

The Future of Agriculture in Egypt

Version 2



Comparative Full Cost Accounting Study of Organic and Conventional Crop Production Systems in Egypt

Version 2 – May 2020

The Future of Agriculture in Egypt: Comparative Study of Organic and Conventional Crop Production Systems in Egypt

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This study is endorsed by

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Abstract

This version is subsequent to the previous version The future of Agriculture, which was written by the Carbon Footprint Center in 2016 (version 1, 2016). Due to our vision to face many challenges in regards to climate change, food insecurity, water scarcity, and desertification we decided to rewrite and update the original study after the new economic development in Egypt. In November 2016, Egypt floated the Egyptian Pound, against all foreign currencies, in a move that has reduced its value by almost 50% against the US dollar as one step on the long way to improved economic performance. Considering these developments, this study was initiated to update the cost analysis in different approaches in the agriculture sector with the same objective to analyze the economic costs for five of the strategic crops growing in both old and new land in Egypt in 2019 and comparing these results with the published data of 2015. Thus, getting an overview whether the organic or the conventional growing system is ecologically and economically more sustainable for the long-term future.

Table of Content

List of Figure	04
List of Tables	04
Acronyms	04
1 Introduction	05
2 Background	06
2.1 Global Challenges	06
2.2 Challenges Facing Egypt	07
2.3 Full Cost Accounting	10
3 Methodology	10
3.1 Data Collection	11
3.2 Calculation and Evaluation	12
3.3 Parameters	14
4 Data Analysis	17
4.1 Rice	18
4.2 Maize	19
4.3 Potatoes	21
4.4 Wheat	23
4.5 Cotton	25
5 Conclusion	26
5.1 Summary of Results	26
5.2 Conclusion	28
References	29

List of Figures

Figure 1: Carbon dioxide CO ₂ e Emission per sector	06
Figure 2: Cost Overview Rice Old Land	18
Figure 3: Cost Benefit Analysis Rice Old Land	18
Figure 4: Cost Overview Maize Old Land	19
Figure 5: Cost Benefit Analysis Maize Old Land	19
Figure 6: Cost Overview Maize New Land	20
Figure 7: Cost Benefit Analysis maize New Land	20
Figure 8: Cost Overview Potatoes Old Land	21
Figure 9: Cost Benefit Analysis Potatoes Old Land	21
Figure 10: Cost Overview Potatoes New Land	22
Figure 11: Cost Benefit Analysis Potatoes New Land	22
Figure 12: Cost Overview Wheat Old Land	23
Figure 13: Cost Benefit Analysis Wheat Old Land	23
Figure 14: Cost Overview Wheat Old Land	24
Figure 15: Cost Benefit Analysis Wheat New Land	24
Figure 16: Cost Overview Cotton Old Land	25
Figure 17: Cost Benefit Analysis Cotton Old Land	25
Figure 18: Cost Overview - Summary	26
Figure 19: Cost Benefit Analysis Summary	27

List of Tables

Table 1: Parameters	14
Table 2: Water Quality Cost	16
Table 3: GHG Emission Cost	16
Table 4: Soil Erosion Cost	17
Table 5: Market Prices	

Acronyms

CFC	Carbon Footprint Center
EBDA	Egyptian BioDynamic Association
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Fd	Feddan (1 Fd = 0.42Hectare)
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
HU	Heliopolis University
MALR	Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation

Introduction

It is important to realize that agriculture and forestry have been the largest single contributors towards climate damage over the past 200 years. According to a report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2014), direct agriculture and forestry are responsible for nearly 24 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. "Direct" in this context means that energy or transportation used in agriculture have not been taken into account, but only factors such as soil nitrogen, biomass burning, fertilizer production, animal husbandry and irrigation. Conversely, this also means that sustainable agriculture, especially the "Biodynamic" approach, offers solutions.

Nevertheless, there is a need for global major changes in agriculture, in order to provide enough food to feed the growing population, while minimizing its environmental impacts. For more sustainable farming practices, organic farming is often proposed as a solution. Research on our own fields has conclusively shown that biological, organically cultivated crops can be competitive to the conventionally cultivated ones in expenses and benefits since organic produce contains fewer pesticides since chemicals such as fungicides, herbicides, and insecticides are widely used in conventional agriculture and residues remain in the planted crops. Organic farming is better for the environment since it reduces pollution, conserves water, reduces soil erosion, increases soil fertility, and uses less energy.

The presented version is subsequent to the previous version: "The future of agriculture" which was written by Carbon Footprint Center (version 1, 2016). The objective of the study was to analyse the economic costs for five of the strategic crops: 1) cotton 2) maize, 3) potatoes, 4) rice, and 5) wheat that are growing in both old and new land in Egypt for 2019 and comparing these results with the results of 2015, thus, getting an overview whether the organic or the conventional growing system is ecologically and economically more sustainable for the long-term future. These crops have been selected due to their strategic importance in terms of the cultivated area, food insecurity, economy and employment in Egypt (Allen, 2007) according to a study funded by the industrial modernization center IMC and prepared by Booz Allen Hamilton consulting.

Background

2.1 Global Challenges

Global climate change is considered one of the most urgent environmental problems. The main negative impact on climate change is the emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs; CO₂, CH₄, N₂O), which is directly or indirectly due to the burning of non-renewable resources (carbon bound in mineral oil or coal). Tropical rainforests hold the biggest living biomass on very delicate soils that may lose their fertility completely when clear cutting is performed as in recent decades (Alföldi et al. 2002).

Agriculture contributes to over 20 percent of global anthropogenic GHGs emissions (OECD, 2001). Moreover, agricultural intensification has had major detrimental impacts on terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems of the world. The doubling of production during the last 35 years was associated with a 6.9 fold increase in nitrogen fertilization, 3.5 fold increase in phosphorus fertilization and a 1.7 fold increase in irrigated land (Tilman, 1999). Which consequently had resulted in negative impacts on soil health and environmental contamination.

Agriculture, however, is not only contributing to global warming, but is also affected by it to a major extent. According to Burdick (1994) increasing global warming will shift cultivation zones polewards, plant growth and production being jeopardized by changes in the distribution of rainfall, the increase of UV-B radiation, and changes in the chemical composition of the atmosphere. In regions with continental climate, soils are subject to desiccation, meaning climate change will aggravate problems of salinity, erosion, and desertification. Extreme climatic events will occur more frequently. Pests and diseases favoured by a warmer climate will continue to proliferate. All these factors will have negative impacts on agricultural yields (Reilly *et al.*, 1996)

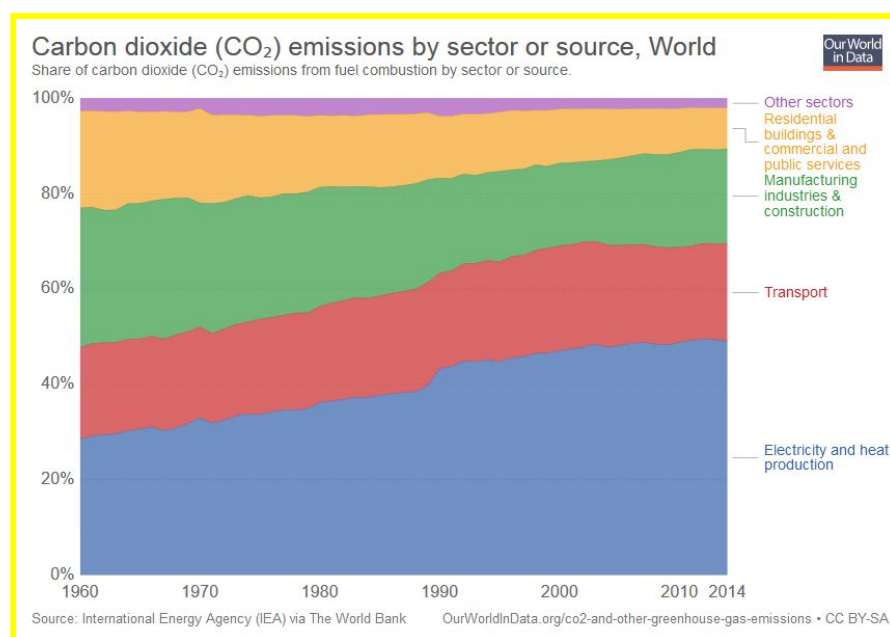


Figure 1

Globally, the primary sources of GHGs emissions are electricity and heat (31%), agriculture (11%), transportation (15%), forestry (6%) and manufacturing (12%). Energy production of all types account for 72% of all emissions (Climate Analysis Indicators Tool; World Resources Institute, 2017)

2.2 Challenges Facing Egypt

Egypt is facing many challenges related to demographics, economy and public health, that have the potential to become exacerbated unintentionally by new problems related to the environment. For example, water scarcity continues to be a major issue for Egypt, which depends almost entirely on the Nile River for the country's water resources. According to some analysts, Egypt is on track to reach a threshold of "absolute water scarcity" by 2030. Climate changes, particularly higher temperatures are expected to shorten growing seasons and reduce agricultural yields in Egypt. Large amounts of water are also lost through evaporation every year, something that climate change will make things worse. Not to mention the pollution damage to the Nile, which is widespread (Yale Environment 360, 2010).

A. Poverty

The percentage of Egyptians, who live in extreme poverty, rose to 32.5 in 2018 from 27.8 percent in 2015, with an increase of 4.7 percent, said State-owned Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (Ahram Online, 2019). According to CAPMAS's latest survey on income, expenditure and consumption for 2017/2018, Egypt announced that individuals earning less than EGP 8,282 (US\$ 501.03) annually and US\$1.3 daily, live under the poverty line. The highest percentage of poverty among 99 million Egyptians was recorded in Upper Egypt, mainly in Assiut and Sohag, with 66.7 percent and 59.6 percent, respectively. Poverty rates ranged from 80 to 100 percent in about 46 villages in these two governorates (Ahram Online, 2019).

