OCRT Regional Meeting: South Asia

Amritbir Riar & Monika Messmer

Organic Cotton Round Table 2018
Milano 22 October 2018
Regional Workshop
South Asia

- Organic cotton Challenges survey
- Organic Cotton Strategy for South Asia: keeping the lead – FiBL
- Pakistan as emerging player for organic cotton - SIA Foundation
Organic cotton Challenges survey

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Organic Cotton Strategy for South Asia: keeping the lead

Amritbir Riar, Tanay Joshi & Monika Messmer

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Organic cotton: What is next for South Asia

ORGANIC 2016

- Asia: 70%
- Africa: 25%
- North America: 3%
- Other: 2%

Organic top10 countries

1. India: 189,364 hectares
2. Tanzania: 64,084 hectares
3. China: 9,653 hectares
4. USA: 8,369 hectares
5. Tajikistan: 7,013 hectares
6. Kyrgyzstan: 5,616 hectares
7. Burkina Faso: 4,928 hectares
8. Turkey: 3,733 hectares
9. Benin: 2,507 hectares
10. Uganda: 2,428 hectares
Updates from 2017

• Total production for the 18 countries growing organic cotton in 2015-16 was 107,980 MT of organic fiber (4% decrease from last year), with India representing a slimmer majority than ever before (a decline in share from 67% to 56%).

• China ranks second, holding a 14% share of total production.

• Growth in Central Asia continues with Kyrgyzstan reporting 7,981 MT organic cotton fiber (44%), and Tajikistan 6,620 MT organic cotton fiber (562%) placing the country third in the production rankings.

• A 15 per cent increase for the Texas Organic Cotton Market Co-op (TOCMC).

• Research shows that 80 per cent of OBEPAB farmers in Benin are experiencing yields higher than the average organic yield for the country, and in Tanzania, yields have doubled for bioRe farmers.

Full report @ https://textileexchange.org/2017-market-reports/
FiBL has a strong track record in organic cotton breeding – with years of experience in improving the situation in India together with local partners.

FiBL’s involvement in organic cotton seed breeding in India

- **Participatory Cotton Cultivar Evaluation**
- **Involvement in Seed & Soil Task force**
- **Green Cotton Project: Cotton breeding & genetic diversity**
- **Seeding the Green Future**

**Partners & Major Donors**

- STIFTUNG MERCATOR SCHWEIZ
- coop
- TextileExchange
- Chetna Organic
- Pratibha
- JASA
- CSA
- C&A Foundation
- OCA
- Oeko-Tex
- Baina
- Fair Trade
- BioRe
- Human Rights Organic Cotton
- Cotton Connect

[www.fibl.org](http://www.fibl.org)
Results highlight the need for agro-ecological zone specific cultivar development for different soil and water dynamics.
Main results

• Capacity enhancement of farmers, research and extension staff
• Active engagement of the farmers
• Increased seed availability and choice of cultivars
• Improved arboreum cotton

Lessons learned moving forward

• Fast progress can be achieved through selection under organic conditions
• Varietal lines can achieve similar yield as hybrids
• Farmer adoption is key
• Testing at least 3 years under representative organic conditions to make recommendations
• Involvement of higher Indian agricultural institutions is key to access genetic material
Percent Distribution of Trials Across Different States

- Madhya Pradesh $(n = 68)$
- Maharashtra $(n = 30)$
- Rajasthan $(n = 20)$
- Odisha $(n = 17)$
- Gujarat $(n = 6)$
- Andhra Pradesh $(n = 3)$
Long-term Experiment (LTE) Cotton
Bollworm: how much we can control?

- 68 different hybrid and varietal lines of Gossypium hirsutum and varietal lines of G. Arboreum
- Bollworm can damage up to 65% of bolls under irrigated and highly fertile conditions.
- Damage from bollworms range from 13 -91%
- G. hirsutum varietal lines were more susceptible than G. hirsutum hybrids and traditional G. arboreum varietal lines.
Why farmer grow organic cotton?

Large holding organic farmers (> 4 ha) are concerned about closed nutrient cycle to reduce their dependence on market for inputs.

Premium price of cotton crop is an important motivation for medium (2-4 ha) and small holding (<2 ha) organic farmers.
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
SWOT analysis for South Asia

**S**
- Arable land
- Climate
- Strong and well dispersed research and extension system
- Subsistence Agriculture + Local knowledge
- Growing organic market
- Infrastructure for value addition

**W**
- Small and dispersed land holding
- Fragmentation of land
- Under developed value chains
- Complex bureaucracy
- Limited traceability
- Unsustainable Water Management

**O**
- Bridgeable yield gaps
- Educated youth
- Economic development + Purchasing power
- Politics and polices

**T**
- Contamination
- Limited policies and funding for organic
- Limited availability of organic seeds
- Increasing labour cost and shift to other short duration cash crops
Contact

Amritbir Riar
amritbir.riar@fibl.org

Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL
Ackerstrasse 113 / Postfach 219
5070 Frick
Switzerland
Phone +41 62 8657-288
Fax +41 62 8657-273
info.suisse@fibl.org
www.fibl.org