

# Sustainability Through Regenerative Farming

*Revitalizing farmlands, especially their soils, has undeniable advantages, both ecologically and commercially.*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Mark Twain once famously said: "Buy land, they're not making it anymore."

Though joking, he's got a point. There is a limited supply of land useful for farming on this planet, and, in the U.S. especially, it's shrinking by the year. The American Farmland Trust released an alarming report entitled "Farms Under Threat: The State of America's Farmland" which revealed that in the two-decade period between 1992 and 2012, 31 million acres of farmland disappeared from ecosystems across the country.

Sadly, the loss of these farms will affect more than just the local communities in which they are situated. "Without farms, there's not only no food but there's no future. We need farmland to feed us and sustain our economy—but also to help restore our planet," cautioned the report.

Some of that farmland was lost due to the encroachment of human habitation. High-quality cropland, forests, and pastures were simply bulldozed and paved over to make way for more residential, commercial, and industrial development. But, some of that farmland was lost not to make room for a new tract of suburban homes, but because the land itself was mismanaged, overexploited, or toxified by pollution and is no longer economically viable for use in agriculture.

Engineering a Path to Healthier, More Sustainable Farming

A new breed of environmentally-conscious agribusinesses, like GÜDPHORIA, are committed to turning the tide by restoring neglected and abused lands, revitalizing soil and ecosystems, and advancing the science of conservation. Broadly, this endeavor is called regenerative agriculture.



Image Courtesy of Environmental and Energy Study Institute

The tools and expertise that underpin this movement cover every major factor affecting both the health of the land and its inhabitants as well as the interdependent ecosystems that touch it:

**Soil Regeneration:** Promoting the formation of new soil by retaining soil carbon, cycling nutrients, using landscaping and cover crops to limit soil erosion, and protecting organisms that are critical to soil development.

**Biodiversity:** Preventing the loss of critical species in an ecosystem, safeguarding natural habitats, and blocking the incursion of non-native, invasive species.

**Water Cycle:** Ensuring that natural water sources can move freely through a farming ecosystem and that agricultural practices do not negatively impact groundwaters or cause toxins to runoff.

**Ecosystem Services:** The improvement of human agriculture by leveraging natural systems, such as insect pollinators; the natural decomposition of waste by fungi, bacteria, and animals; and whole ecosystems to prevent soil erosion, reduce the risk of flood, and detoxify water.

**Biosequestration:** Capturing atmospheric carbon in terrestrial biological processes, such as by soil carbon sequestration where plants absorb carbon dioxide during photosynthesis, which ultimately fertilizes the ground soil when the plant decomposes.

**Climate Change Resilience:** Using farming techniques to make habitats less susceptible to increasing temperatures and volatile storm systems.

Regenerative agriculture is made up of a subset of individual, sustainable agricultural practices that are designed to reduce farm waste, nurture the growth of beneficial organisms, infuse soil with fresh nutrients, and shield ecosystems from both natural and human-caused risk factors:

**Permaculture:** The development of agricultural systems that are sustainable, self-sufficient, and capable of remaining in place for extended periods.

**Agroecology:** The application of ecological principles (e.g. protecting biodiversity, native species, and interconnected habitats) to agriculture.

**Agroforestry:** Growing trees and shrubs on farmland to enhance crop yields, increase biodiversity, and improve soil structure.

**Restoration Ecology:** Converting degraded or depleted ecosystems back into arable lands and active habitats by proactively removing toxins, replenishing nutrients, and repairing damage.

**Keyline Design:** Maximizing the use of water on a farm (and minimizing soil compaction) by directing rainwater towards drier areas with plowlines and other landscaping methods.

Holistic Management: Attacking agricultural challenges by using a variety of different techniques in combination to address all the factors in the ecosystem (e.g. water, carbon, energy, fauna, and microbes).

### The Benefits of Regenerative Agriculture

Revitalizing farmlands, especially their soils, has undeniable advantages, both ecologically and commercially. Land that retains nutrients, isn't prone to eroding, and which exists in harmony with surrounding ecosystems and the water cycle requires fewer farming inputs like chemical fertilizers and extensive irrigation.

It also nets stronger crop yields for farmers, better withstands damaging weather patterns like heat waves, droughts, floods, and severe storms — extreme weather events that are becoming shockingly common due to climate change — and can even result in crops that are less stressed by pests, pathogens, and competing plants (and thus require fewer pesticides or herbicides).

Clearly, there is a lot of serious science and technical know-how behind achieving all the goals of regenerative farming, and many farmers, already burdened by the challenges of running a modern agricultural business, worry that adding new, sustainable proficiencies to their operation is not a practical option for them. On the contrary, virtually any farm can improve its own economic efficiency and ecological bonafides by starting with a few, simple, and commonsense changes.

First and foremost, they should focus their energies on minimizing the impact (metaphorically and literally) of farming the land by investigating no-till and low-till agriculture techniques and investing in composting. No-till farming is proven to improve soil structure while decreasing soil erosion and improving the retention of water and nutrients in soils. More emphasis on composting, which is just nature's way of recycling organic matter, helps farmers reduce their need for external fertilizers (lowering their costs and improving the health of their soils without adding chemicals that might contaminate groundwaters).

### The Future of Farming Looks to Its Past

For millennia, indigenous cultures have understood the need to grow crops and raise livestock in a manner that ensures generations to come would still have access to our shared, natural resources. Modern, industrial farming has strayed from that path and the consequence is that the world's farms have been "stretched to a breaking point," in the words of a 2021 United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization report.

Adding more and more external fertilizers, toxifying soil and groundwater, overexploiting land until all its life-creating nutrients wash away, and continuing to farm in a manner that does not recognize the increasing threat of greenhouse... [Read More](#)

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