B. Water Scarcity

Egypt has been suffering from severe water scarcity in recent years. Uneven water distribution, misuse of water resources and inefficient irrigation techniques are some of the major factors playing havoc with water security in the country. Egypt has only 20 cubic meters per person of internal renewable freshwater resources, and as a result the country relies heavily on the Nile River for its main source of water. The River Nile is the backbone of Egypt's industrial and agricultural sectors and is the primary source of drinking water for the population. Rising populations and rapid economic development in the countries of the Nile Basin, pollution and environmental degradation are decreasing water availability in the country. Egypt is facing an annual water deficit of around 7 billion cubic metres. Infact, the United Nations is already warning that Egypt could run out of water by 2025 (EcoMENA 2020).

C. Agriculture

“Egypt is an agricultural based country, where Its development primarily depends upon rural resources. Agriculture contributes approximately 14% of the GDP and absorbs about 31% of the workforce. About 53% of the population lives in rural areas where directly or indirectly their livelihood depends upon the agricultural sector. Despite its positive and significant contributions to food security/supply, economy, employment, export earnings, ecological balance, yet the agriculture sector in Egypt faces many threats and challenges which, in turn, impacts rural development initiatives. The prominent challenges include land and water issues; old cultivation techniques; lack of information on marketing; poverty; degradation of natural resources and environmental issues; population growth; inadequate support services; framework and institutional constraints; and lack of agricultural and rural development policies” (Shalaby et al., 2011).

D. Soil characteristics

In the desert areas, soil types and their properties are very much influenced by geomorphic and pedogenic factors. Generally, soils in the new lands are short of nutrients (especially micronutrients), are very low in organic matter, alkaline (high pH), and have poor physical properties and moisture characteristics. In many areas, other adverse features include a high percentage of calcium carbonate (CaCO_3), high salinity content, and, in some cases, high gypsum content. In the main, the physical constraints are hardpans, which are formed at varying depths in the soil profile under the influence of many cementing agents. The characteristics of these resources vary considerably from one location to another because of their mode of formation. (ICARDA, 2011).

D.1. Old land

The old lands represent the largest irrigated area in Egypt and are found in the Nile Valley and Delta. These include lands which were reclaimed from the desert many generations ago and are intensively cultivated, mostly using water from the Nile. These lands, characterized by alluvial soils and spreading over 5.36 million feddan, are irrigated by traditional surface irrigation systems, which, compared to modern and improved irrigation systems, have a very low field water application efficiency of around 50%. Two problems occur at most of this land, on the one hand continued encroachment by non-agricultural uses at a rate of 20,000 feddan/year and continued degradation of soil fertility (Amer et al., 2017).

D.2. New land

New lands include lands that have been reclaimed relatively recently, particularly since the construction of the Aswan High Dam – or areas that are currently in the process of being reclaimed. They are located mainly on the east and west sides of the Nile Delta and are scattered over various areas of the country. New lands cover 2.5 million feddan and cover old-new lands as well as new-new lands. The Nile is the main source of irrigation water, but in some desert areas also underground water is used. Sprinkler and drip irrigation regimes are common as well. Reclamation of these lands started in the early 1950s and is continuing. The government reclaimed approximately 1.92 million feddan of desert land between 1952 and 1987 and an additional 627,000 feddan between 1987 and 1991. During the fifth 5-year plan (1993-1997), the reclamation of 572,700 feddan (ca. 240534 ha) was proposed, of which about 469,900 feddan were actually reclaimed. (ICARDA, 2011). From year 2011 till 2018, 235,600 feddans were reclaimed (CAPMAS, 2020)

E. Soil erosion

Soil erosion is regarded as one of the most serious environmental problems associated with land use (Morgan 1996). In many cases, erosion causes an almost irreversible decline in soil productivity and other soil functions (Biot & Lu 1995; Bruce et al. 1995) and leads to environmental damage. Egypt is located in the severely dry region extended from North Africa to West Asia, the wind erosion is considered one of the main land desertification processes in areas exceeding 90% of the state area in western desert, eastern desert and particularly Sinai. These areas are characterized by a fragile ecosystem, scarcity of vegetation cover and severe drought (Wassif, 2002). Organic agriculture is a production system that is in closer alignment with natural cycles and processes. Hence organic agriculture should also be less conducive to erosion than conventional agriculture, although this is yet to be proved.

2.3 Full Cost Accounting

One of the main objectives of this study is to raise awareness for the external effects of agriculture on the environment and society. The external effects are described as all unintended effects on the life of one person occurring during an action done by another person, which can be any action in daily life as well as any economic activity. Examples for human actions like this, including even one person spewing smoke into the air or dumping litter on the highway (Buchanan and Stubblebine, 1962).

Throughout this study, the most important examples for external costs are soil erosion, atmosphere damage through GHGs and water damage, are described in more detail in section 3 “Methodology”. In this study the term “Damage Costs” is used as an equivalent for the more commonly used term of “External Costs” and they include particularly “Environmental Damage Costs”. Right now these damage costs are being paid by the society and future generations, an internalization by, for example, an environmental tax would represent a cost shift from the common responsibility to the responsibility of the polluter.

The Method of “Full Cost Accounting” is, as described in section 3 “Methodology” in more detail, highlighting the fact of further hidden costs beside the direct costs of raw material, labour, This term of “Environmental Full Cost Accounting” (EFCA) can be seen as equal to the term of “True Cost Accounting” (TCA). True Costs are described as the sum of internal and external costs, which can be understood for this study as “Direct Costs” and “Damage Costs” (FAO, 2001).

3 Methodology

The study “Food Full Cost Accounting” is an economic and financial comparison of organic and conventional food production systems in Egypt for five of its strategic crops: rice, cotton, wheat, potatoes and maize in old lands and in new lands.

The comparison structure and the calculation for the direct cost parameters is based on the methodology of the FAO Study “Economic & Financial Comparison of Organic and Conventional Citrus-growing systems” prepared by the University of Valencia in Spain in 2001, except for the financial investment calculation. This is since the presented study aims to focus on the explanation of the specific damage costs, which would be distorted by integrating financial multipliers. The calculation methodology for the damage cost parameter Water Quality, Atmosphere Damage, Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and Soil erosion is based on the FAO report “Food wastage footprint Full-cost accounting - Final Report 2014”.

3.1 Data Collection

The data collection and calculations are conducted by the Cool Farm Tool (CFC) team, led by Engineer Thoraya Seada and Dr. Ramy Mohamed. Primary and secondary data were collected from a total of four different parties, as follows:

A. Primary Data Collection:

1. Site visits: During several site visits in various Egyptian governorates such as Fayoum, Beheira, Kafr Elsheikh and Shakira, in-depth interviews with farmers were conducted to collect more data about the agri-culture process, costs, expenses and income. Each governorate was represented with at least 5 farmers.

B. Secondary Data Collection:

2. Data for the direct costs of conventional agriculture such as: raw material costs, costs for fertilizer, insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides, other costs, seed costs and labour & machinery costs was taken from the annual bulletins prepared by CAPMAS for the agriculture sector originated from the Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture (MALR)

3. Egyptian Biodynamic Association (EBDA), provided data for the direct costs of organic agriculture.

4. The FAO Report “Food Wastage Footprint (FWF) Final Report” was used for the calculation of external damage cost: water quality (Water pollution caused by pesticides and nitrate and phosphate), atmosphere damage regarding GHGs emissions, soil erosion and pesticide poisoning.

3.2 Calculation and Evaluation

3.2.1 Carbon Footprint Calculation

The Carbon Footprint assessment is conducted by the Cool Farm Tool (CFT) which is an online greenhouse gas, water, and biodiversity calculator for farmers on this link <https://coolfarmtool.org/>. The CFT was originally developed by Unilever and researchers at the University of Aberdeen and the Sustainable Food Lab to help growers measure and understand on-farm GHG emissions. The Cool Farm Tool requires general information about farms, such as crop area, yield, soil type, fertilizer and inputs, as well as some detailed information on electricity and fuel use (for field operations and primary processing). The CFT includes calculations of soil carbon sequestration, which is a key feature of agriculture that has both mitigation and adaptation benefits.

In organic farming, the calculation for the carbon footprint assessment includes the carbon sequestration through the use of compost. Carbon sequestration is defined as long-term storage for carbon dioxide or other forms of carbon. The sequestration amount from compost may offset carbon dioxide emitted by other farm operations such as diesel consumption. Through calculations using the CFTool the results for total GHG emission in organic farming in Egypt are calculated to be negative or zero. Subsequently, in conventional farming, the calculation for the carbon footprint assessment was done by the previously described methodology of the Cool Farm Tool.

3.2.2 Water Footprint Calculation

The concept of water footprint emerged in 2002, and it has been created in analogy to the ecological footprint. While an ecological footprint measures how much land a human population requires to produce the resources it consumes and to absorb its waste, a water footprint measures human demand on freshwater. In November 2009, the first manual of the methodology - “Water Footprint Manual” - was published by Water Footprint Network (WFN).

The Water Footprint methodology distinguishes three types of water usage:

1. Consumptive use of rainwater (green water)
2. Consumptive use of water withdrawn from groundwater or surface water (blue water)
3. Pollution of water (grey water)

In organic farming, the water calculation was conducted with the previously described methodology “Water Footprint Assessment” to determine the amount of water required per faddan (Green & Blue water). The water quality costs (greywater) for organic farming equates to zero, as these costs are related to the usage of pesticides and to the amount of nitrates in sources of drinking water.

In conventional farming, the calculation was conducted by using the Water Footprint Assessment to determine the amount of water required per faddan (Green & Blue water). These costs are dependent on the usage of pesticides and the amount of nitrates in sources of drinking water, therefore integrating grey water data as well.

