

What is Organic Farming? | Agriculture | Biology | FuseSchool

As populations have grown, farming practices have become more intensified to maximize crop yields and ensure we can feed the ever growing population.

Fertilizers and pesticides are used on crops and animals may be kept inside in more densely packed sheds to maximise milk yields, or egg production, or speed up the time needed for the animal to be ready to be sent to the market for meat. An alternative to conventional farming is organic farming and it has been proposed as an alternative to conventional agriculture for helping to overcome the climate change crisis we are currently experiencing.

Organic Farming

Organic farming currently accounts for about 1% of agricultural land worldwide. It focuses on sustainability and its thought to have less detrimental effects on the environment.

In theory, organic farming should not use chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides or feed additives for livestock. It requires the farmer to use more natural alternatives. This results in lower yields but the farmer can sell the produce at a higher price because the quality is better.

Inputs

Instead of fertilisers, manure is used. This recycles waste and improves the soil structure. However, it is smelly and more difficult to apply than chemical fertilizers.

Crop rotation is used to reduce diseases building up in the soils and to strengthen soil composition. Certain crops such as legumes fix nitrogen from the air and increases the nitrates in the soil. Instead of using herbicides, weeding is the preferred organic farming technique.