

Press Release

New extension tools for organic cotton production

(Frick/CH, 2.2.2006) The Research Institute for Organic Agriculture (FiBL), Switzerland, has developed a set of new guide books and training materials on organic cotton production in the tropics. The documents provide comprehensive practical know-how on producing organic cotton and on designing projects with smallholder farmers. They draw on 3 years of research based on the Maikaal bioRe project in India, and integrate lessons learnt in other organic cotton projects in Asia and Africa.

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The highlight of the extension tools is the Organic Cotton Crop Guide, a comprehensive reference manual for practitioners. Designed primarily for project organizers, extension workers and farmers, it covers all relevant aspects from soil preparation and variety selection over crop nutrition and pest management to the economic performance of organic cotton farming.

The Organic Cotton Training Manual complements the crop guide by summarizing the key messages, providing illustrated transparencies and suggesting didactic approaches for each topic. It aims on facilitating training activities for extension staff and farmers. The Soil Fertility Training Manual provides a curriculum and a set of commented transparencies for a one day session on soil fertility in organic cotton farming.

The Organic Cotton Project Guide supports organizers of organic cotton projects in designing and setting up projects, or in re-thinking them. It describes in detail the different steps involved in setting up an organic cotton project with smallholder farmers and provides key questions for each step.

All extension tools are available on the CD 'Producing Organic Cotton: A Toolkit' that also includes templates for farm record keeping, a video

on organic agriculture in central India and photos for illustration of didactic material. The development of the tools was funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and by WWF Switzerland.

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Order and Download

Free downloads of the guides and extension tools are available from the website www.organiccotton.fibl.org. Hard copies of the crop guide and the CD can be ordered from FiBL (www.shop.fibl.org). The documents and their Hindi versions are also available from the International Competence Centre for Organic Agriculture (ICCOA) in Bangalore, India (www.iccoa.org). A French version of the Organic Cotton Crop Guide adapted to African conditions is in preparation.

Further information on the research project and its results:

www.organiccotton.fibl.org

The Publications

Organic Cotton Crop Guide

A manual for practitioners in the tropics

by Frank Eyhorn, Saro G. Ratter, Mahesh Ramakrishnan

FiBL, 1st edition, 2005, 64 pages, Order number 1388, ISBN 3-906081-67-2

9.00 CHF, 6.00 EUR

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A high quality picture with the front pages of the guides is available via

www.fibl.org/english/shop/article/1388-cotton-guide.php

Producing Organic Cotton: A Toolkit (CD)

Crop guide, Project guide, Extension tools

by Frank Eyhorn

FiBL, 1st edition, 2005, Order number 1391, ISBN 3-906081-72-9

9.00 CHF, 6.00 EUR

A high quality picture with the front pages of the guides is available via

www.fibl.org/english/shop/article/1391-cotton-toolkit.php

This press release is available at www.fibl.org