3.2.3 Soil Erosion

Wind erosion ratio in Egypt is about 5.5 ton/hectare (2.33 ton/fd) a year in the oasis areas in the western desert and 71–100 ton/hectare a year in areas of rainfed agriculture on the northwest coast showing wind erosion risks in these areas wavering between moderate and severe (Wassif, 2002). This information was used to calculate the amount of soil erosion from wind for conventional farming and the cost is calculated according to the FAO Report. In organic farming, the soil loss is 15% less for organic agriculture than for conventional agriculture according to Auerswald, Kainz and Fiener (2003).

Soil erosion is treated differently for old land and new land in this study. Since the erosion at old land areas is reduced to a minimum in comparison to the new land because of the much more stable clay soil in the old land area. These circumstances are similar for conventional agriculture as well as organic agriculture

3.3 Parameters

This section demonstrates the explanation of all the used parameters in this study. In the following table you will find a first outline of the main comparison parameters (Direct Cost, Damage Cost and the Total Income as well as total Expenses). After this short overview, each Parameter listed in the cost tables will be explained in more detail.

Table 1: Parameters

A. Direct cost

A.1 Raw materials Inputs

A.1.1 Irrigation water

A.1.2 Fertilizers

A.1.3 Insecticides, Fungicides, Herbicides

A.1.4 Seed cost

A.1.5 Other cost

A.2 Labour & Machinery

A.3 Certification

B. Damage cost

B.1 Water Quality

B.1.1 Pesticides in sources of drinking water

B.1.2 Nitrate and Phosphate in sources of drinking water

B.2 Atmosphere Damage

B.2.1 GHGs emissions

B.3 Soil erosion

C. Total

C.1 Total Income

C.2 Total Expenses

C.3 Net Benefit

A. Direct Cost:

This represents all variable factors of production. For the sake of greater clarity, it has been broken down into different subcategories.

A.1 Raw Materials Inputs:

This category represents the costs generated by inputs – that is the value of all inputs immobilized during the productive process.

A.1.1 Irrigation Water:

The irrigation cost includes the energy cost such as diesel and electricity cost for the irrigation system which is calculated per Feddan. As water is freely available to Egyptian farmers, the cost for irrigation is only related to the energy cost.

Cost of Irrigation water regarding to electricity and diesel consumption:

- Irrigation using electricity on 0.75 LE/KWH
- Irrigation using Diesel on 6.75 LE/liter

A.1.2 Fertilizers:

This includes the cost of compost for organic farming and the cost of fertilizer for conventional farming. The price is calculated using data from MALR for conventional farming and data from the EBDA for organic farming. The amount of fertilizer usage varies according to the type of the crop.

A.1.3 Insecticides, Fungicides and Herbicides:

Conventional systems rely on pesticides (herbicides, insecticides, fungicides), many of which are toxic to humans and animals. The data for the cost of pesticides for organic farming is assumed to be zero since no harmful synthetic pesticides are used. The emphasis in organic agriculture is on using inputs (including knowledge) in a way that encourages the biological processes of available nutrients and defense against pests. Most pesticides are prohibited in organic farming as they can hinder these processes. In organic agriculture, management is directed towards preventing problems, while stimulating processes that assist in nutrition and pest management (IFOAM). Organic agriculture uses bio-control methods instead of synthetic pesticides.

A.1.4 Seed Costs: The cost of seeds are similar in conventional and organic farming. Prices were taken from the MALR and EBDA.

A.1.5 Other Costs:

Costs, not directly related to the manufacturing of a product or delivery of a service such as Maintenance or Emergency (annual bulletins prepared by CAPMAS with MALR data and discussions with EBDA organic farmers).

A.2 Labour & Machinery: Includes total cost of labour required during the production cycle to perform farming tasks. Also, it includes the cost of renting machinery, since this is common in Egypt.

A.3 Certification: Cost incurred by the farmer to have his or her land certified as organic by the Organic Farming Board, which is the agency responsible for inspecting land and verifying the nature of the used growing method.

B. Damage Cost: In reference to the chapter of “2.3 Full Cost Accounting”, this cost determines the amount of damage on the environment and society caused by agriculture through the unsustainable use of water, atmosphere and soil. The environmental impacts of food wastage has been monetized. These costs are estimated via the wastage quantities and unit costs of the related environmental (and social) impacts. This also applies to the categories that are assessed on the basis of per-area cost data, as the area numbers related to food wastage are in the end linked to the food wastage quantities.

B.1 Water Quality: Describes the effect on water resources, occurring through the use of pesticides and fertilizer in agriculture.

B.1.1 Pesticides in drinking water sources: These estimates are based on the removal costs of pesticide from drinking water for the UK.

B.1.2 Nitrate and Phosphate in sources of drinking water: These estimates are based on the removal costs of nitrate from drinking water for the UK – as no other data were available.

Table 2: Water quality cost (FWF, FAO, 2014)

Impact Category	Evaluation Method	Unit Value used (USD 2012)
Water quality (nitrate and pesticide contamination of drinking water, nitrate/ phosphate eutrophication)	Defensive expenditures (costs of pesticide, nitrate, phosphate removal from drinking water), damage costs, Willingness to Pay to avoid.	Eutrophication (based on 0.286\$/kg N leached in UK, correction for N input and output levels and agricul- cultural areas in each country, and benefit transfer) P eutrophication (based on 12.32\$/kg P leached, correction for P input and output levels and agricultural areas in each country and benefit transfer) 0.78\$/ha (Thailand) for pesticide contamination (to- tal 264 million in UK, 14.6 million Thailand, corrected for toxicity levels, area, benefit transfer)

***Benefit transfer is done as region-wide as possible. Where values for the UK and Thailand are given, UK numbers are used for developed country benefit trans- fer and Thailand numbers are used for developing country benefit transfer (FWF, FAO, 2014). ***

B.2. Atmosphere Damage: Removal of the main GHGs emissions from the atmosphere.

B.2.1 GHGs emissions: Damage cost of GHG emissions (including deforestation and managed organic soils), based on a range of approaches, damage costs and defensive expenditure.

Table 3: GHG Emission Cost (FWF, FAO, 2014).

Impact Category	Evaluation Method	Unit Value used (USD 2012)
GHGs emissions (including deforestation and managed organic soils)	Social cost of carbon (based on a range of approaches, damage costs and defen- sive expenditure)	113 \$/tCO ₂ e (globally, no benefit transfer needed)

B.3 Soil erosion: The cost of soil loss through wind erosion caused by the food production.

Table 4: Soil Erosion Cost (FWF, FAO, 2014).

Impact Category	Evaluation Method	Unit Value used (USD 2012)
Soil erosion (due to wind)	Damage costs (on-site and off-site)	27.38\$/t for wind erosion (US values plus benefit transfer, plus per ha soil erosion levels from 48 countries and region- al averages; corrected for soil erosion potential of different cultures)

C. Total

C.1 Total Income

The total income is calculated regarding the crops revenue per feddan and it depends on the market price per each crop and the average premium price between organic and conventional crops was 14.49% in 2019.

Table 5: The Market price in 2019

Crops/Price	Rice	Maize	Potatoes	Wheat	Cotton
Conventional	6,000 LE	2,714 LE	6,000 LE	4,567 LE	16,680 LE
Organic	7,200 LE	3,250 LE	6,700 LE	5,200 LE	20,016 E

** The mentioned table of prices are regarding the Egyptian market prices in 2019 for organic and conventional mentioned crops.*

C.2 Total Expenses

The total expenses are the sum of the total Direct Cost which represents all variable factors of production and the total Damage cost which determines the amount of damage on the environment and society caused by agriculture through the unsustainable use of water, atmosphere and soil.

C.3 Net Benefit

The net benefit is results of deducting the total expenses which included the direct cost and the damage cost from the total income.

4 Data Analysis

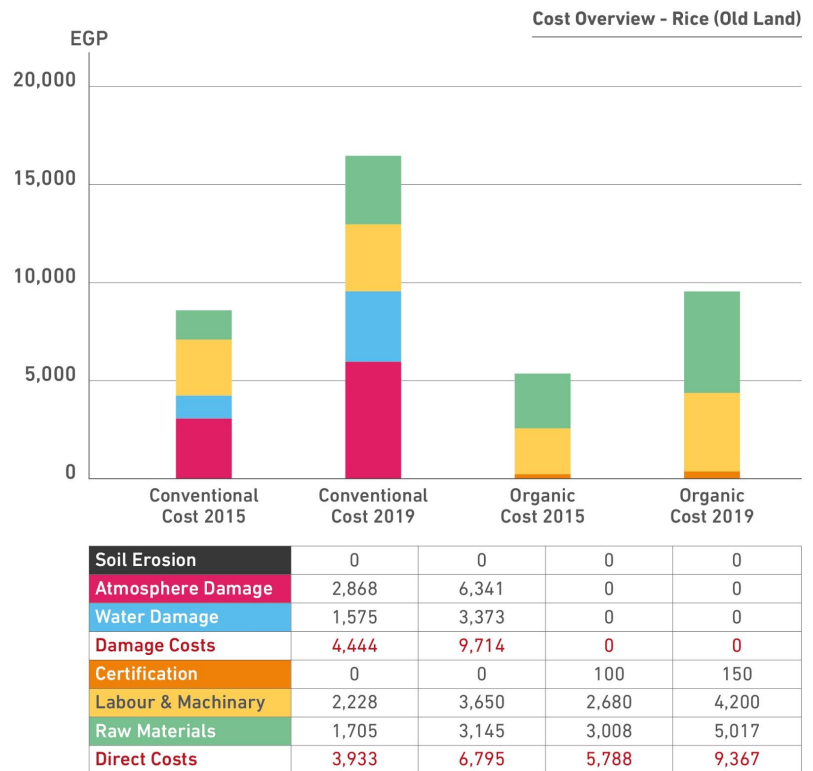
This chapter presents the calculated production costs of the five strategic crops covered by this study. It compares the cost trends of producing these crops under conventional farming and organic farming systems in old land as well as in new land in Egypt during the past four years.

