A Critical Review of Regenerative Agriculture in Western Canada

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Regenerative Agriculture, Soil Health, Barriers, Mitigating Environmental Risk

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This critical review examines the concept of regenerative agriculture in Western Canada, exploring its potential as a nature-based solution to environmental challenges in the agricultural sector. Through an analysis of the economic, societal, and environmental factors, we can further understand the factors influencing farmer adoption of regenerative agriculture practices, drawing insights from Canadian case studies. Research shows that while regenerative agriculture lacks a unified definition, it consistently emphasizes the importance of sustainability and soil health. It represents an opportunity for Canadian farmers to implement practices that enhance ecosystem resilience and mitigate environmental risks. However, the adoption of regenerative agriculture faces significant barriers, including initial investment costs, cultural resistance, and the absence of immediate financial returns.

OVERVIEW

Throughout the past decade, the term regenerative agriculture (RA) has grown immensely in popularity, yet its true meaning remains elusive. This raises the question: is regenerative agriculture Canada's newest buzzword, or does it represent a genuine paradigm shift in farming practices? Replace the phrase regenerative agriculture with the terms agroecology, bio-intensive agriculture, permaculture, or agroecological restoration, and the result is largely a similar concept. Despite the commonalities between these concepts, regenerative agriculture has emerged as the solution to address Canada's agricultural and environmental challenges.

Due to RA's rise in popularity, narrowing down one specific definition or set of practices is difficult, particularly in the Canadian context. To better understand RA, it is more effective to focus on its core principles. A comprehensive review of 28 peer-reviewed articles by Schreefel et al. (2020) revealed multiple definitions addressing various key concepts, with the majority emphasizing sustainability and soil health. RA aims to enhance ecosystem health through diverse farming methods, making it more appropriate to examine its attributes rather than adhering to a single definition. This approach allows for a better understanding of RA's potential impact on the agricultural sector and surrounding ecosystems. Figure 1 illustrates the core themes found within RA articles, with the majority focusing on sustainability and soil health concerns.

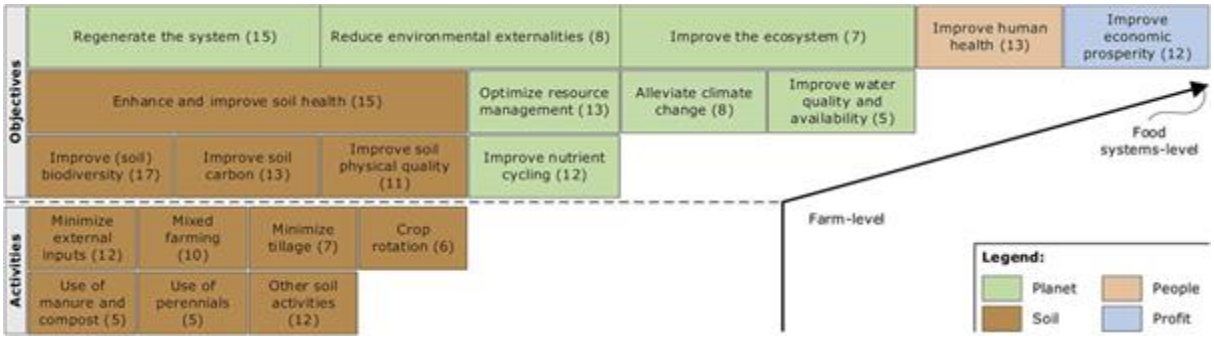

Figure 1. Themes of Regenerative Agriculture: The numbered brackets indicate the number of search records for each term (Schreefel et al. 2020, 3).

As the world adapts to intensifying global extremities, droughts, heat waves, wildfires, and an increase in the frequency of catastrophic events, agriculture must evolve to overcome these challenges. RA represents an opportunity for Canadian farmers to implement nature-based solutions for an otherwise costly way of managing environmental risks in the agricultural sector. Given agriculture's connection with the environment, changes in precipitation patterns, temperature fluctuations, droughts, strong winds, and unpredictable storms can significantly impact crop and livestock production. These challenges are further intensified by Canada's short growing season. In agriculture, environmental risk refers to the potential for adverse outcomes affecting both the environment and agricultural operations (Government of Saskatchewan n.d.). Effective management involves identifying potential hazards and implementing measures to mitigate damage (Government of Saskatchewan n.d.). This literature review argues that RA can serve as a viable nature-based solution to these environmental challenges. By adopting RA practices, Canadian farmers can enhance resilience and play a crucial role in shaping the future of agriculture in Canada.

