

Practice of Sustainable Agricultural Techniques

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Summary

Instead of struggling against nature, work with nature by introducing sustainable agriculture. That way, you can get high yields while still being eco-friendly (and thus, crop-friendly). To mitigate the effects of chemical-based and industrial agriculture, you need to use the best knowledge and technology available to get the best results. If done well, farmers can use less pesticide and fertilizer which saves money and protects the farmland (making it more productive), not to mention the environment.

Crop rotation is the practice of changing the crop a field grows each planting season. It is a very effective sustainable agriculture technique that circumvents many negative effects that come from planting the same crop in a field year after year. One of those consequences is unwanted pests. Crop rotation makes it so that a pest who prefers a particular crop will not have a continuous food source to sustain their increasing population. European corn borers are one such pest that currently plague US farmers since corn is generally grown in two-year rotations with soybeans. It would take at least a four-year rotation to control many pests like corn borers. Rotation is a natural pest deterrent that by breaking up the pests' reproductive cycles.

Using rotations, agriculturalists have a chance to utilize soybeans and legumes to replenish the soil so that artificial fertilizers aren't needed as much. Cycling soybeans and corn makes it so nitrogen levels are higher in the soil, resulting in higher corn yields.

Every farmer needs more control over weeds, pests, diseases, erosion and soil quality. Here are a few of the most popular techniques used by farmers practicing sustainable agriculture. Pest infestations are a very important part of the crop rotation discussion since government policies are beginning to call for more bioenergy crops. This governmental encouragement shouldn't keep farmers from rotating crops in favor of growing corn every year since crop rotation is an important role in fending off pests.

In addition to crop rotation, many agriculturalists like to utilize cover crops to keep land working all year round instead of leaving it bare for part of the year (which also has negative consequences). These crops include hairy vetch, clover, and oats.

Conclusion

The right cover crop is worth you're the time and effort because it makes your land less susceptible to insects and weeds and more nutrient-filled. This way, the land will need fewer chemical fertilizers, insecticides and herbicides.

It is easy to argue that soil is the prized possession of any farmland. Healthy soil means growth and life both of crops and helpful insects and microbes. But those helpful little friends are often destroyed by pesticides. The product of good soil is a crop that is less likely to be eaten by pests. But bad soil produces crops that need a lot of fertilizer to produce well. There are several ways to improve the quality of the soil. Cover crops, leaving crop residue, and compost all help.

When you think about a farm as an ecosystem and not a food-factory, the door is opened to many intriguing ways to control pests. Many insects, birds and spiders are a natural pest control, being predators of agricultural pests. Chemical pesticides have the unfortunate consequence of killing both predators and pests so you are left without the friendly animals that would keep your farm pest free.