

# Bhutan's 100% Organic Agriculture. The Rhetoric and Reality

Population: 8 lakh

Cultivated area: 75,000 ha

## **Organic promises. Time line.**

**2007:** Bhutan set the goal of becoming 100% organic nation by 2020

**2008 :** Bhutan established National Organic Plan( NOP)


**2012:** At the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, the Prime Minister of Bhutan asserted that his country would be 100% organic nation by 2020

**2013:** Govt of Bhutan reiterated that it would become 100% organic by 2020. To increase food self-sufficiency and reduce poverty.

## **We are now in 2021.**

Has Bhutan turned 100% organic country? Increased food self-sufficiency?

No...Not at all..!

Reality bites hard in 2021 

## **Between 2013 and 2020**

Bhutan's chemical fertilizers import increased from 2964 tons to 4305 tons.

Pesticides import increased from 438 tons to 895 tons.

Rice import increased from 24000 tons to 77000 tons.

Paradoxical. Bhutan, the 100% organic nation, continues to import and use agrochemicals..!

Paradoxical. The organic nation's food security is achieved by huge import of rice and vegetables grown using chemical inputs..! It is similar to the Indian state of Sikkim that takes rice from Punjab and vegetables from West Bengal.

The 100% organic promise is full of romantic notions about environment, health, happiness, higher yields, low cost, higher prices and profits to the farmers.

What goes missing in this rhetoric is realism.

Unfortunately, very few dare doing the review to ask the right questions.

Bhutan's fiasco (and that of Sikkim) should serve a timely alert to Sri Lanka.

### **Tailpiece**

The latest spin from Thimphu is that the **100% organic Bhutan** target is pushed from 2020 to 2035..!

Long live the lofty green rhetoric..! 😊

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Data source: Govt of Bhutan, Trade Statistics.