

**STATUS AND AGRIBUSINESS POTENTIALS OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE  
IN THE PHILIPPINES**

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**ABSTRACT**

Organic agriculture has traditionally been practiced as a way of life by the indigenous people in the Philippines. With the massive introduction of agrochemicals and inorganic fertilizers in the 1950's, many farmers made use of them extensively until ultimately chemical-based farming became widespread in the country. In the 1990's a shift towards organic farming has become visible. This has been perceived to be due to an emergence of a growing number of health conscious consumers in the food market. Consequently, the area devoted to organic agriculture and organic practitioners in the Philippines have significantly increased. A national survey in 2007 on the number of organic practitioners, kind of organic products produced, and the area (hectares) devoted to organic agriculture showed a remarkable increase in all parameters compared to a survey in 2004. It can be noted also that concerted efforts to address the issues raised in organic agriculture particularly on human resource development, technology generation, organic production and organic processing are being addressed by stakeholders from both non-government organizations (NGO's) and Government Organizations (GO's) including some universities.

In terms of its agribusiness potentials, the organic agriculture industry in the Philippines has tremendous potential for growth considering the proven assurance of higher farm income than conventional agriculture (chemical-based farming), strong policy support from the government, increasing segment of the Philippine population shifting to a more healthy lifestyle, and increasing awareness on the irreversible ill-effects of chemical-based agriculture on the environment