

Rediscovering sound soil management

May 10 2011

At the same time that demand for food is soaring along with the world's population, the soil's ability to sustain and enhance agricultural productivity is becoming increasingly diminished and unreliable.

Fortunately, it's not too late to restore our [soil](#) resources. What it will take, say the editors and contributors to a new book, *Soil Management: Building a Stable Base for Agriculture*, is rediscovering the value of soil management and following practices that are firmly grounded in science. The book is published by the American Society of Agronomy (ASA) and Soil Science Society of America (SSSA).

Soil management concepts have been in place since the beginning of agriculture. However, "our personal concern," say the editors, Jerry L. Hatfield and Thomas J. Sauer of the USDA-Agricultural Research Service, "is that we have not focused enough on how to improve our soils and management practices." This concern led them to assemble in the book the latest scientific knowledge about the physical, biological, and chemical processes taking place in soils, which together form the foundation of effective soil management.

Individual chapters cover diverse issues of global relevance, including water dynamics in soils, gas exchange, soil biology, pesticide movement, and [wind erosion](#). The book also emphasizes the mounting challenges of enhancing productivity while simultaneously achieving environmental protection, and managing soils in a [changing climate](#).

"The management of soil is fundamental to life," say SSSA president

Charles Rice and ASA president Newell Kitchen. "This book speaks to a priority message of our sciences."

While the book is well suited to scientists, it also uses accessible language, allowing students, soil science professionals, and other science-literate readers to benefit from its integration of management issues, soil research and long-term conservation efforts. The editors hope the volume will spark renewed interest in the critical, but somewhat neglected, topic of soil management.

Provided by American Society of Agronomy

Citation: Rediscovering sound soil management (2011, May 10) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-05-rediscovering-soil.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.