

CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE



The What

Climate-smart agriculture (CSA) is a holistic approach to farming, ranching, and forestry that focuses on improving soil health through regenerative farming practices that include but are not limited to:



COVER CROPS

A variety of crops that are planted alongside cash crops to regenerate soil nutrients, slow soil erosion, protect cash crops, increase water absorption, and more.



CONSERVATION TILLAGE

Any tillage and planting system that covers 30 percent or more of the soil surface with crop residue to reduce soil erosion. This includes reduced till and no-till methods.



CROP ROTATIONS

The practice of planting different crops sequentially on the same plot of land to improve soil health, optimize nutrients in the soil, and combat pest and weed pressure.

The Why

BENEFITS

- Improves soil absorption and filtration
- Increases carbon storage capacity
- Supports resilience to soil erosion
- Minimizes soil disturbance
- Reduces fuel and labor costs
- Increases organic nutrients in soil
- Stifles weed growth
- Controls pests and diseases
- Increases biodiversity
- Reduces fertilizer needs over time

CHALLENGES

- Initial upfront cost
- Logistics and implementation
- Regional differences
- Results aren't always immediate
- Information and communication gap



“We can make changes. We can help farmers to be more profitable by enabling them with more freedom and more options. The regenerative ag movement gives farmers that freedom and gives a better perspective on our role—to be a shepherd of creation by looking at it in a different light.”

MITCHELL HORA, FOUNDER AND CEO OF CONTINUUM AG



1. Know Your Goals

- Identify where your operation is today (soil health, crop yields, input costs, etc.).
- Create SMART goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely) for your farm.
- Establish which [types of regenerative practices](#) suit your operational goals best.
- Consider what equipment is needed and what you already have.

2. Create a Solid Support System

- Reach out to farmers implementing desired practices in person or online.
- Get involved in [regenerative agriculture organizations](#).
- Contact your local university extension office to explore resources available.
- Connect with local agronomist or soil consultation firm to establish a transitional game plan.
- Explore the [USDA NRCS website](#) for conservation programs and grants available.
- Apply for cost-share programs to support transitional expenses.
- Secure additional financing (if needed).

3. Be Adaptable

- Evaluate current chemical use.
- Identify the root problem that synthetic inputs address.
- Explore [alternative solutions](#).

4. Measure Results

- Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) and metrics.
- Record starting point data (soil health, crop yields, input costs, etc.).
- Identify metrics timeline (yearly, semiannually, etc.).
- Vet [software to measure success](#).

5. Train and Scale

- Implement training sessions with all farmhands involved.
- Conduct periodic check-ins to ensure practices are being followed.
- Share [conservation wins and learning lessons](#) with your farm community.