Farmer adoption of RA is influenced by several complex factors; however, this review will focus on the economic, societal, and environmental components. Economically, the transition to RA requires an initial investment in new practices and technologies, which can be a barrier for farmers concerned about short-term profitability. However, RA can potentially enhance long-term financial resilience by improving soil health, reducing input costs, and increasing yields over time. The lack of immediate financial benefits poses a significant challenge for farmers considering the transition to RA. For instance, the initial costs of implementing RA practices may not yield short-term returns, creating a skewed cost-benefit relationship (Obregon et al. 2023, 78-90). This economic barrier is particularly evident in the cattle industry, where the upfront investment in regenerative practices may not translate to immediate price premiums. Farmers may need to invest in new equipment, training, or land management techniques without seeing an immediate increase in yield or profit. Moreover, the transition period to RA can lead to temporary yield reductions as the soil ecosystem adjusts, further discouraging adoption. Despite these implications, RA can increase land value, and boost on-farm profits (Smith 2023). Figure 2 demonstrates the role that RA plays in increasing a farm's profitability over time (Smith 2023).

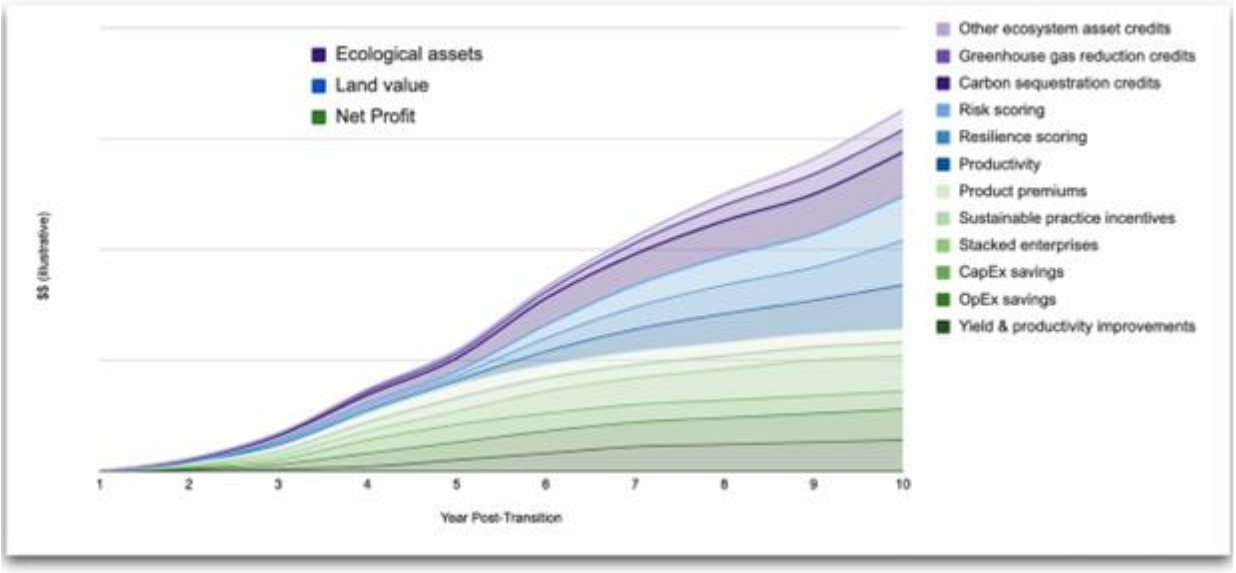

Figure 2. Profitability of Regenerative Agriculture: Assessed by years post-transition through ecological assets, land value, and net profit (Smith 2023).