The results are presented using the previously described parameters, they include two main components of the production cost: "Direct Cost" are costs commonly paid by the farmer during production, and "Damage Cost" which are not included in the individual cost calculation.

4.1 Rice Cost per Feddan

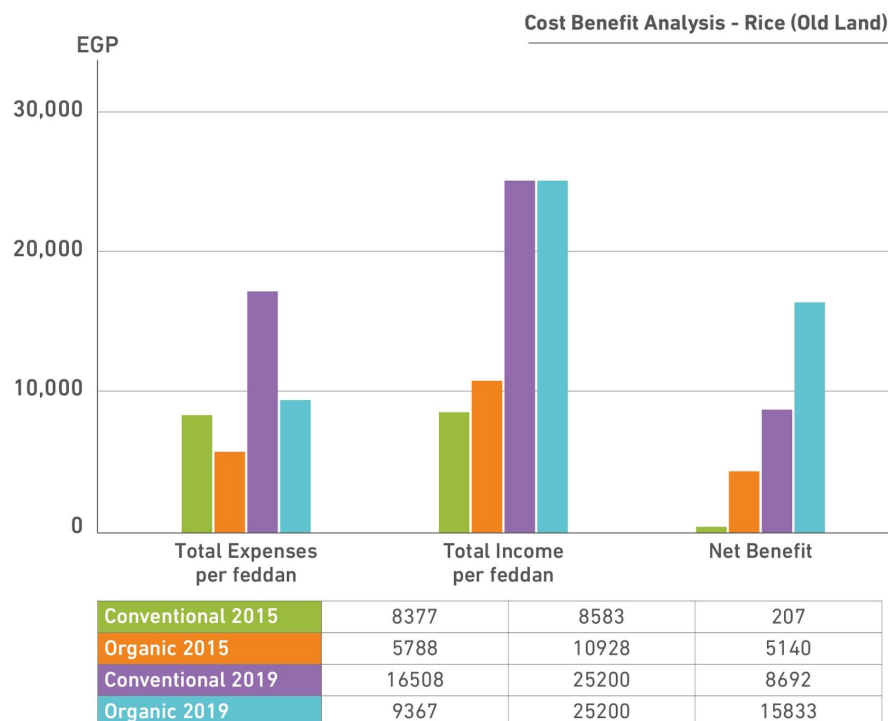
4.1.1 Rice Old Land Cost per Feddan

The higher direct cost for rice production under the organic farming system was calculated in 2015 at EGP 5,788, in contrast to EGP 3,933 under conventional farming system. However, the damage costs in conventional systems were around EGP 4,444 compared with EGP 0.0 for organic farming. While in 2019 The direct cost for rice production under the organic farming system was calculated at EGP 9,367, in contrast to EGP 6,795 under conventional farming system. However, the damage costs in conventional systems were around EGP 9,714 compared with EGP 0.0 for organic farming.



As shown in Figure 4 total expenses per feddan for conventional farming in 2015 are calculated to be 8,377 EGP and the total income was 8,583 EGP. Therefore, the net benefit was 207 EGP. While in organic farming the total expenses were 5,788 EGP and the total income was 10,928 EGP so a net benefit was calculated to be 5,140 EGP. These results clearly emphasize the remarkable advantage of organic farming.

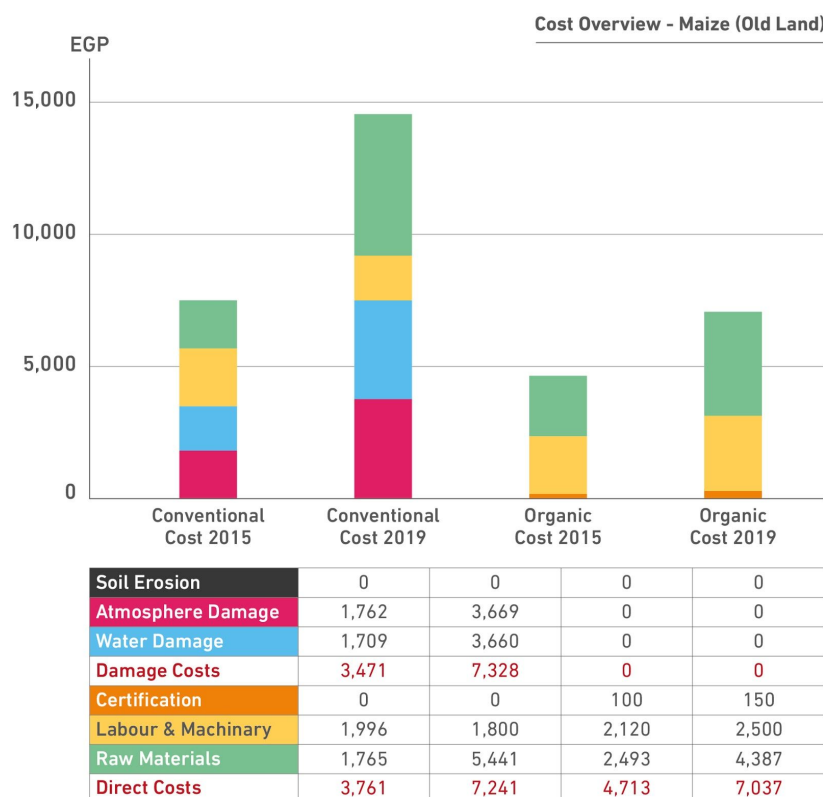
In 2019 the total expenses per feddan for conventional farming are calculated to be 16,508 EGP and the total income was 25,200 EGP. Therefore, the net benefit was 8692 EGP. While in organic farming the total expenses were 9,367 EGP and the total income was 25,200 EGP, a net benefit was calculated to be 15,833 EGP. These results clearly emphasize the remarkable advantage of organic farming.



4.2 Maize Cost per Feddan

4.2.1 Maize Old Land

In 2015 The direct production costs for maize, growing in the old lands were higher under the organic farming regime, calculated around 4,713 EGP, however, in conventional farming the direct cost was around EGP 3,761. In contrast the damage cost in conventional systems was calculated to EGP 3,470. While in 2019 the direct production costs for maize, growing in the old lands are higher under the organic farming regime, calculated at around 7,037 EGP, however, in conventional farming the direct cost is around EGP 7,241. In contrast the damage cost in conventional system was calculated at EGP 7,328

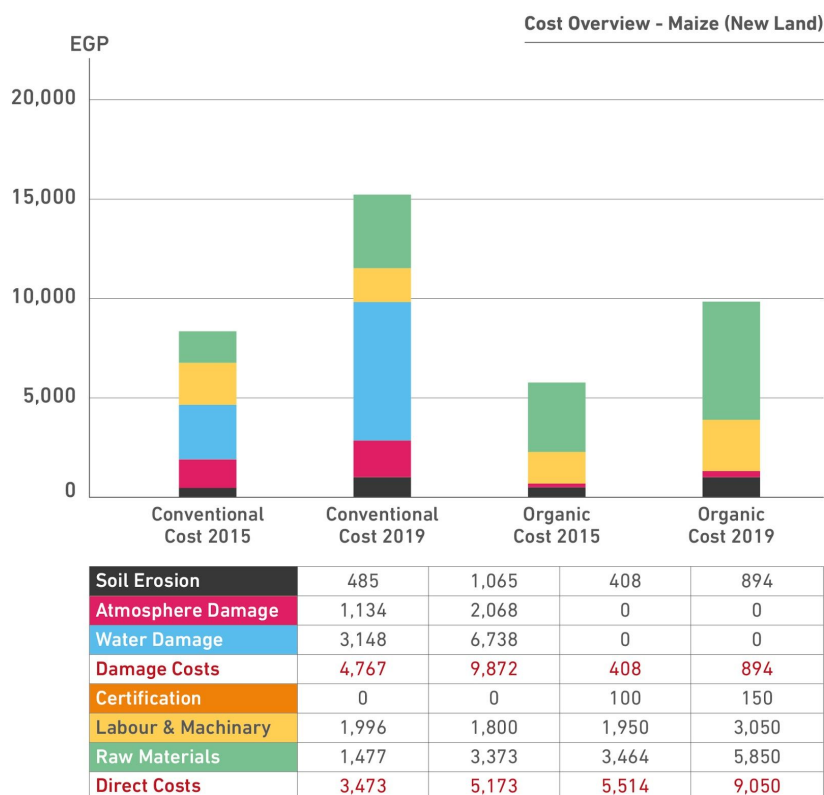


As shown in Figure 6, in 2015 the total expenses per feddan for conventional farming was 7,232 EGP while the total income was 5,506 EGP, which results in a deficit of 1,726- EGP. In organic farming, the total expenses were 4,713 EGP and the total income was 5,580 EGP, thus there is a small net benefit of 866 EGP. while in 2019 the total expenses per feddan for conventional farming was 14,570 EGP while the total income was 8,793 EGP, which results in a deficit of 5,776- EGP. In organic farming, the total expenses were 7,037 EGP and the total income was 9,100 EGP, thus there is a small net benefit of 2,063 EGP.



4.2.2 Maize New Land

In 2015 The direct costs for Maize production in a new land area were higher for organic farming, calculated to be 5,513 EGP per feddan, while at conventional farming the direct cost was around EGP 3,472. On the other hand, the damage costs in conventional farming was around EGP 4,767 and EGP 407 for organic farming in the new land. In 2019 The direct costs for Maize production in a new land area are higher for organic farming, calculated to be 9,050 EGP, while at conventional farming the direct cost was around EGP 5,173. On the other hand, the damage costs in conventional farming was around EGP 9,872 and EGP 894 for organic farming in the new land.



