



Organic Ginger Production & Certification



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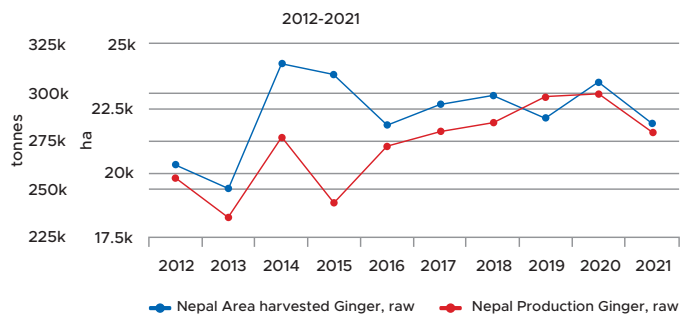
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Ginger Production

Ginger cultivation is a significant agricultural endeavor in Nepal, and the crop is a major source of revenue for the country. Nepal is the fifth largest producer of ginger in the year 2021 with the production of 279,206 Mt of raw ginger (FAOSTAT, 2022).

The Mid-Hills and Terai regions of Nepal are the main areas where the country's ginger production is focused, making Nepal an important producer of ginger with a national productivity of 12.74 Mt/ha (MOALD, 2079). The cultivation of ginger is a significant agricultural pursuit in Rolpa district of Nepal situated in the western region of the country. The ginger is cultivated in 630 ha of land of the district with a productivity of 7.70 Mt/ha (MOALD, 2079).

Production/Yield quantities of Ginger, raw in Nepal



Source: FAOSTAT (Feb 15, 2023)

Organic Ginger Farming:

Organic ginger farming is a method of growing ginger without using synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, or Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). Organic farming practices rely on natural methods to manage

pests, diseases, soil fertility, and emphasize the use of sustainable and environmentally-friendly practices. Organic ginger farming possess several benefits including improved soil health, reduced exposure to harmful chemicals, and increased biodiversity. SAHAS Nepal in partnership with Stromme Foundation formed 52 membered producer group in Sunilsmriti Rural Municipality-4 and 8 for organic ginger farming. The organic ginger farming and certification process was practiced in Rolpa for the first time and farmers were able to fetch profitable income. Rural Municipality highly admired the organic ginger farming and is in the process for replication in other areas. Below listed are process adapted for organic farming, organic certification process, and success story from organic farming. Key practices involved in organic farming are shown in figure 1.

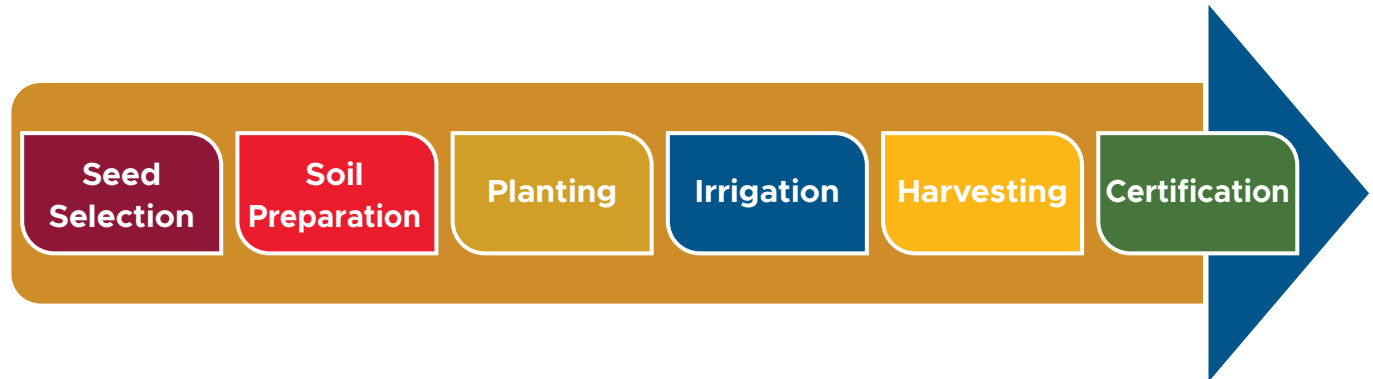


Figure 1: Steps of organic farming

Major practices to be adapted during different steps of organic ginger farming



Seed

- Disease-free seed rhizomes
- Seed sourcing: Seed source should also be certified as organic
- Seed treatment: natural fungicides such as neem oil or garlic extract



