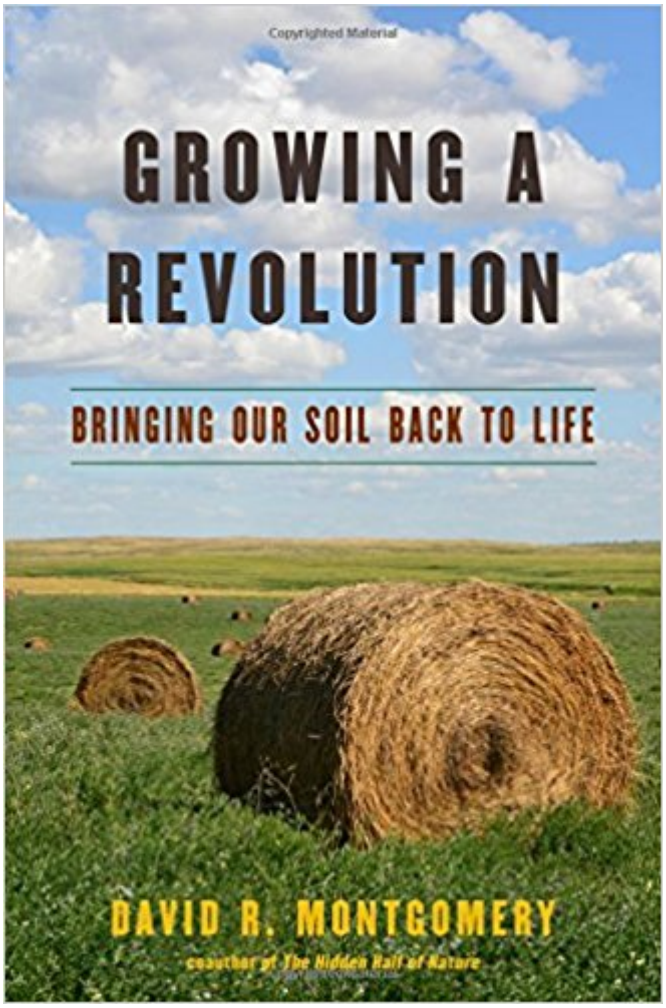
Growing A Revolution: Bringing Our Soil Back To Life



Synopsis

A MacArthur FellowÃ¢â ¬â„¢s impassioned call to make agriculture sustainable by ditching the plow, covering the soil, and diversifying crop rotations.The problem of agriculture is as old as civilization. Throughout history, great societies that abused their land withered into poverty or disappeared entirely. Now we risk repeating this ancient story on a global scale due to ongoing soil degradation, a changing climate, and a rising population.But there is reason for hope. David R. Montgomery introduces us to farmers around the world at the heart of a brewing soil health revolution that could bring humanityÃ¢â ¬â„¢s ailing soil back to life remarkably fast. Growing a Revolution draws on visits to farms in the industrialized world and developing world to show that a new combination of farming practices can deliver innovative, cost-effective solutions to problems farmers face today.Cutting through standard debates about conventional and organic farming, Montgomery explores why practices based on the principles of conservation agriculture help restore soil health and fertility. Farmers he visited found it both possible and profitable to stop plowing up the soil and blanketing fields with chemicals. Montgomery finds that the combination of no-till planting, cover crops, and diverse crop rotations provides the essential recipe to rebuild soil organic matter. Farmers using these unconventional practices cultivate beneficial soil life, smother weeds, and suppress pests while relying on far less, if any, fertilizer and pesticides.These practices are good for farmers and the environment. Using less fossil fuel and agrochemicals while maintaining crop yields helps farmers with their bottom line. Regenerative practices also translate into farms that use less water, generate less pollution, lower carbon emissionsÃ¢â ¬â ¢and stash an impressive amount of carbon underground. Combining ancient wisdom with modern science, Growing a Revolution lays out a solid case for an inspiring vision where agriculture becomes the solution to environmental problems, helping feed us all, cool the planet, and restore life to the land.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“Surprising, inspiring, and thoroughly engaging. . . . Relevant to farmers, backyard gardeners, and everyone who cares about our future, this is a clarion call that should not be ignored.Ã¢â ¬Â• - BooklistÃ¢â ¬Å“In his reader-friendly style, Montgomery describes the environmental crossroads at which we stand and shows us not only the devastation but the potential solution that exists right beneath our feet.Ã¢â ¬Â• - Hope Jahren, author of Lab GirlÃ¢â ¬Å“In the past couple of years, an awful lot of smart people have started talking very seriously about the state of the planetÃ¢â ¬â„¢s soil. If you want to understand whatÃ¢â ¬â„¢s at stake, and learn about the exciting possibilities, this book is a fine starting point.Ã¢â ¬Â• - Bill McKibben, author of Deep EconomyÃ¢â ¬Å“This is a Sand County Almanac of agriculture, a Walden of loam and tilth, a paradigm-bending journey into the principles that guide the life beneath our feet and thus the life that nourishes us.Ã¢â ¬Â• - Paul Hawken, author of The Ecology of Commerce and Natural CapitalismÃ¢â ¬Å“Brilliant, well researched, eloquent, and deeply hopeful.Ã¢â ¬Â• - Denis Hayes, founder of Earth DayÃ¢â ¬Å“Montgomery has the rare talent of making complex scientific topics not only understandable but truly fascinating. Growing a Revolution is both exceptionally enlightening and tremendously enjoyable. Highly recommended reading.Ã¢â ¬Â• - Nicolette Hahn Niman, author of Defending Beef and Righteous PorkchopÃ¢â ¬Å“Being a long time Ã¢â ¬Ëœdoom batÃ¢â ¬â„¢ regarding the fate of the natural world, I was given hope by Growing a Revolution that there is a real possibility of revolutionizing agriculture with the result of growing more food, employing people, and putting carbon back into the ground.Ã¢â ¬Â• - Yvon Chouinard, founder of Patagonia