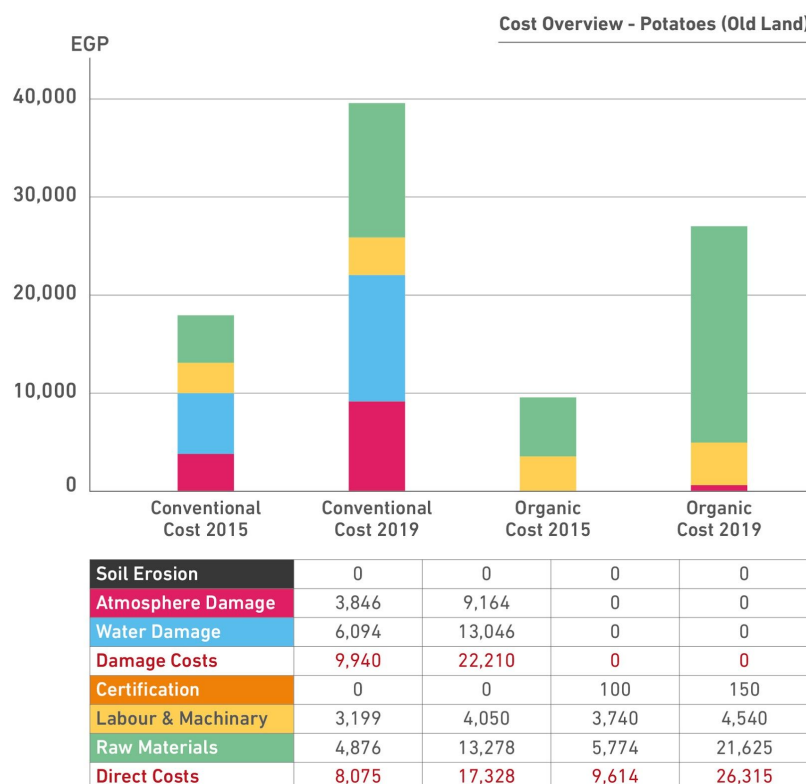
As shown in figure 8 using conventional farming, in 2015 the total expenses were 8,240 EGP while the total income was 5,316 EGP thus it creates a loss of -2,924 EGP. Organic farming shows a similar result, through total expenses of 5,922 EGP and a total income of 3,168 EGP generates a total loss of -2,754 EGP, which is slightly lower than the net loss of conventional farming. In 2019 the total expenses were 15,045 EGP while the total income was 7,436 EGP thus it creates a loss of -7,609 EGP. Organic farming shows a similar result, through total expenses of 9,944 EGP and a total income of 6,825 EGP generates a total loss of -3,119 EGP, which is slightly lower than the deficit of conventional farming.



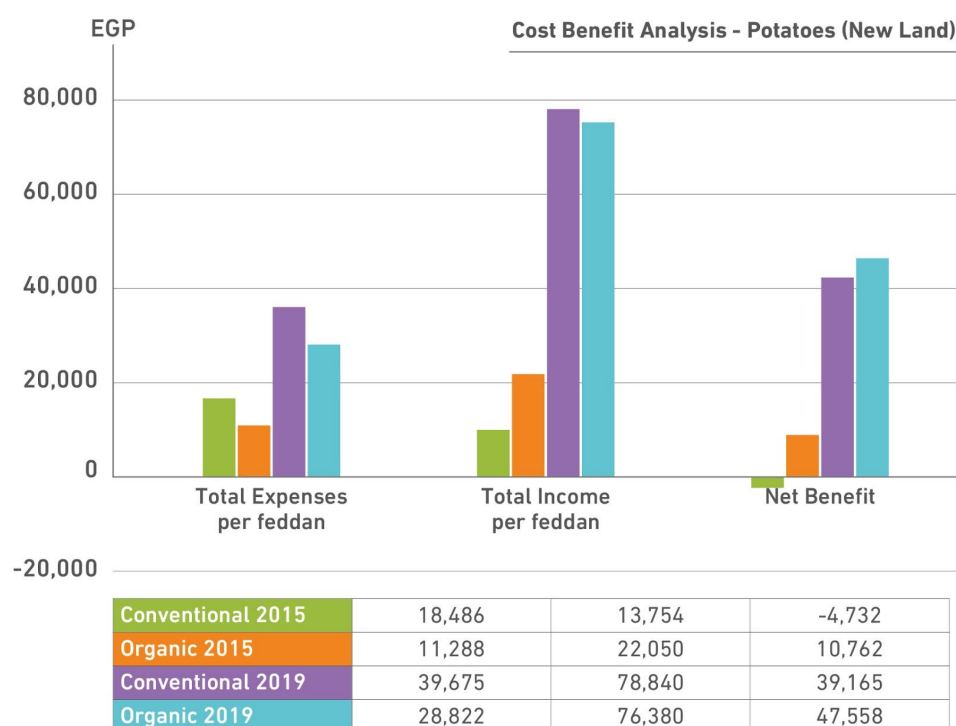
4.3 Potatoes Cost per Feddan

4.3.1 Potatoes Old Land

Figure 9 shows that in 2015 the average direct cost per feddan for potato production in conventional farming at old land was 8,075 EGP, and the damage cost was EGP 9,940. The Figure also shows that the average direct cost per feddan for potato production in organic farming was EGP 9,614, and the damage cost was 0.0 EGP. While in 2019 the average direct cost per feddan for potato production in conventional farming at old land was 17,328 EGP, and the damage cost was EGP 22,210. The Figure also shows that the average direct cost per feddan for potato production in organic farming was EGP 26,315, and the damage cost was 0.0 EGP.

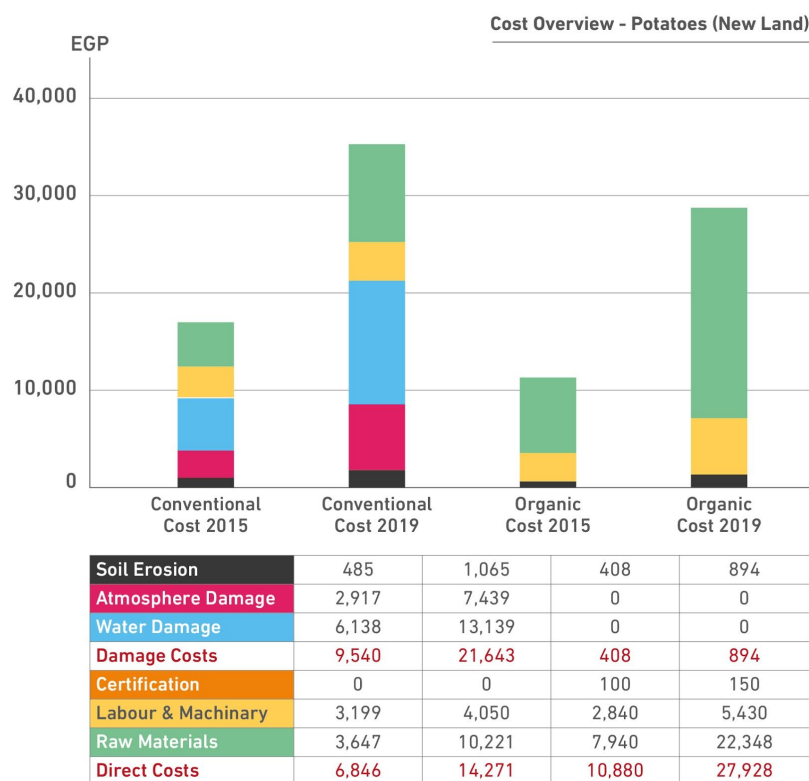


As Figure 10 illustrates, the total expenses per feddan in 2015 are a total of 18,014 EGP and total income per feddan is 13,604 EGP for conventional farming equals a deficit of **-4,411 EGP**. In contrast organic farming produces a net benefit of **10,966 EGP** through the total expenses of **9,614 EGP** and a total income of **20,580 EGP**. Therefore, after including the damage cost the potato production is much more sustainable in organic farming than in conventional. While in 2019, as Figure 10 illustrates, the total expenses per feddan are a total of 39,675 EGP and total income per feddan is 78,840 EGP for conventional farming equals a deficit of 39,165 EGP. In contrast, organic farming produces a net benefit of 47,558 EGP through the total expenses of 28,822 EGP and a total income of 76,380 EGP. Therefore, after including the damage cost the potato production is much more sustainable in organic farming than in conventional.

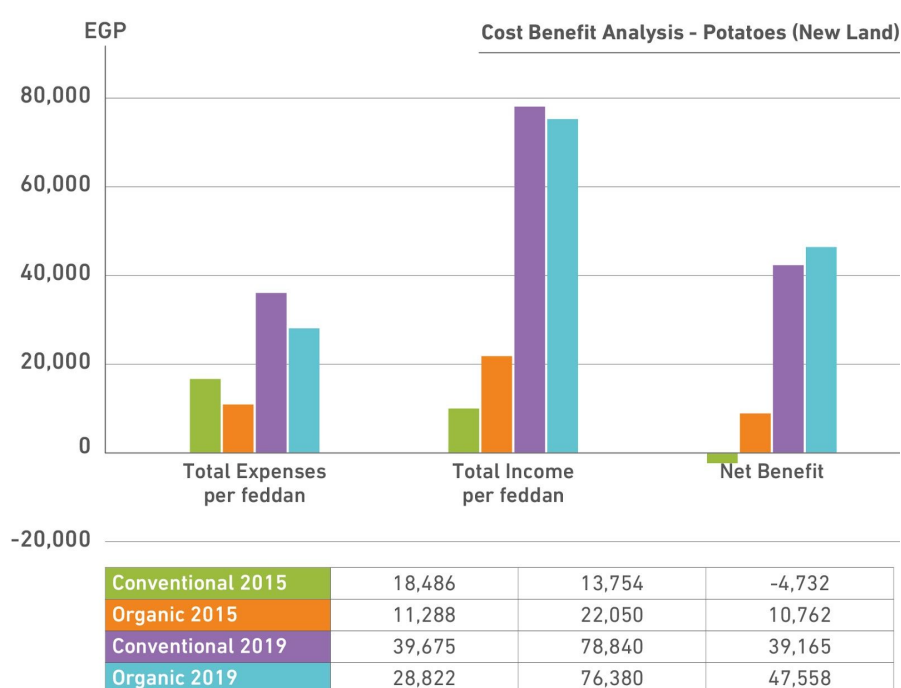


4.3.2 Potatoes New Land

The comparison in Figure 11 shows in 2015 the conventional farming at new land direct costs of 6,846 EGP per feddan, and additionally damage cost of EGP **6,505**. It also shows the average direct cost per feddan of potato production in organic farming in new land areas of EGP 10,880, and damage costs of 407.9 EGP. in 2019 The comparison in Figure 11 shows the conventional farming at new land direct costs of 14,271 EGP per feddan, and additionally damage cost of EGP 21,643. It also shows the average direct cost per fd of potato production in organic farming in new land areas of EGP 27,928, and damage costs of 894 EGP.



