



The Importance Of Building Soil Health

And Diversity

It seems everywhere you go the word in agriculture these days is regenerative farming. It used to be biological farming, natural farming, ecological farming, holistic farming, no-till farming, cover cropping, biodynamic farming that were the buzz words. Now we are talking about regenerative farming which basically covers all and any type of farming that focuses on increasing soil health and restoring carbon in the soil.

A couple of years ago we met and filmed Gabe Brown who is an outstanding example of what it can mean to be a regenerative farmer. What follows is a short summary of an interview of Gabe which asks why he is doing what he is to help his fellow farmers.

“Gabe Brown is one of the great bridge builders in farming. No matter which corner of agriculture you come from, or even if you don’t work in agriculture, Brown’s talks about how regenerative farming can restore our ravaged soils to vitality makes sense. Moreover, he presents it with a plainspoken, pragmatic aplomb that captivates and never alienates, instead drawing listeners into the pleasure and excitement he gets from trying out new ideas. He explains techniques with a clarity that eludes many professional educators, and when the moment requires he can drive straight to the core of an issue with one stroke.

*When a farmer said to Gabe it all sounded great but asked why should he put in the extra work? Gabe simply asked him if he cared about his grandchildren. People who come away from a Gabe Brown talk dissatisfied are as rare as hen’s teeth. Now after many years of explaining his soil building wizardry, he has now found time to write a book: **Dirt to Soil** that tells his story and explains what he does and why it works. The book includes farming practices, a philosophy of nature and the story of how Gabe and his family survived several years of natural disasters in the mid-1990’s, an ordeal that proved pivotal.”**

Over the years Gabe has gleaned information, bits and pieces from individuals, organisations and Nature herself. He has then applied as much as he could in his own operation. For over 25 years experimented to achieve his results but claims that others could now achieve the same in 5 years following what he shares.

Gabe says the current industrialized, commoditized production model is one of following recipe cards, whether you are a livestock producer, a cash grain producer or a vegetable producer. We get these prescriptions more or less spelled out on a recipe card, and then it’s just a matter of doing those practices. Regenerative agriculture is one of observation. It’s one of real stewardship where you have to be adaptive; you see what’s going on in the ecosystem, and what the ecosystem is trying to tell you. And then you just use these tools, whether it be livestock, or cover crops, or no-till drills....and advance soil health and ecosystem functions. That’s the way I look at it as a recipe card versus observation, experimentation and adaptation”

Farming Secrets says: Work With Native Perennials To Build Resilience

*Ref: Building Resiliency Acres USA Oct 2018 p. 62