic farmers should safeguard the organic fields by using any of the following measures:

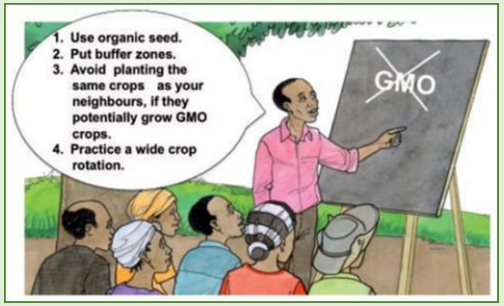
1. Planting of **natural hedges** on the boundary to neighbouring fields to avoid the risk of pesticide spray drift through wind or run-off water. The wider the border area around the fields, the better.
2. To avoid runoff from upstream fields, organic farmers should divert the water away or talk to the farmers upstream about how to work together to minimize the risk of contamination through water.



How to protect crops from pesticides drift?

b) Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO):

Genetically modified products should, not be used in organic farming, and organic farmers should protect their production against any GMO contamination.



How to reduce risks of GMO contamination?

1. **Source: FAO/TECA (2015) – Training manual for Organic Agriculture, Chapter 3.**
2. **For further info on organic farming, please contact the Ministry of Agro Industry and Food Security on: 212 0854 or visit the FAO website: www.fao.org**

Ministry of Agro Industry and Food Security

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Information Leaflet

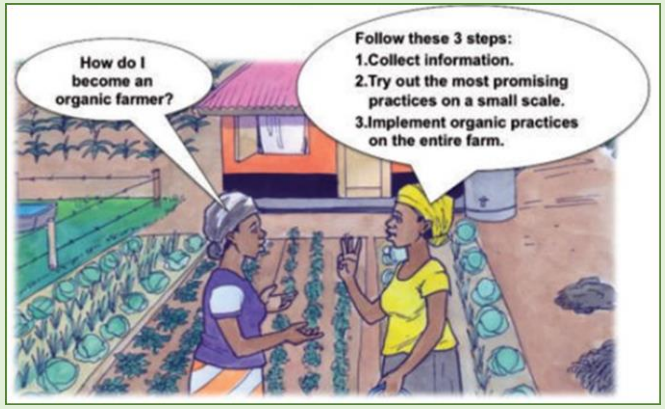
on

Step by Step Conversion to Organic Crop Production

Summary

The procedure of conversion of a farm commonly consists of three steps.

- **In a first step**, it is recommended to collect information on appropriate organic farming practices.
- **In a second step**, the most promising organic practices should be tried out on selected plots or fields to get familiar with.
- **In a third step**, only organic procedures should be implemented in the entire farm. Support from an experienced extension officer or a farmer is usually very helpful to give guidance in the process.



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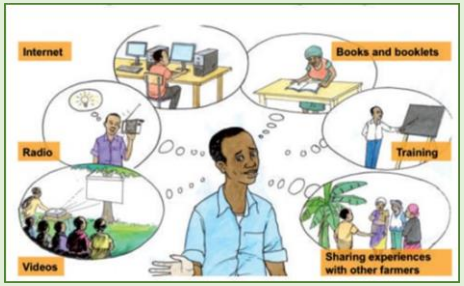
Step 1: Good information first

- Successful organic farming requires considerable knowledge on the functioning and the possibilities of management of natural processes. Learning from experienced farmers allows to get first-hand experience under local conditions, and thus to learn about the advantages and potential challenges related to implementing organic methods.



1. **How to improve soil fertility?**
2. **How to keep crops healthy?**
3. **How to best increase diversity in the farm?**
4. **How to give value to organic products and how to successfully sell them?**

Step 2: Getting familiar with organic practices

After having collected information about the requirements, the potentials and the main practices related to conversion, farmers should start to learn from their own experience on their farms.

i. **Mulching** - Covering the soil with dead plant material is an easy way to control weeds and protect the soil in annual crops.

ii. **Intercropping** - Growing two annual crops together, commonly a leguminous crop like beans or a green manure crop in alternating rows with maize or another cereal crop or vegetable.

iii. **Composting** - Application of compost to the fields can have a major impact on crop growth and yields.

iv. **Green manuring** – Green manuring can greatly contribute to improvement of soil fertility.

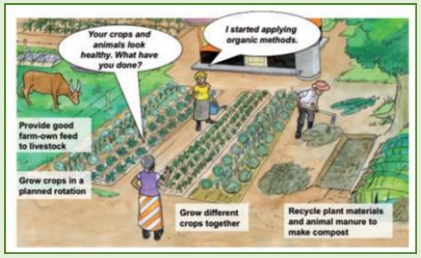
v. **Organic pest management** – Use of resistant varieties of crops, choosing sowing times that prevent pest outbreaks; improving soil health to resist soil pathogens; rotating crops; encouraging natural biological agents for control of disease, insects and weeds; using physical barriers for protection from insects, birds and animals; modifying habitat to encourage pollinators and natural enemies; and trapping pests in pheromone attractants.

vi. **Appropriate seeds and planting material** - Use of healthy seeds and planting materials, and robust and/or improved cultivars can make a big change in crop production.

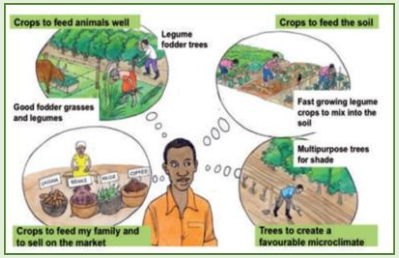
vii. **Planting of leguminous trees** - In perennial crop plantations such as banana, planting of leguminous trees may improve the growing conditions of the fruit crop by providing shade, mulching material and nitrogen through nitrogen fixation

viii. **Terraces and soil bunds** - Construction of terraces and soil bunds along the curves of hills is a key measure for soil conservation.

- **<u>Which crops to grow during conversion?</u>**



How to start implementing organic practices?



Which crops should I grow?

Step 3: Full conversion to Organic Farming

In a third step, implementation of organic practices throughout the entire farm should be considered. As soon as organic practices are implemented throughout the entire farm, a farmer can claim to be an organic farmer. Application of organic practices marks the beginning of a long process of improving the production system.