Regenerative Agriculture and the Family Farm

Science has shown that regenerative farming practices have the potential to sequester more carbon, improve soil organic matter and the life therein, and reduce runoff of water, fertilizers, pesticides, and topsoil alike. These practices can increase farm productivity, mitigate anthropogenic amplification of the rapid climate change family farmers have experienced for the past decade, and help to keep family farmers prosperous on the land, and able to continue feeding our Commonwealth, nation and planet.

PFU supports the pursuit of Regenerative Agriculture among farms of all sizes and types.

This includes support for:

• Any and all efforts aimed to furthering the practice of Regenerative Agriculture to include educational, legislative, policy, and advocacy efforts.

• Efforts that incentivize these practices, be they administered through governmental, private agency or the marketplace, so that the financial burden of implementing them is not borne solely by family farmers, but by all whom they benefit.

Background:

Regenerative Agriculture generally describes practices which:

• Build Soil Organic Matter (SOM) over the medium/long term

• Reduce or eliminate disturbance to and promote the vigor of soil microbiota— crucial to building SOM — by one or more of the following methods:

+ No, reduced or "conservation" tillage
+ No — or minimal — pesticides and synthetic fertilizers
+ Perennial systems, wherever possible
+ Constant cover (ie: diverse cover crops) on ALL agricultural lands
+ Intercropping", that is, integrating livestock in intensively managed grazing rotations and the fertility they provide — into agricultural operations wherever practicable.
+ Responsible, consistent, scientifically-proven crop rotation (to include fallowing, as prescribed)
+ Incorporating agroforestry and/or silvopasture

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The benefits to family farmers of increasing SOM utilizing Regenerative Agriculture include:

- Increases the land's ability to hold water, nutrients, and topsoil
- Increases the land's ability to support plants, animals, and family farmers
- Decreases the number of inputs and their associated costs required to raise crops or

  livestock, and to control the pests associated with both
- Sequesters carbon, which is one of the major greenhouse gases (GHG), and, arguably, the most surely anthropogenic
- Keeps water on and around the farm clean, and usable, and municipal water supplies

  viable

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