# OUTCOMES OF NATURAL FARMING IN SHIMLA DISTRICT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH: A CASE STUDY

Neha Mishra[1*] et al.,

**ABSTRACT**

Subhash Palekar Natural Farming (SPNF) is a traditionally rooted scientific method of chemical free farming system. This agro ecology based diversified approach sustains the climate resilient agriculture ensuring low farm input cost as compared to conventional agriculture. It advocates the use of natively grown farm inputs, indigenous cow dung and cow urine. Approximately more than 1.5 lakhs farmers have adopted SPNF in all 12 districts of Himachal Pradesh. The Shimla district, having apple as main crop was purposively selected for the present study. Under SPNF, farmers are harvesting 3 to 18 crops along with apple on the same land ensuring 100 % soil cover by taking five different crop combination out of which apple + bean + pulses + vegetables for kharif and apple + pea + vegetables for rabi are preferred. The article aims to statistically compare the Natural Farming (NF) and Conventional Farming (CF) systems in terms of yield and cost. The significant increase in yield of NF over CF is 7.01% in kharif and 147.62% in rabi season. Different costs like labour cost, material cost and total cost have been compared. For kharif season, the labour, material and total costs of CF are significantly greater than NF i.e., 18.78%, 42.62% and 20.61% respectively. But for rabi season, all these costs are slightly higher for NF due to cultivation of 3-8 intercrops by natural farmers in absence of main crop apple which is negligibly returns significant yield under NF.

**KEYWORDS: Natural Farming, Conventional Farming, Apple, Intercropping, Sustainability.**