

## Removing the Entry Barriers of Small-holder Organic Farming in Korea

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There have been many research references which have mentioned entry barriers in organic farming. According to previous studies in Korea, it is difficult for majority of small-holders to convert their conventional farming into organic farming due to difficulty in pest and weed control, compost making, marketing organic produces and lower yield and income during the initial 3-4 years. In other words, various types of entry barriers exist when starting organic farming. There is lack of confidence in regulating pests and insects without pesticides as is the case with weed control.

Chemical fertilizers also have the same problem. Compared to compost making and application, it is easy and convenient to apply chemical fertilizers. The former requires large amount of organic materials, labor forces and much time for fermentation, thereby rise in cost. To small holders, access to organic materials is limited within the farm for compost making due to small farm size and the previous conversion to mono-culture farming. Furthermore, it is difficult for organic beginners to gain access to the organic market during the initial 3-4 year conversion period. Therefore, they are obliged to sell their produce at conventional market price. It is common for beginners of organic farming losing about 20-30% of farming income compared to conventional farming.

Small holders in Korea cannot solve these many entry barriers without external support. Many Korean farmers understand that organic farming is more environmentally friendly and food safety-oriented than conventional chemical farming. However, they cannot easily convert conventional to organic farming due to these entry barriers.

Starting from the late 1990s, the government as well as non-government organizations have participated to remove these entry barriers in organic farming. . Through the direct marketing channels, rural agricultural and urban consumer cooperatives have been solving the difficulties of selling the organic products at initial stages of farming. Also, the central government has paid direct income to organic farmers since 1998. It is a partial compensation for the initial loss of farm income. Local governments and rural agricultural cooperatives are providing cheap compost to the organic farmers through operation of communal compost making facilities under the policy program of

recycling community organic materials. Also local agriculture cooperation provides cheaper vinyl and bio-pesticides to organic farmers through direct and collective purchasing from manufacturers.

<Table> Various Types of Entry Barriers, Removers and Supportive Measures

Types of Entry Barrier	Alternative ways and technologies	Removing Participant	Supportive measures
Pest and insect control	bio-pesticides and natural enemy	local agr. coop.	providing micro-biological pesticides
Weed control	vinyl mulching	local agr. coop.	providing vinyl with subsidies
Compost making	collective compost making product	Local government, local agr. coop.	partial subsidies to compost cost
Product sale	producer-consumer direct sales	consumer coop. in urban city	cooperation between rural and urban coop.
Income loss	Direct payment	central government	3-years of direct payment for yield loss

Efforts to remove the entry barriers for beginner of organic farming started as early as 1990s, in which Korean organic farming has developed rapidly during the last 20 years. Organic farming area including non-pesticides farming to total farmland is about 6 % of total farmland in 2011 compared to 0.01 % in early 1990s. Total amount of organic consumption measured by marketing amounts (including non-pesticides products) is about one billion USD in 2011. And more than 100 local organic farming clusters which have more than 30 ha( same as about 30 farmers) of collective group organic farming have been formed in more than 50 local county and townships. It is expected that the share of organic farming area to total farmland will be 10% by 2020.