Under the conventional farming system, the total expenses were 13,352 EGP while the total income was 13,754 EGP accordingly the net benefit was 402.8 EGP. Under the organic farming system, the total expenses were 11,288 EGP while the total income was 22,050 EGP and thus the net benefit was 10,762 EGP. After including the damage cost potato production is more sustainable in organic farming than in conventional. while in 2019 the total expenses were 13,352 EGP while the total income was 13,754 EGP accordingly the net benefit was 402.8 EGP. Under the organic farming system, the total expenses were 11,288 EGP while the total income was 22,050 EGP and thus the net benefit was 10,762 EGP. After including the damage cost potato production is more sustainable in organic farming than in conventional.



4.4 Wheat Cost per Feddan

4.4.1 Wheat Old Land

For old land, wheat production in 2015 in organic farming generates a direct cost of around 4,893 EGP per feddan as shown in Figure 13. However in conventional farming the direct cost was slightly lower, at EGP 3,373. While the damage cost for conventional farming was EGP 4,147 and for organic farming 0 EGP. in 2019 For old land, wheat production in organic farming generates a direct cost of around 8,591 EGP as shown in Figure 13. However in conventional farming the direct cost was slightly lower, at EGP 6,993. While the damage cost for conventional farming was EGP 8,710 and for organic farming 0 EGP.

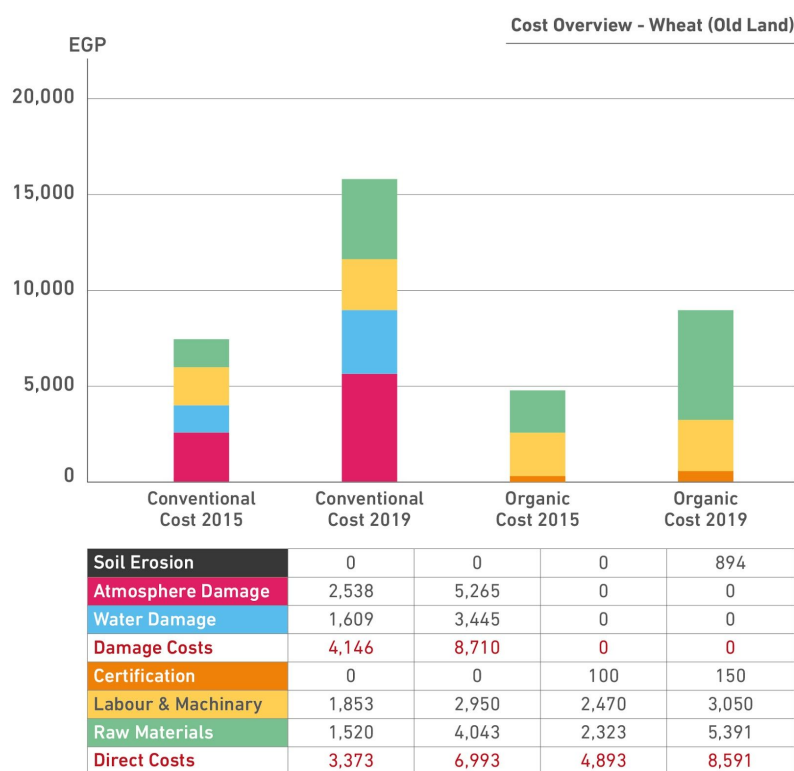
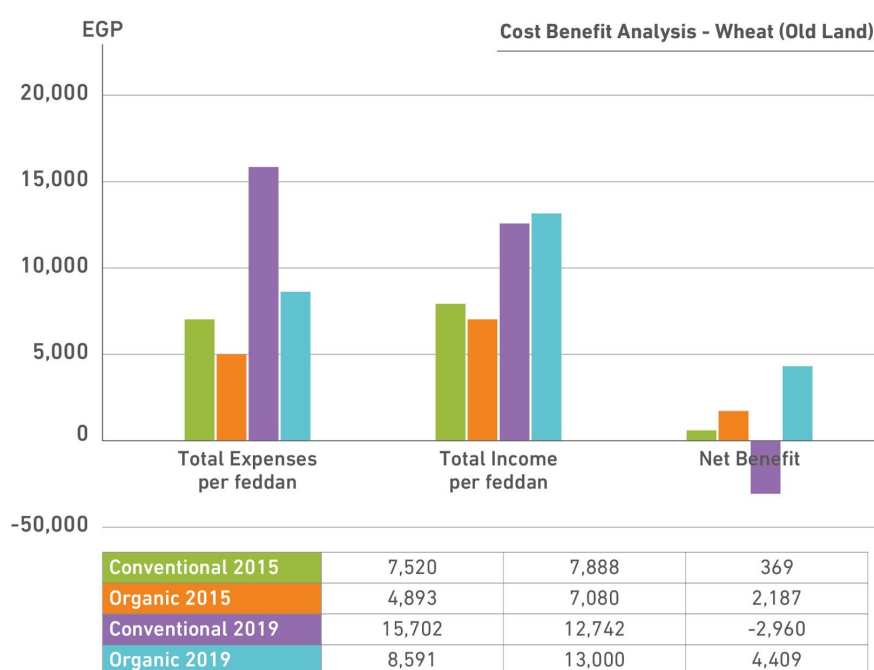
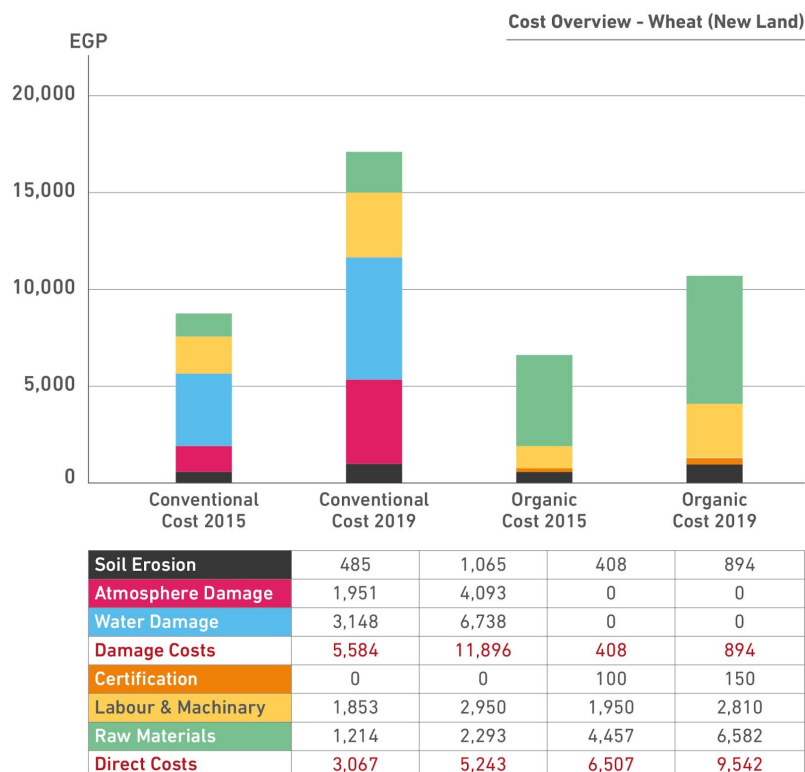


Figure 14 shows the total expenses per feddan of 7,520 EGP and the total income per feddan of 7,889 EGP for conventional farming, therefore it generates a small benefit of 368.8 EGP. In contrast organic farming shows a clear net benefit of 2,187 EGP, calculated by total expenses of 4,893 EGP and a total income of 7,080 EGP. in 2019 Figure 14 shows the total expenses per feddan of 15,702 EGP and the total income per feddan of 12,742 EGP for conventional farming, therefore it generates a small benefit of -2,960 EGP. In contrast organic farming shows a clear net benefit of 4,409 EGP, calculated by total expenses of 8,591 EGP and a total income of 13,000 EGP.

