CHAPTER – 7
SUMMARY
AND
CONCLUSION
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This chapter presents a brief summary of the thesis and re-iterates the conclusion of the study.

7.1 SUMMARY:
The study dealt with organic farming as an alternative technique for conventional chemical agriculture. The aim of the study was to **conduct an inquiry into the organic farming technique to test its economic viability.** The term ‘economic viability’ was **defined in a broad sense to include the external costs and benefits** (although unaccountable in most cases), **as well as long term sustainability concerns.** Distinction was also made while discussing ‘economic viability’ in **the micro as well as the macro sense.** The study also attempted to synthesise the economic, ecological, and socio-cultural implications of the organic technique.

Chapter 1 of the thesis covered the basic issues like the need for the study, objectives, limitations, research methodology, and sources of data. **The study was based on the hypothesis that organic farming is economically viable.** Taking this as a starting point, chapter 1 went on to discuss the definitions, principles, practices, and history of organic farming.

Thus, a base was created for an extensive review of literature, presented in chapter 2. As the study aimed at a holistic analysis of the phenomenon, the
review covered a wide variety of issues, like sustainability, ecological implications, costs, techniques, experimental data, issues regarding policy, yield, labour, externalities, and so on.

The study was based on data collected by the researcher by way of pot-culture experiments, as well as that collected through interviews of farmers and other stakeholders. Chapter 3 presented the results of four experimental trials, which showed that the results were comparable for both the treatments. The organic treatment gave better results for fenugreek, and statistical analysis proved that the variance was highly significant. Objectives number 1, 2 and 4 of the present study, mentioned in chapter 1, are partly completed in this chapter, and partly in chapter number 4.

The responses of the farmers, who were interviewed, were tabulated and presented along with qualitative interpretations in chapter 3. These farmers included a general cross-section, and a separated group of converted organic farmers. Section I of this chapter dealt with the responses of a general cross-section of 144 farmers, while section II dealt with the data of 10 converted organic farmers, and group discussions with another 30 organic farmers. Objectives number 2 and 3 of the present study, were partly completed in this chapter, and partly in chapter number 3.

Chapter 5 covered an outline of the discussions carried out with other stakeholders in the society, who are in some way connected to organic farming. These included economists, agricultural scientists, horticulturists, researchers, professors, wholesalers and retailers, bankers, and government
officers. Objective number 1 was, thus, covered under this chapter also, as in chapter 4.

Chapter 6 discussed the inferences drawn from the study, and different recommendations and policy implications. It dealt with issues like organic in installments, management of default organic zones, certification, labeling, agricultural credit, crop-insurance, subsidies, support price, transition facilitation, organic exports, backward linkage effect and employment generation. Objectives number 3 and 5 of the study were covered under this chapter.

7.2 CONCLUSION:
The hypothesis of the study is proved.
The study concludes that:

- Currently, the organic and chemical systems are on highly unequal ground due to the heavy government support given to the chemical system for about five decades.
- Even then, organic farming has proved to be economically viable on the micro-level of individual farmers, both in terms of monetary as well as real benefits.
- Generally, a drop of yield is seen in the conversion period of 3-5 years; however reduced yields might often be compensated for by reduced costs.
- Yield picks up after the conversion period, making it highly comparable with that under the chemical system, thus making organic farming viable in the long run.
• If externalities could be imputed, organic farming would be economically viable even in the short run.

• Considering the problem of food security, on the macro-level, a complete, immediate or sudden shift to organic farming is not advisable.

• A proper technological mix should be developed, where, as much as possible the plant requirement is met through organic manures, bio-fertilizers, and bio- and botanical pesticides, using chemical fertilizers and pesticides only when required. Hence, ‘mixed farming’, ‘ecological farming’, ‘sustainable agriculture’, or as ‘green agriculture’, as it is often referred to, should be the immediate goal on the macro-level. This would serve the twin objective of reducing private, social, and environmental costs, while maintaining the yields at the macro level.

The conclusions of the present study can be well-summarised in the following lines by G. Tyler Miller:

"The secret of sustained action is to think and work on two levels simultaneously. On a long-range basis we must continually whittle away at making major changes in our political and economic systems and our world-view. At the same time we must do a number of little daily things at the band-aid level, to give us the time needed for the major changeover to a steady state world. Daily accomplishments also give us the psychic energy to keep working on long-range changes, where progress will be slow."
'Begin on the individual level and work outward in ever widening circles. Join with others and amplify your actions. Remember that with care and skill, two plus two can be greater than four. This is the way the world is changed.' (Tyler Miller, 1972, p: 172)

We are not here to curse the darkness, but to light the candle that can guide us through the darkness to a safe and sane future.

- John F Kennedy