Soil

- Composting or Green Manure should be in used
- Crop rotation/Cover crop
- Reduced tillage/fertilisation must not exceed crop requirements
- Mulching from straw



Planting

- Planted in furrows or ridges
- Natural pest control methods; Companion planting
- Proper spacing (20*30cm)
- Weeds control by mechanical or thermal means



Irrigation

- Efficient irrigation methods: Rain water harvesting or irrigation water from natural source must be used without chemicals
- Maintain adequate moisture levels



Harvesting

- After full maturity of rhizomes, leaves start to turn yellow/pale
- Removal of dirt and impurities: Gentle rubbing/use of water
- Drying: Well ventilated and shady place
- Storage: Cool and dry place, underground

Organic Certification:

Organic certification of ginger includes a process by which the production, handling, and processing of ginger are verified to comply with organic standards. Organic certification assures consumers that the ginger they are buying has been produced using environmentally friendly and sustainable farming practices, without the use of synthetic pesticides, fertilizers, or GMOs. SAHAS Nepal facilitated the entire certification process in coordination and collaboration with The Organic Valley, Pvt. Ltd, Surkhet, the farmers produced ginger which received organic certification from CERES, the certifying agency.

Steps involved in the organic certification of ginger:



Application

- Submit an application to a recognized organic certification body along with additional documents and fees.
- The documents include Farmers Diary, Registration form and the project agreement.



Inspection

- An organic inspector visits the farm to evaluate the practices and procedures used for the production, handling, and processing.
- The inspector checks for compliance with organic standards, including soil management, pest and disease control, use of approved inputs, and record-keeping



Review

- The inspector's report is reviewed by the organic certification body.
- The certification body decides whether to approve or deny the certification based on the compliance of the farmer or producer with organic standards.



Certification

- Upon approval from the organic certification body, the farmer or producer is issued an organic certification.
- This allows applicant to use the organic label on their ginger and market it as organic.



Renewal

- Organic certification must be renewed annually.
- A review of the previous year's production and handling practices, along with an on-site inspection is carried out to ensure ongoing compliance with organic standards.

Organic ginger as a sustainable earning option



In Rolpa, ginger farming was not considered a viable option for livelihood as farmers were unaware of the merits and market value of organic ginger. But something changed for the farmers in Rolpa as they earned more than Nepalese Rupees 300,000 from organic ginger production.

To improve farmers' income from marginalised and vulnerable communities and sustainable livelihood, SAHAS Nepal conducted a survey based on area, climate, soil, and resources required for ginger cultivation as a value chain commodity. The feasibility survey and the marketing potential study revealed Aresh, Bagma and Koiralarkh from Sunilsmriti Rural Municipality as suitable areas for

organic ginger production.

The farmers of this area traditionally cultivated corn, wheat, and barley as the main crops and seasonal migration was common. Later farmers received training on organic ginger production techniques, organic production standards, business plans, production and economic analysis. As a result of the training, the farmers formed two organic ginger producer groups.



SAHAS Nepal linked farmer groups with the Organic Valley, Surkhet, and facilitated for the production of ginger according to organic standards of organic production. During the organic certification process, the internal ginger field inspection of the farmers was conducted by SAHAS Nepal staff. At the same time, The Organic Valley performed the field monitoring, and CERES, the certifying agency, did the external field inspection. After the inspection, 52 farmers received organic certification. Those farmers produced 21.8 tons of organic ginger, stored 11.8 tons for seeds and sold 10 tons to the Organic Valley Surkhet from which farmers have earned around Nepalese Rupees 320,000. Gir Bahadur Gharti Magar, Chairman of Organic Ginger Production Group, said “After seeing the production and market value of organic ginger, 15 new farmers have joined the producer groups and bought 200 kg to 600 kg seed per

farmer for the next planting season.” He further mentioned that the plan of the producer groups is to increase the area of ginger planting, initiate the organic farming of turmeric and timur and establish their village as an “organic village”.





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