



Adoption of Organic Coffee Practices Among Yirgacheffe Farmers in Northwestern Ethiopia: A Comprehensive Three-Year Study

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Abstract

Yirgacheffe is a renowned coffee-growing region in Northwestern Ethiopia known for its high-quality organic coffee production. Despite the global trend towards sustainable agricultural practices, there remains limited empirical research on how smallholder farmers adopt and benefit from organic farming methods. The research employed qualitative methods including semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and direct observations to gather data from farmers in Yirgacheffe. An iterative approach was used for data collection and analysis over three consecutive years, ensuring robust insights into farmer behaviour and environmental outcomes. During the study period, approximately 75% of farmers reported adopting organic practices, with a notable trend towards greater adoption rates among younger generations who had received initial training and support. Key themes included socio-economic benefits such as increased market access and improved health conditions for families. The findings suggest that while challenges persist regarding cost and labour requirements, the majority of Yirgacheffe farmers view organic practices positively and are committed to sustainable agricultural methods. This study provides valuable insights into farmer behaviour and environmental impacts within a specific context. Given the positive outcomes observed, recommendations include continued support for training programmes aimed at enhancing organic farming skills among smallholder farmers, alongside efforts to reduce costs and improve market linkages.

Keywords: *Ethiopia, Yirgacheffe, Gezira Plateau, Participatory Action Research, Sustainable Development, Cultural Heritage, Farmer Knowledge Systems*

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