



Organic Farming Handbook

JAMAICA ORGANIC FARMING HANDBOOK

**A Guide for
Extension Workers and Farmers**



**JAMAICA ORGANIC AGRICULTURE
MOVEMENT**

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FOREWORD

Why this handbook? Is Organic Agriculture not just a primitive and outdated form of agriculture for dreamers and nostalgic people? The answer is clearly no. Organic Agriculture is a sophisticated form of farming which needs a lot of initiative, experience and responsibility in order to be successful. Many farmers, especially smallholders, in Jamaica, have for long been using more or less sustainable forms of land use. However, increasingly rapid changes of economic, technological and demographic conditions may force farmers to seek short-term profits and pay less attention to keeping their agriculture in balance with nature.

Smallholders in Jamaica need appropriate strategies and techniques, which will lead to sufficient and reliable yields without depleting the resource, base upon which they depend. To help smallholders keep and/or make their farming systems productive and sustainable, extension workers need some kind of guidance and background information which is provided in this handbook. Also larger, commercial farms and plantations that may want to convert their holdings to organic, will find useful information and guidance

The aim of this handbook is to give an introduction to the different aspects of organic agriculture. Where possible, specific conditions in Jamaica have been considered. This manual is in no way complete or perfect. However, I have tried to cover the most important aspects of this modern form of agriculture.

I hope that this manual will be useful for agricultural extension workers as well as for interested farmers. It should not be forgotten, however, that the success of an organic farm will mainly depend on the willingness and ability of the farmer to experiment and thus to find appropriate solutions to his/her site-specific problems.

Ulrich Helberg, in February 2003

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