

UnFed: Creating Equality in Our Food System



Regenerative Agriculture

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y9V9knyP0d8>

Regenerative agriculture is definitely a buzzword in the industry right now. When we're talking about regenerative agriculture we're talking about a sustainable food production system that not only produces nutrient-dense food but can also contribute to reversing the effects of global warming. About 10% of greenhouse gasses come from a combination of carbon emissions that result from a tilling practices on crop fields, and methane that is produced from conventional meat and poultry farming practices. Both of these greenhouse gases are addressed by regenerative farming,

Plants

In a healthy functioning ecosystem, carbon is stored in the earth. But when we till soil, as is standard in modern agriculture, all of that carbon is released out of the land, and has no place to go but up. Part of the solution is to draw the carbon in the atmosphere back down the earth and that's where regenerative agriculture comes in.

Regenerative agriculture replaces the practice of annual tilling and reseeding with practices that build and nurture soil structure on our crop fields. Soil scientists say that, at the rate we are degrading the top layer of soil through tilling, we have about 50-60 years left of regular harvesting. We are destroying soil to a point that it will no longer be able to grow food. Regenerative agriculture restores the foundation of essential minerals and microbiology which allows plants to be strong and healthy, and allows carbon to remain in the earth.

Over the last few decades we have seen this cycle where the soil is getting weaker. Industrial agriculturists have chosen to genetically modify the seeds, and supplement the dead soil we created with pesticides, herbicides and chemical fertilizers. There is a dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico the size of the state of Texas where things don't live or grow anymore. Coming down the Mississippi River, on the sides of the river at the basin you see the highest rates of cancer in the country. That is all from water runoff from all of the chemicals and pesticides used by big agriculture in the middle of the country. So, we have this storm brewing that is finally gathering attention across the United States and across the globe. It's a real thing.

Animals

Our current livestock farming practices are also having long-term negative effects on the environment. We have moved cows, chickens, and pigs off the farm and into industrial feedlot situations. They don't get to go outside. They are fed pesticide-covered corn and soy instead of being able to graze, and they are injected with anti-biotics to address the diseases created by these conditions. These practices are not only inhumane, but the animals are producing methane in massively concentrated quantities. This methane is a significant contributor to greenhouse gases. Regenerative agriculture puts animals back into the system where they naturally belong, grazing on grass, fertilizing the soil, and being able to live outdoors in a humane style.

As individuals, there is a lot we can do to support agricultural practices that can result in improved health for our bodies and our environment. It starts with becoming more aware of where our food comes from and how it is grown and produced. We should have a standard where we don't want the lowest quality of food possible in our bodies, but where demand one that it higher.

When allowed to do her work, nature has a magical way of producing bounty for all of us to enjoy. Regenerative Farming practices are a way to synchronize with natural rhythms, take care of our soil, and produce the healthiest food possible. There are easy things we can all do change our habits and contribute to the transformation of the world to a better and healthier place for all of us.

Things You Can Do

- Support brands and companies that produce food in a responsible and conscious way. Avoid eating meat that is feed-lot or traditionally grown.
- Buy local food and support farms that grow organically and use regenerative practices. Learn about how they grow and what kinds of seeds they use.
- Grow more food at home and sync up with nature's rhythms.
- Be aware of local food policy, laws, and regulations around agriculture, environmental practices, and pesticide and chemical use.

Check out the resources below. They spell out what it takes to convert from traditional agriculture that is destroying our ability to grow food, to a regenerative model that can feed the planet in a healthy, equitable, sustainable way.

Resources:

Rodale Institute - <https://rodaleinstitute.org/>

Regeneration International - <https://regenerationinternational.org/>

RegenAG - <http://regenag.com/web/>

Books:

Dirt to Soil, by Gabe Brown

For the Love of Soil, Nicole Masters

Drawdown, Paul Hawken

No-Till Intensive Vegetable Culture, Bryan O'Hara

Teeming with Microbes: The Organic Gardener's Guide to the Soil Food Web, by Jeff Lowenfels and Wayne Lewis

Documentaries:

The Biggest Little Farm

The Need to Grow

Kiss the Ground