Ultimately, the future of RA in Canada depends on societal priorities and willingness to pay for sustainable agricultural products. Policymakers are vital in shaping these priorities through incentives, regulations, and public education. It is important for Canadians to consider how they want their tax dollars allocated, and to voice their support for sustainable agricultural practices. By aligning consumer demand, policy initiatives, and farmer incentives, Canadians can ensure the adoption and success of regenerative agriculture. Societally, the adoption of RA is shaped by cultural attitudes, community support, and the willingness of farmers to embrace innovative practices. Peer influence and access to educational resources play crucial roles in shifting mindsets and encouraging adoption. Environmentally, the success of RA depends on its ability to address local ecological conditions, such as soil type and climate variability. Farmers are more likely to adopt RA if they see tangible benefits of improved ecosystem services, such as enhanced biodiversity and increased soil fertility. This research seeks to define regenerative agriculture in Western Canada by examining these factors in Canadian case studies and identifying best practices to combat environmental risks for farmers.

A foundational component of regenerative agriculture is the application of best management practices (BMPs) (Liu et al. 2018, 1-3). BMPs refer to methods and techniques that optimize resource use while minimizing environmental harm, such as conservation tillage, nutrient management, and riparian buffer zones (Liu et al. 2018, 2). These examples of best management practices promote practical steps toward reducing agricultural runoff and enhancing water quality (Liu et al. 2018, 2). In Western Canada, BMPs often serve as the gateway to broader adoption of regenerative practices, enabling farmers to make incremental but impactful changes. No-till farming is a widely recognized BMP that is known to help prevent soil erosion and foster carbon sequestration, improving soil health (Liu et al. 2018, 4). Nutrient management BMPs, which emphasize the efficient use of fertilizers, mitigate the risks of nitrogen and phosphorus runoff into waterways (Liu et al. 2018, 4-26). Cover cropping, another key BMP, enhances soil organic matter, improves moisture retention, and reduces dependency on chemical inputs (Liu et al. 2018, 4-26). Together, these practices not only support ecological goals but also contribute to farm profitability by enhancing long-term productivity. Despite the ecological and economic benefits, the adoption of regenerative agriculture faces barriers, including financial risks, lack of knowledge, and cultural resistance. Research highlights that farmers' decisions are heavily influenced by financial incentives, such as subsidies and market-driven mechanisms like carbon credits, as well as access to credible and localized technical information (Prokopy et al. 2019, 530). Peer networks and community-led initiatives also play a critical role, as farmers are more likely to adopt practices demonstrated successfully by their peers (Prokopy et al. 2019, 530). Educational programs and outreach efforts are therefore vital in creating awareness and building confidence in regenerative practices (Prokopy et al. 2019, 523-525). The regional challenges of regenerative agriculture in Western Canada also require the addressing of structural and systemic barriers. Factors such as land tenure arrangements, the scale of operations, and market infrastructure impact adoption rates. For instance, smaller farms may lack the funds to invest in new practices, while tenant farmers might be hesitant to implement long-term strategies on leased land (Prokopy et al. 2019, 528). Policymakers and industry stakeholders must therefore develop supportive frameworks, including financial incentives, technical support, and recognition programs that reward regenerative efforts.

CASE STUDIES OF REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE IN CANADA

Regenerative agriculture represents a transformative approach to farming that prioritizes ecological health, biodiversity, and long-term soil sustainability. Among the increasing number of environmental challenges, RA has gained recognition as a potential solution to creating better agricultural systems. This paper explores case studies of RA in Canada, identifying practices used, outcomes, and trade-offs associated with its adoption. By examining specific instances across diverse Canadian landscapes, from the fertile soils of British Columbia's Fraser River Delta to urban farming initiatives in Calgary, this review underscores the benefits of RA.

While RA can provide environmental advantages, it often comes with economic trade-offs. RA practices frequently require significant upfront investments, changes in conventional farming methods, and adjustments to existing market dynamics. For many Canadian farmers, the financial burden of transitioning to RA is amplified by the absence of subsidies or incentives. Through the case studies, I examine how farmers must weigh the economic, societal, and environmental costs against the broader ecological benefits of RA.