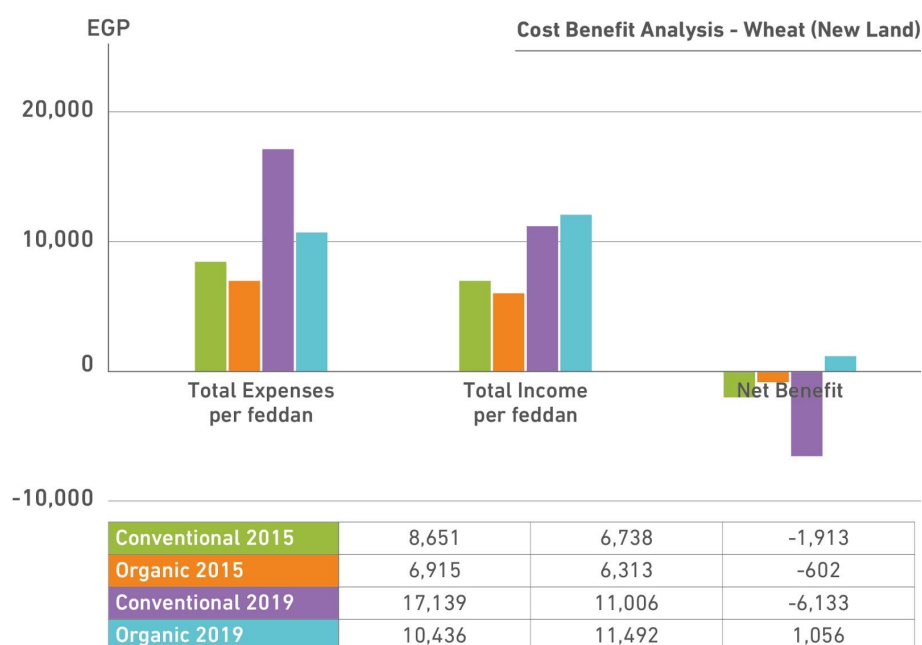


4.4.2 Wheat New Land

In 2015 Conventional farming producing wheat in new land generated direct costs of 3,067 EGP, and damage costs at 5,584 EGP as shown in Figure 15. Furthermore it shows the average direct cost per feddan of wheat production in organic farming of around EGP 6,507 and damage cost around EGP 408. while in 2019 Conventional farming producing wheat in new land generates direct costs of 5,243 EGP, and damage costs at 11,896 EGP as shown in Figure 15. Furthermore it shows the average direct cost per feddan of wheat production in organic farming of around EGP 9,542 and damage cost around EGP 894.



The cost benefit analysis for wheat production at new land shows as a result for conventional farming in 2015 total expenses of 8,651 EGP and a total income of 6,738 EGP. Consequently there is a net deficit generated of around 1,913- EGP. On the other hand, the figure shows the slightly smaller loss of organic farming which is around 602- EGP, which is calculated by the total expenses of 6,915 EGP and the total income of 6,313 EGP. in 2019 The cost benefit analysis for wheat production at new land shows as a result for conventional farming total expenses of 17,193 EGP and a total income of 11,006 EGP. Consequently there is a net deficit generated of around 6,133- EGP. On the other hand, the figure shows the slightly smaller loss of organic farming which is around 1,056 EGP, which is calculated by the total expenses of 10,436 EGP and the total income of 11,006 EGP.



4.5 Cotton Cost per Feddan

4.5.1 Cotton Old Land

Figure 17 shows the average direct cost per feddan of cotton production at conventional farming in the old land, which was 4,280 EGP, and the damage cost, at around EGP 3,556. The graph also shows the direct cost of cotton production in organic farming which was 6,109 EGP, and the damage Cost for organic farming at EGP 0 in the old land. In 2019 Figure 17 shows the average direct cost per feddan of cotton production at conventional farming in the old land, which was 9,420 EGP, and the damage cost, at around EGP 4,280. The graph also shows the direct cost of cotton production in organic farming which was 8,955 EGP, and the damage Cost for organic farming at EGP 0 in the old land.

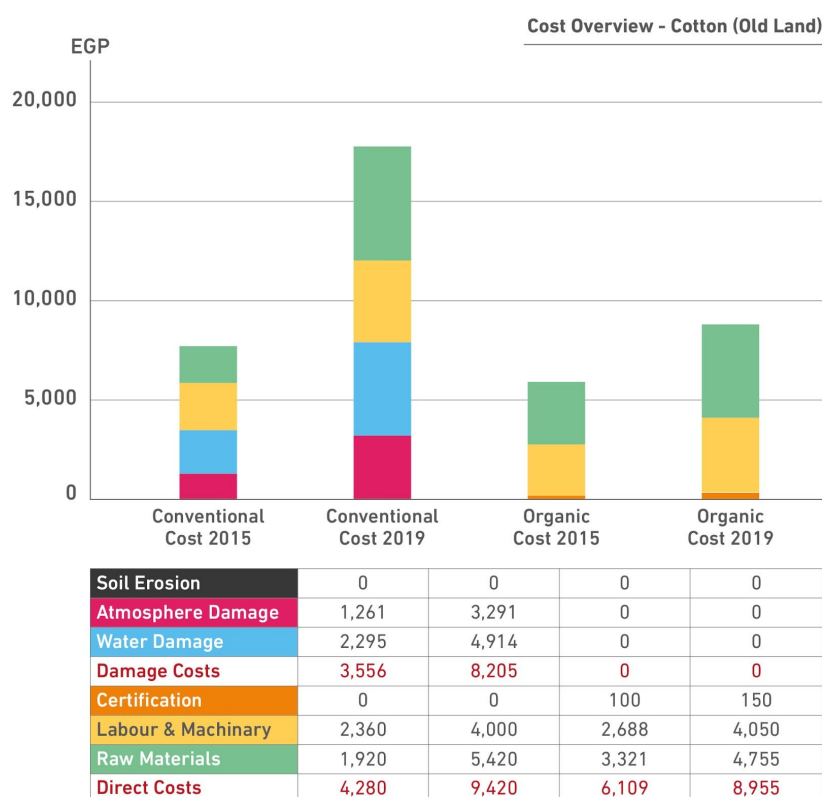
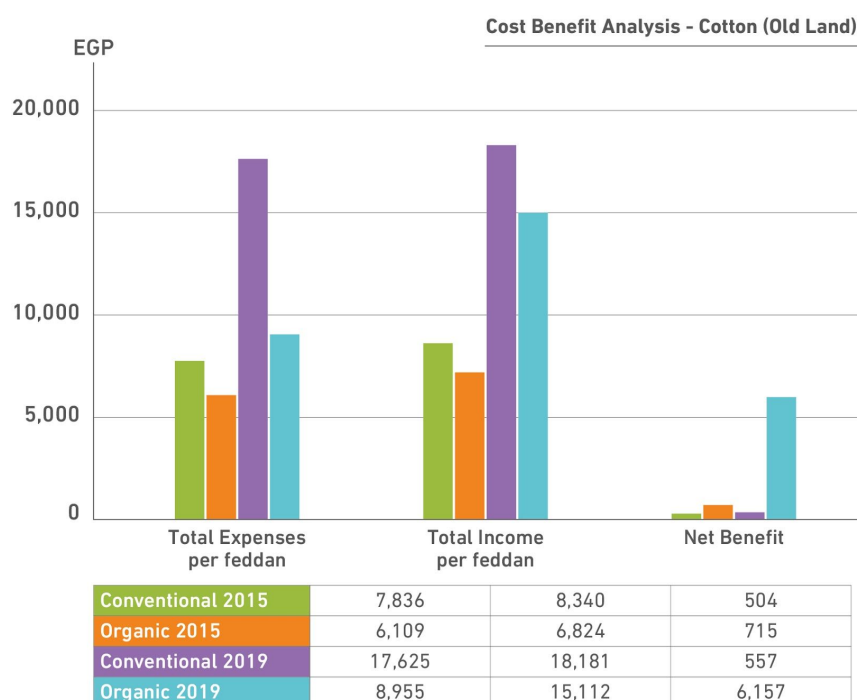


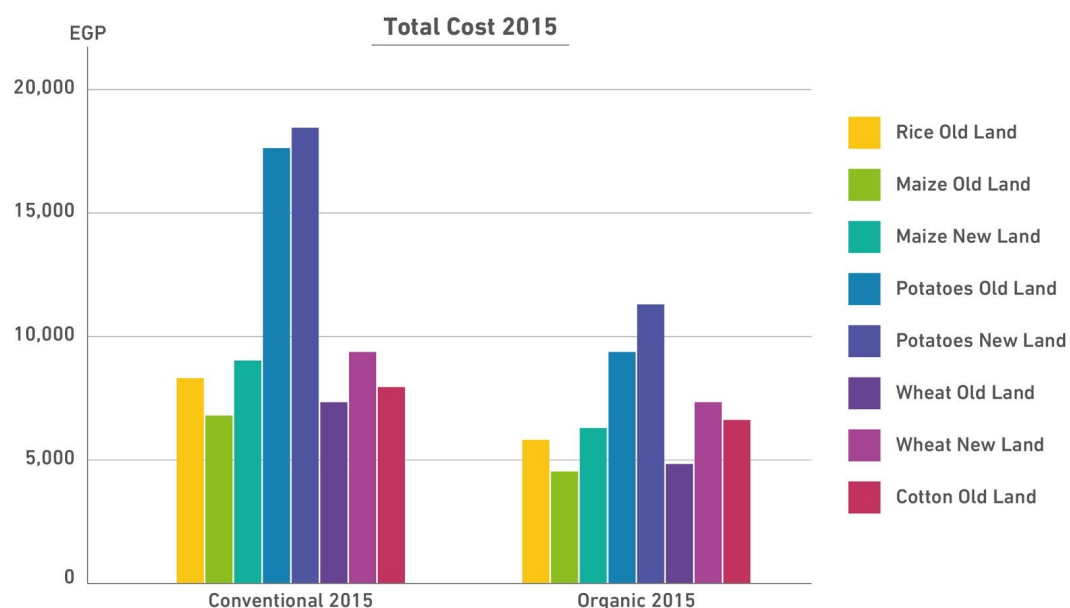
Figure 18 shows the total expenses per feddan (7,836 EGP) and the total income per feddan (8,340 EGP) for conventional farming, resulting in a very small net benefit of 504.3 EGP. In contrast the organic farming generated total expenses of 6,109 EGP and a total income of 6,824 EGP, consequently it shows a higher net benefit of 715 EGP. while in 2019 the total expenses per feddan (17,625 EGP) and the total income per feddan (18,181 EGP) for conventional farming, resulting in a very small net benefit of 557 EGP. In contrast the organic farming generated total expenses of 8,955 EGP and a total income of 15,112 EGP, consequently it shows a higher net benefit of 6,157 EGP.



