

Improving soil productivity through enhancement of organic matter in soils

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Chemical agriculture is essentially reductionistic in approach. Had it been dialectical, the present problems of ecological damage would not have occurred. Over-zealous emphasis on use of chemicals to improve crop yields is a case in point. In fact, soil productivity is inclusive of chemical and biological processes as well as physical properties. Then the philosophy is to feed the soil rather than the crop to maintain soil health. It is mainly the organic matter that can be the conduit for enhancing the soil productivity.

Enhancing soil organic matter (SOM) from the present abysmally low levels to an equilibrium status in a given ecological setting only can lead to improvement of soil productivity on a sustainable basis.

The paper discusses the importance of SOM. The need for subsidizing organic sources as provided for chemical sources is emphasized. Then a sea change would occur. And enhancing SOM through biomass production is feasible.

Even without the rightfully proposed subsidy, non-chemical agriculture is economical and sustainable overtime. Such production systems may be taken up as 'target scheme' in rainfed, tribal and mountainous areas, at the first instance. Fortunately, for obvious reasons, much less chemical inputs are in use in these areas.

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