CASE STUDY 1: REGENERATIVE OUTCOMES IN RIVER DELTA SOILS OF SOUTHWESTERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Conducted in the Fraser River Delta of southwestern British Columbia, this study examined the effects of agricultural stewardship programs on regenerative agriculture outcomes in intensive annual crop production systems. The research focused on previously implemented programs that incentivize practices such as hedgerows (HR), winter cover cropping (WCC), and grassland set-asides (GLSA) (Kersey et al. 2024, 2). Hedgerows refer to planting native trees and shrubs on the edges of farmland. Planting hedgerows creates habitat for surrounding wildlife, and can improve farmland soil health. As for winter cover crops, farmers typically use cereals such as barley or wheat to plant before the cold season. These WCCs are known to improve soil structure and function, as well as provide migratory birds with forage in the fall (Kersey et al. 2024, 2). Lastly, grassland set-asides, refer to the inclusion of perennial grasses that are planted onto farmland, then left to rest for a few years. The land that GLSAs have been planted on eventually becomes replenished with nutrients, provides local species with habitat, and can store increased amounts of carbon in the soil (Kersey et al. 2024, 6).

The study compared 26 fields enrolled in these regenerative agriculture programs with non-program fields (NP) (Kersey et al. 2024, 6). Soil samples were collected in the spring of 2018 from various depths up to 100 cm. The researchers measured soil organic carbon (SOC) concentrations and used pedotransfer functions to estimate soil water regulation indicators. Results demonstrated that fields enrolled in stewardship programs had significantly higher SOC concentrations in the top 15 cm of soil, as compared to the non-program fields (Kersey et al. 2024, 7). The topsoil equivalent soil mass SOC stocks were 71% greater in HR fields, and 63% greater in the WCC + GLSA fields than the NP fields (Kersey et al. 2024, 7). The soil workability threshold, which is an indicator of soil water regulation, was also found to be higher in the program fields.

It is important to note that the three stewardship programs discussed within the article were managed by the Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust (DF&WT) (Kersey et al. 2024, 2). DF&WT is a nongovernmental organization that addresses food security and the disappearance of wildlife habitats. The goal of their program is to help farmers in the Fraser River Delta and the Fraser Valley improve their soil health and crop yields through sustainable farming practices, while also preserving wildlife habitat on farms. For example, DF&WT provides cost-share payments to farmers for taking active agricultural land out of production and seeding it with GLSA mix for 1 to 4 years. This in turn benefits the farmer by improving soil health, creating habitat for local wildlife, and can be incorporated within the typical annual cropping rotations of the region. Similarly, the winter cover cropping program also uses cost-share payments with producers. While the DF&WT model has proven effective, it must be acknowledged that the financial barrier to adopting regenerative practices remains a challenge for farmers outside the Fraser Valley, where similar cost-sharing mechanisms may not be available. This case study provides an example of how financial planning programs and assistance are required to ensure the success of RA. Ultimately, this study demonstrates the effectiveness of long-term stewardship programs in enhancing regenerative outcomes in agricultural systems. The promotion of practices such as hedgerows, cover cropping, and grassland set-asides, can increase resilience to environmental risks, and enhance the sustainability of intensive agricultural systems in coastal regions of Western Canada.

CASE STUDY 2: VARYING CROP DIVERSITY AND CROP ROTATIONS IN CARMAN, MANITOBA

At the Ian N. Morrison Research Farm in Carman, Manitoba, a randomized field experiment was conducted beginning in 2018 and centred its focus around the 2020 and 2021 growing seasons (Curtis et al. 2024, 441). During the study period, Manitoba experienced record-high temperatures and incredibly low precipitation. Crop diversity and crop rotations can significantly impact the resilience of yields during extreme weather events. With the Canadian prairies warming more every year, it is important to consider regenerative agriculture practices to increase farm longevity and sustainability.

The experimental design was a randomized complete block with four replications, using plots measuring 6 meters by 14 meters. Four alternative systems were planted, which included a “warm-season crop” (WS) rotation (corn–sunflower–dry bean–canola), a “biodiverse” (BD) rotation (nine crops grown in various combinations in a rotation of fall rye with a cover crop, corn/soybean intercrop, pea/canola intercrop, and green fallow mixture), an organic no-till system, and a perennial grain rotation (Kernza intermediate wheatgrass) (Curtis et al. 2024, 442). Each of the four alternative systems studied was compared to the “business as usual” (BAU) rotation of wheat - canola - wheat - soybean (Curtis et al. 2024, 442). The crops were seeded with an R-Tech no-till drill for small grains and a precision planter for corn, all varying in depth (Curtis et al. 2024, 442). Researchers managed the crops with conventional practices using both synthetic fertilizers and herbicides. Nitrogen application rates for the BAU rotations were based on yield projections, whereas the alternative rotations adjusted nitrogen application depending on soil testing results (Curtis et al. 2024, 442).

