

Natural Farming

September 30, 2020

In News

Natural farming is an ecological farming approach established by **Masanobu Fukuoka (1913–2008)**, a **Japanese farmer and philosopher**, introduced in his **1975 book-The One-Straw Revolution**. Natural farming is a system where the **laws of nature are applied to agricultural practices**. This method works along with the natural biodiversity of each farmed area, **encouraging the complexity of living organisms**, both plants, and animals that shape each particular ecosystem to thrive along with food plants.

More About Natural Farming

- It is also referred to as “the Fukuoka Method”, “the natural way of farming” or “**do-nothing farming**”. The title refers not to lack of effort, but to the **avoidance of manufactured inputs and equipment**.
- Natural farming is a **closed system**, one that demands no human-supplied inputs and **mimics nature**.

Similarities Between Natural Farming and Organic Farming

- Natural and organic both are **chemical free** and more or less poison free farming methods.
- Both systems **discourage** farmers from using any chemical fertilizers, **pesticides** on plants and in all agricultural practices.
- Both farming methods encourage farmers to use **local breeds of seeds**, and native varieties of vegetables, grains, pulses and other crops.
- Organic and natural farming methods promote **homemade pest control methods**.

Differences Between Natural Farming and Organic Farming

- In organic farming, organic fertilizers and manures like compost, vermicompost, cow dung manure are used and added to farmlands from external sources.
- In natural farming, neither chemical nor organic fertilizers are added to the soil. In fact, no external fertilizers are added to soil or given to plants whatsoever.
- In natural farming, **decomposition of organic matter by microbes and earthworms is encouraged right on the soil surface itself**, which gradually adds nutrition in the soil, over the period.
- Organic farming still requires basic agro practices like plowing, tilting, mixing of manures, weeding to be performed.
- In natural farming there is no plowing, no tilting of soil and no fertilizers, and no weeding is done just **the way it would be in natural ecosystems**.
- Organic farming is still expensive due to the requirement of bulk manures, and it has an ecological impact on surrounding environments; whereas, natural agriculture is an extremely low-cost farming method, completely molding with local biodiversity.
- There are many working models of natural farming all over the world, the **zero budget natural farming (ZBNF)** is the most popular model in India. This comprehensive, natural, and spiritual farming system is developed by **Subhash Palekar**.