

Regenerative Farming: *What is it, Why Does our Health Depend on it, and Why is it So Necessary in the Fight Against Global Warming?*

Regenerative agriculture describes a set of farming practices that are intended to build fertile healthy soil by feeding the microbes in the soil. Regenerative agriculture, like organic farming, eschews chemical fertilizers and pesticides, but it goes beyond organic in actively working to feed the soil to support the soil microbes. It is this microbial richness of the soil that gives us the most nutrient-dense foods.

Additionally, regenerative farming practices have the collateral benefit of not only sequestering carbon in the soil – thereby reducing its release into the atmosphere as CO₂ – but actively *pulling* CO₂ from the atmosphere at the same time.

The productivity of current intensive agriculture is maintained only through excessive tillage, and external fertilizers and pesticides. Such practices have systematically destroyed the biological activity of our soils by stripping the soil of its biodiversity (in other words, destroyed the microbe content of the soil). As we lose this biological activity, we also lose minerals and nutrients, not merely in our soils, but also in our foods, our plant medicines and ultimately our bodies.

Crops grown in soil that's been depleted of minerals, leaves any food and/or consumable products similarly deficient. Mineral deficiencies have been linked to specific health issues, such as teenage depression, ADD, and autism.

Using carbon farming to grow our plants is not only critical to the plant's nutritional value, but in our fight to reduce the effect of global warming as well. The main reason why the temperature of the Earth keeps rising is the continuously increasing carbon emissions. As we all know, there is too much carbon gas in the atmosphere, and efforts to reduce those emissions alone is not enough. The carbon has to be taken from the atmosphere and sequestered back into the soil.

Soil is the second largest reservoir of carbon on the planet (the oceans being first). The rate at which industrial farming is destroying our soils is alarming. In the past four decades alone, a third of the world's farmland has been destroyed. Most frighteningly is the effect this soil degradation has on the earth's climate. As our soils degrade, they lose the ability to hold their vast amounts of carbon, thus releasing disastrously large amounts of CO₂ into our atmosphere.

By switching from intensive industrial farming to regenerative farming practices, we could still have the opportunity to regenerate our degraded soil. Most importantly, our soils will not only regain their ability to hold their CO₂, but once again begin to actively pull harmful CO₂ out of the atmosphere.

The opportunity to begin to reverse this dangerous trend of irresponsible farming practices is within our grasp. If we require all cannabis growers in this State to adhere to these principals, we will have the most nutritionally valuable cannabis while saving our planet's future at the same time. The time to act is now.