By examining the rotations of residual biomass, growth patterns, harvest index, water-use efficiency, and yield performance, we can understand the importance of crop rotation practices in optimizing yield stability. For example, fall rye and sunflower averages thrived due to the adaptability to lower vapour pressure deficits, whereas most crops yielded below long-term averages due to the stressful conditions. The biodiverse (BD) rotation illustrated advantages over the traditional systems by achieving similar net returns with half of the nitrogen fertilizer input (Curtis et al. 2024, 449). Also, the corn/soybean intercrop showcased impressive biomass production without the added nitrogen, which displays its efficiency in resource usage. Suppose farmers can achieve similar results with systems such as the BD rotation on their own farms, this will create the potential for more sustainable practices that reduce reliance on the fossil fuels used during nitrogen fertilizer production. Yet, post-harvest farmers may encounter challenges in marketing and selling less common crops resulting from diverse rotations. Established supply chains often favour traditional crops, which can limit market access for new or alternative products. Although there is an opportunity for success, this case study also displays the tradeoffs that farmers may have to embrace when experimenting with RA practices. This study, conducted during two drought years that may become increasingly common in the prairies, displays the importance of regenerative agriculture practices. The findings demonstrate that integrating diverse cropping systems can significantly enhance soil health, improve water-use efficiency, and contribute to risk mitigation, making these RA practices extremely useful for future agricultural strategies.

CASE STUDY 3: SYSTEMS THINKING AND CANADIAN LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS

Adopting RA practices, particularly adaptive rotational grazing (RG), represents a significant opportunity for enhancing sustainable farming systems in Western Canada. Systems thinking, an approach that emphasizes understanding the relationships and interdependencies within a complex system, plays a pivotal role in the successful adoption of regenerative practices like rotational grazing. McWherter and Sherren emphasize that strong systems thinking abilities are essential for producers to effectively implement and manage RG systems (McWherter and Sherren 2024, 1-3). This approach requires farmers to consider multiple interconnected factors, including livestock needs, available acreage, forage composition, soil quality, water availability, and labour requirements (McWherter and Sherren 2024, 1-3). Through developing a holistic understanding of these elements, producers can make more informed decisions and adapt their practices to optimize both environmental and economic outcomes.

The success of rotational grazing in the US Great Plains provides valuable insights that can be applied to the Canadian context. In the United States, RG has been shown to help farmers meet environmental goals such as supporting drought recovery and erosion control (McWherter and Sherren 2024, 9). These benefits are relevant to the Canadian prairies, which face similar challenges of climate variability and soil degradation. While the adoption of rotational grazing can lead to positive environmental outcomes, it's important to consider the financial implications for Canadian livestock producers. The transition to RG systems may require initial investments in infrastructure, such as fencing and water systems, and potentially changes in herd management practices. However, the long-term benefits can include improved pasture productivity, reduced input costs, and enhanced drought resilience (McWherter and Sherren 2024, 9). To promote the adoption of rotational grazing and other regenerative practices in Western Canada, it is crucial to develop tailored training programs that enhance producers' systems thinking abilities. By integrating local contexts and addressing specific challenges faced by Canadian producers, these initiatives can support the transition towards more environmentally and economically resilient agricultural systems (McWherter and Sherren, 2024, 9-14).

CASE STUDY 4: REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE IN URBAN FARMS IN CALGARY, ALBERTA

The future of regenerative agriculture in Canada may one day take place in the backyards, rooftops, and urban spaces of our cities. As environmental risks pose an increasing challenge to traditional farming practices, innovative urban farmers are demonstrating that small-scale, intensive cultivation methods can play a crucial role in building sustainable and resilient food systems. Chelsea Rozansk and Michael Gavin from the University of Calgary Faculty of Graduate Studies worked with the Root and Regenerative Urban Farms and the Young Agrarians to document the cultivation processes of a production urban farm over the 2021 growing season (Rozanski and Gavin 2023, 52). Their research explored how urban farmers could implement land-based regenerative practices to enhance food production for local alternative food networks (Rozanski and Gavin 2023, 51-56).

