

The Regenerative Principle of Minimizing Disturbance

Discussing the Principles of Regenerative Organic Agriculture

Picture This:

Spring is in the air. Gardens are being tilled, fields are being worked, all in preparation of seeding. These are memories that many of us share. It's simply the way it has always been done. In this discussion, we will focus on the principle of minimizing disturbance, what it is, and what we can do to advance this idea in practice.

What Is the Principle of Minimizing Disturbance?

The principle of minimizing disturbance refers to the act of reducing physical, biological and chemical disturbance of the land and maintaining as much biology in the soil as possible.

“20% and 40% of organic soil carbon is lost within 2 years of cultivation.” - Richard Eckard

What Are The Benefits of Minimizing Disturbance?

Many benefits are achieved by applying this principle, including:

- Compaction of soil is reduced
- Infiltration of air and water into soil is increased
- Crusting from heavy rain is reduced
- The creation of a “sponge-like” soil is increased
- Carbon loss from soil is reduced (important for microbes as that's their food and shelter!)
- Sequestration of carbon is increased

The Problem and Solution to Soil Disturbance

Not all soil disturbances are man-made. Wind erosion is a natural process that can have a huge effect on soil, particularly when all of your topsoil is bare and prone to be blown away. Thankfully, our grandfathers had a solution for this. That solution is to incorporate hedgerows, wind breaks, and alley cropping. Not only can this alleviate soil erosion, it can also increase biodiversity and life in the soil and area.

In Conclusion

While this can seem like an impossible task, the important thing to remember with regenerative organic agriculture is that it is a **process**. Nothing happens overnight, there's no magic switch to flip. It is an ongoing process to better soil and better yields.