



From the Ground Up: The Women Revolutionizing Regenerative Agriculture

Stephanie Anderson

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Stephanie Anderson's fascinating essay collection *From the Ground Up* is about the women who are pioneering change in the field of regenerative agriculture.

Recalling how the US's food system collapsed during the early days of COVID-19, this book first establishes how food systems involve all the participants and activities of the food industry. Thinking about how to prevent similar downfalls in periods of turmoil, Anderson turned to consider regenerative agriculture in greater depth; these farming and ranching practices "restore organic matter and biodiversity in soil." The book delves into what women are doing to implement this type of agriculture in a time when sustainability and holistic approaches to food are more important than ever.

The book dedicates each of its nine chapters to different areas of the food system, showing how specific women are influencing them. Many of the subjects are women of color, and the enormous influence of BIPOC people on regenerative agriculture is emphasized. Kelsey Scott is Native American and a fourth-generation rancher, while Chinese American Wen-Jay Ying owns Local Roots NYC, a CSA multifarm shop based in New York City. Scott's family uses a process called "disturbance" or regenerative rotational grazing in order to encourage the cattle to graze evenly, while Ying ensures that farmers can sell their products at a fair price. Stories about Anderson's life factor in as well, and such tales humanize what might otherwise be an esoteric topic. Technical information is also conveyed, as with statistics from the 2017 Census of Agriculture, revealing that beginning farmers make up 27 percent of the country's 3.4 million producers.

The essay collection *From the Ground Up* is a fascinating introduction to the world of regenerative agriculture.

CAROLINA CIUCCI (September / October 2024)

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