Utilizing a reflexive practitioner approach, the researchers engaged in small plot intensive (SPIN) farming methods across nine urban spaces totalling 0.26 acres (Rozanski and Gavin 2023, 59). Throughout the growing season, they harvested approximately 7,000 pounds of produce from 48 vegetable varieties (Rozanski and Gavin 2023, 52-58). The project collaborated with 35 community-supported agriculture shareholders, local farmers market customers, restaurant chefs, and members of the YYC Growers and Distributors cooperative (Rozanski and Gavin 2023, 63). At the end of the project length, the researchers donated the surplus produce to various food security initiatives, illustrating the project's ability to also address food insecurity in Calgary. Results indicate the ability to integrate regenerative agriculture practices in urban settings, demonstrating that RA practices can significantly contribute to sustainable food systems. The authors emphasized no-dig agriculture, companion planting, and crop rotation as key techniques that not only enhanced productivity but also built ecosystem resilience and fostered community engagement (Rozanski and Gavin 2023, 51-70). This research is particularly relevant to the growing trend of RA in Western Canada, where land degradation and urban sprawl pose increasing challenges to traditional farming practices. The study findings suggest that urban agriculture can play a critical role in promoting sustainability by utilizing innovative farming techniques that are adaptable as well as improve soil health and biodiversity of local communities (Rozanski and Gavin 2023, 51-70). The paper highlights the importance of experiential learning partnerships among researchers, farmers, and agricultural organizations. Collaborations such as these can help bridge gaps in knowledge and practice, fostering a more sustainable agricultural community capable of navigating the complexities of modern food systems.

CASE STUDY 5: THE TORONTO STAR: INTERVIEWING VARIOUS CANADIAN FARMERS USING RA PRACTICES, 2022

The growing interest in regenerative agriculture among Canadian farmers and ranchers represents a significant shift in agricultural practices, with widespread implications for environmental sustainability, economic viability, and social well-being. Through interviews with ranchers and industry professionals, the Toronto Star explores a complex yet promising picture of RA's role in revitalizing farming practices.

John Cross, owner and rancher at A7 Ranch, displays the environmental promises of RA. His adoption of rotational grazing and soil health practices not only increases carbon sequestration but also increases his ranch's productivity (Toronto Star 2022). Cross acknowledges that while the principles of RA may not be revolutionary, their integration into climate policy could significantly mitigate Canada’s emissions. He states, “If you add up all the arable and grazing land in Canada and move just a little bit of carbon out of the air, and add it to the soil, it looks after a lot of the emissions for Canada” (Toronto Star 2022). Whether Cross’ statement is correct or not, he makes an interesting point regarding the economic role RA may play in the form of carbon offsets, and asks the question; Should farmers be compensated for this? Similarly, Marcus and Sarah Riedner in Carstairs, Alberta, showcase the tangible environmental benefits of RA. By no longer using fertilizers and pesticides, seeding diverse pastures, and maintaining soil coverage, the Riedners have dramatically increased their soil organic matter within five years (Toronto Star 2022). The Riedner’s began farming with the initial goal of achieving 10 percent organic matter by the time Marcus was 65 years old. They completed this goal in five years, and through that success, are now striving to achieve the same amount of soil organic matter twice as deep throughout their land (Toronto Star 2022).

Despite its environmental promise, the economic feasibility of RA poses challenges. The Riedners invested approximately $1 million to transition from conventional farming to RA, a barrier for many farmers (Toronto Star 2022). Nonetheless, the interviews between Cross and the Riedners, highlight emerging opportunities for subsidies and funding in response to RA practices. For other ranchers and farmers like Cross, this could open new revenue streams, incentivizing wider adoption of RA. As for social perspectives of RA among farmers, opinions vary. Keith Currie, a grains and oilseed farmer, and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture's vice-president, explains that regenerative agriculture practices such as planting cover crops and using no-till seed drilling have been used by Canadian farmers since the 1990s and are actively working to keep carbon in soils (Toronto Star 2022). He states that: "The two biggest sequesters of carbon are forestry and agriculture, and that story's not being told" (Toronto Star 2022). Like many other Canadian farmers, Currie would like to partner with the federal government to incentivize farmers to try and do more to lower their emissions and environmental risks. However, the lack of a clear definition for RA makes it difficult to standardize practices or secure widespread buy-ins (Toronto Star 2022). The perspectives of Canadian farmers reflect both optimism and concern regarding RA. While its environmental benefits are clear, financial and social hurdles remain. Farmers like Cross, the Riedners, and Currie demonstrate its transformative potential, but broader adoption will require support from government policies, consumer markets, and industry collaboration.