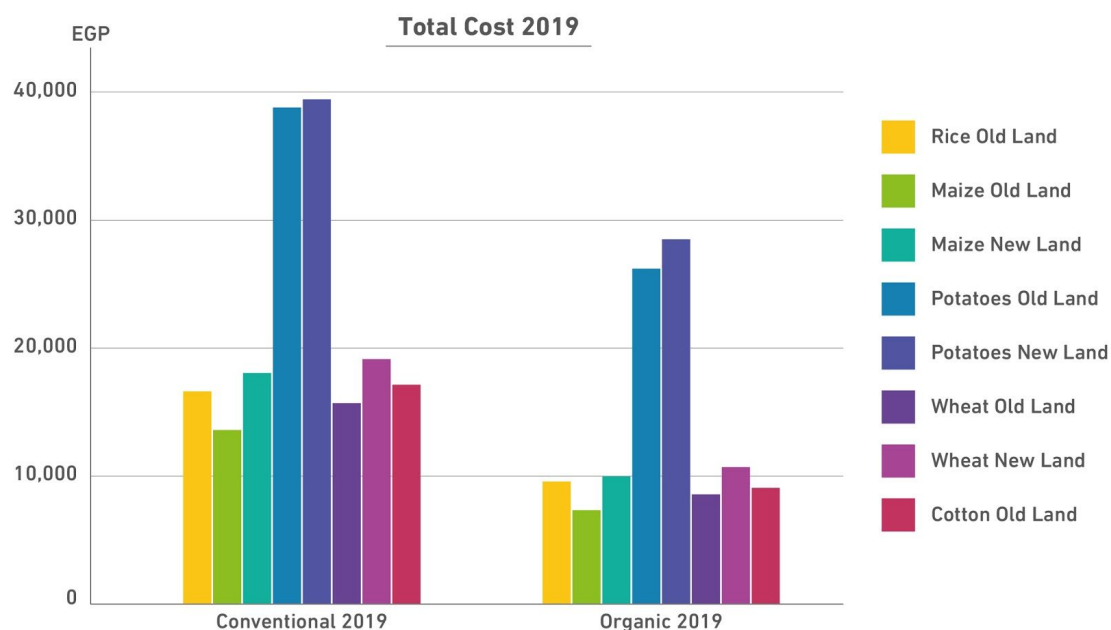
5 Results and Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Results

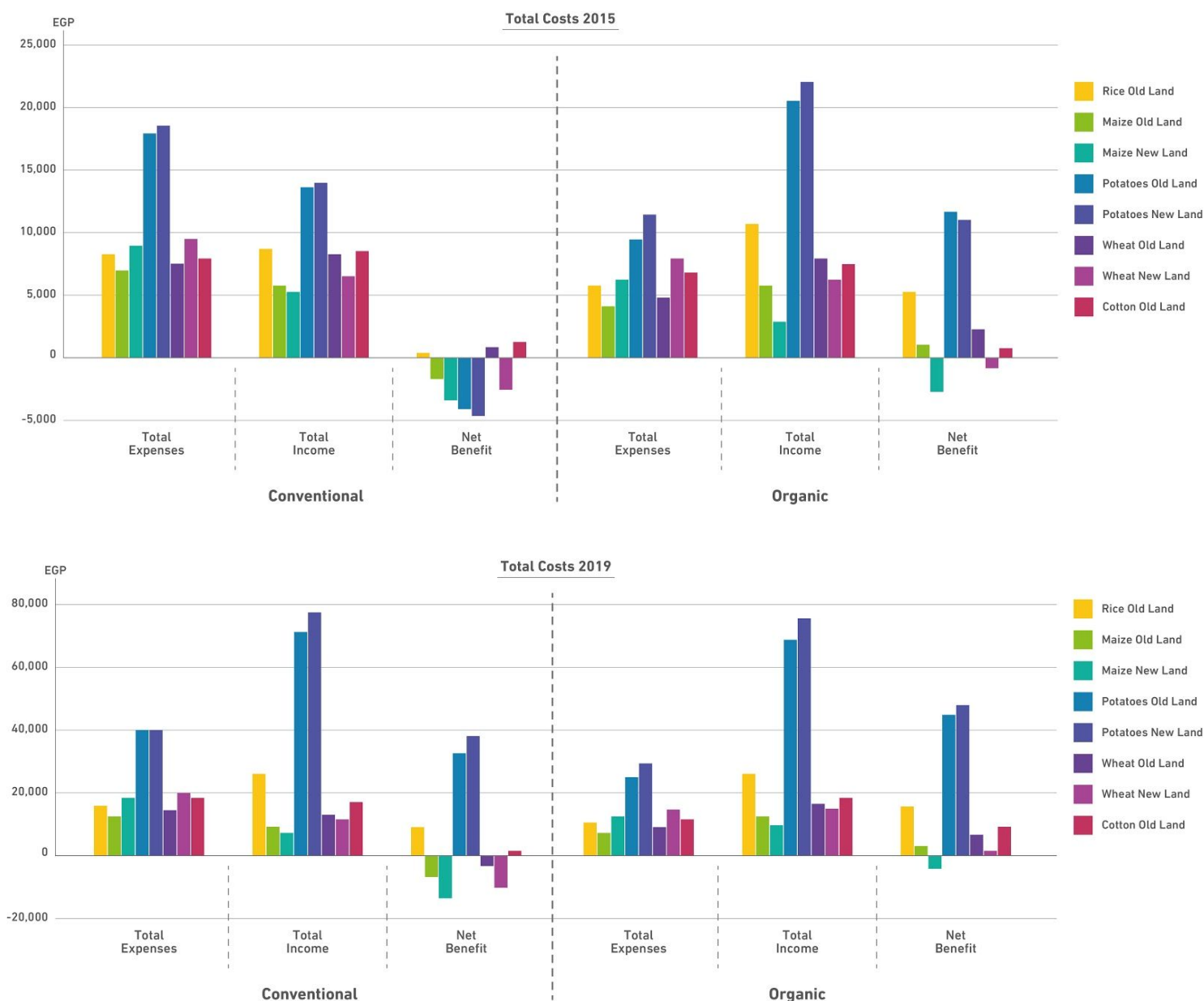
The aim of this chapter is to summarize the results in two graphs, to give an overview and show the main outcome of the previously described results in 2015 and updating calculation for results of 2019. Figure 19 compares the total production costs of organic and conventional farming considering all five evaluated crops.



The graph outlines the higher costs for the environment and society occurring through the use of conventional farming methods, since they include higher damage costs. Organic farming enables a cost reduction for society per Feddan for nearly every crop evaluated in this study, because of the low damage costs included in the calculation.



To summarize the results of the study, figure 20 below, gives an overview on the five evaluated crops in terms of total income and total expenses, calculating the net benefit and comparing it between organic farming and conventional farming methodologies. The result of this comparison shows that the net benefit for society and environment using conventional farming methodologies is negative, while organic farming produces a positive net benefit for the most part.



5.2 Discussion

Organic farming has proven to be remarkably effective in reversing the negative impact of agriculture on the environment. The research concludes that although organic agriculture has a slightly higher direct input cost of production, it enables a reduction of the environmental damage costs, and therefore, results in better cost effectiveness and profitability in the long term for society as a whole.

The study has proven that, with regard to prices, Organic food is in fact already cheaper to produce than conventional products. If the externalized costs, which are currently transferred to society or future generations, would appear in supermarket bills, this would already be obvious to everyone. Taking this into consideration, research on our own production has shown that a wide variety of Organic grown crops are cheaper than crops grown under conventional practices if the costs for pollution, CO₂ emissions, energy, and water consumption are considered.

Organic agriculture has recently gained importance as an alternative farming system, because under the current situation, soil organic matter (SOM) plays a key role in sustainable agriculture in terms of ecology and farm economics. The agricultural inputs in organic farming systems are not subsidized, but they improve the soil structure, maintain water quality, increase soil organic matter, increase biodiversity and yields, while decreasing the total cost to produce one ton of any crop.

As a matter of fact, organic farming enables a cost reduction for society for every crop evaluated in this study, because of the low damage costs included in the calculation. Even if the selling price of Organic products was equal to conventional products, the Organic products would still be more profitable, when including the true cost.

5.3 Conclusion

After establishing that Organic farming is cheaper even if we sell at conventional prices if true cost is included, this study calls for:

- 100% organic agriculture in Egypt.
- Future studies to include a more comprehensive set of indicators to measure the true cost of products. The results of the TEEB studies, to mainstream the values of biodiversity and ecosystem services into decision-making at all levels, should be included, as well as DALY, developed by WHO, which stands for Disability Adjusted Life Year which is a measuring unit that indicates negative impact on health and looks at the loss of “productive years” of a person due to death or illness.
- The Egyptian government to implement a polluter tax to show the true price.
- Government, researchers, and farmers to make this study on all crops in Egypt.
- Governments, researchers and farmers in all countries of the world to make this study to determine the further of agriculture in their countries.
- All members of the organic and biodynamic agroecology and sustainable agriculture movement worldwide to promote this kind of studies.
- Researchers worldwide to study the economic impact of organic agriculture regarding water consumption, health and social impact and climate mitigation and adaptation.
- Entrepreneurs and companies worldwide to include true cost accounting into their business models.
- The governments and education institutions worldwide to increase the education and training opportunities in organic agriculture to enable more farmers worldwide to benefit from the economic, ecological, cultural and social benefits of organic agriculture.
- The governments and all media representatives to increase awareness of all the benefits of organic agriculture among their citizens.
- All consumers of the world to contribute to a better future for forthcoming generations by their educated and responsible purchase decisions today.

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