David R. Montgomery is a professor of geomorphology at the University of Washington. He lives in Seattle with his wife, Anne BiklÃƒÂ©, and Loki, their guide-dog dropout.

Thoughtful and realistically written, talks more about the expense of excess chemicals instead of jumping on the organic bandwagon. Enjoyed the perspective of the farmers.

If you’re trying to find some actual information on why or how-to look for some other books. If you want to read about how bad industrial agriculture and oil companies are - this is your book.

Paradigm shifting book. A testimony of how Soil Health can heal our lands and it’s people.

This book outlines the only way to truly feed 9 billion people on the planet, with any sense of sustainability. Not only that, by taking care of our soils, we by default begin to slow the effects of a changing climate.

I did not think that I would enjoy a book about farming, but I am a big fan of the author’s other books, so I decided to read it anyway. I was quickly pulled in by the question: How can humanity feed its growing populations when so much of earth’s agricultural soil is degraded? This question led the author to research new concepts and practices in farming and soil restoration. Montgomery shows that it is possible to bring biology back into the soil- fertility picture, and provides the reader with not only practical information about soil restoration but also hope for our planet’s future. Once again Montgomery has explained scientific concepts and methods in terms that the general reader can understand and appreciate. The author is the "great explainer" and I highly recommend his newest book. It should be read as part of a "trilogy’ that includes two of his other books; Dirt: the Erosion of Civilizations, and The Hidden Half of Nature: the Microbial Roots of Life and Health.

I’ve been interested in gardening for a few years now. My dad gardened when I was young, but only recently have I owned land to garden.I first heard of this book from an Urban Farming podcast, and I was intrigued. Soil science has been a new interest of mine, and I had never heard of most of the methods and practices in this book.I’m not a true environmentalist, I don’t fight for the whales, or boycott slaughtering animals, but anyone would want to be a good steward of the Earth. The philosophies in this book demonstrate that you don’t need to sacrifice profits for ’going green’ on the farm. In fact, it seems it might be more profitable. Shock, shock.I’m inspired now to not only continue gardening, but to save up and buy some land! Hope my wife agrees with this whim.

Found this gem at a small bookstore in Blue Hill, Maine, and spent the better part of vacation reading it. Couldn’t put it down. I’ve long composted everything in sight and spread the finished product on my lawn since I don’t have a green thumb. It’s good to know that there are things even suburban-dwelling non-farmers can do to sequester carbon and improve their soil, and this book

shows why both are important. A niggling observation: it didn't mention Joe Jenkins's work in the closing-the-loop chapter. Jenkins's thirty-plus years of experience in the field deserves scholarly attention, and would have helped advance the author's point about the importance of returning everything to the soil. Still, I'll refer to this book often and use it as a springboard for further reading.

Occasion: An Easy-Growing Guide to Rose Gardening, Roses, Growing Roses, Antique Roses, Old Garden Roses, Gardening Tips, Organic Roses, Also ... (Easy-Growing Gardening Series Book 2)