The case studies reviewed in this paper illustrate how RA has the potential to succeed, given the proper circumstances. From the stewardship programs in British Columbia that enhance soil organic carbon to the rotational grazing systems in the Canadian Prairies and the urban farming initiatives in Calgary, these examples demonstrate the versatility and adaptability of RA practices. The Canadian farmer interviews with the Toronto Star also explain the growing awareness of RA's role in mitigating environmental challenges while emphasizing the barriers posed by financial costs and market limitations.

While the environmental benefits of RA are significant, these case studies have shown that its adoption often comes at the expense of immediate economic gains. Farmers transitioning to RA may face higher costs for infrastructure, seeds, and altered management practices, and may struggle to compete within existing commodity-driven markets. These trade-offs underline the need for collaborative efforts between policymakers, industry stakeholders, and farming communities to incentivize sustainable practices. Programs like those run by the Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust offer a glimpse into how cost-sharing and support mechanisms can alleviate financial burdens and drive broader adoption. By fostering systems thinking, integrating diverse agricultural practices, and aligning economic incentives with ecological outcomes, Canada has the potential to lead in the global transition toward more sustainable agricultural systems.

ADVANCING REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE IN CANADA

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The performance of regenerative agriculture in Canada remains uncertain with more time and data being required to fully assess its impact. While initial case studies show promise, long-term research is necessary to understand the full extent of RA's benefits and challenges in the Canadian context. The complexity of agricultural systems, alongside the variability of environmental conditions across Canada's landscapes, makes it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about RA's effectiveness on a national scale. Factors such as soil type, climate, and local ecosystems all play a role in determining the success of RA practices, demonstrating the need for region-specific studies and long-term monitoring. As shown by the discussed case studies, the requirements of RA projects in Fraser Valley are extremely different from the requirements of Manitoba cropping systems. To better evaluate RA's effectiveness, Canada needs to develop more comprehensive measurement tools. These could include industry-wide certifications similar to organic labels, specific scientific indicators for monitoring progress, or detailed long-term laboratory experiments (Obregon et al. 2023, 17-27). Such measures would provide farmers, policymakers, and consumers with clearer benchmarks for assessing RA practices and their outcomes. For instance, developing standardized soil health metrics that account for biological, chemical, and physical properties could offer a more holistic view of RA's impact on land quality (Obregon et al. 2023, 17-27). Creating a certification system that recognizes different levels of regenerative practices could incentivize farmers to adopt and improve their methods.

Regenerative agriculture offers Canadian farmers a hopeful approach to addressing environmental risks in the agricultural sector. While long-term benefits remain uncertain due to limited extended studies, it is crucial to recognize that progress toward sustainability begins with taking the first steps. As current academic literature demonstrates, RA has immense potential to act as a nature-based solution. By adopting RA practices, farmers can enhance their farm's resilience and contribute to shaping the future of Canada's agricultural landscape. Moving forward, we must learn to balance immediate production needs with the long-term vision of creating a sustainable farming system for future generations.

For regenerative agriculture to succeed and thrive, the burden of overcoming implementation challenges cannot rest solely on the shoulders of farmers. Instead, a collective effort is required, one that recognizes the shared benefits of RA for farmers, consumers, and the environment. What if tax incentives and write-offs on farm profits could become a tool to inspire widespread transition to RA practices? By easing financial pressures and making RA more economically appealing, these practices could revolutionize how we manage our Canadian agricultural landscapes. However, these changes demand more than just policy adjustments, they require strategies and cross-sector collaboration. Agri-Food Canada must lead the change, working hand-in-hand with the Farmers' Union and other stakeholders to ensure that proposed solutions align with the realities of agricultural life. How can policymakers and farming communities work together to create incentives that are both impactful and accessible? What new partnerships and RA innovations could be created to inspire meaningful shifts in agricultural practices? These questions point to the heart of the issue: creating a system where RA is not just an idea but a practical, sustainable choice for farmers.

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