

Producer Questionnaire for Regenerative & Climate-Smart Practices



How to use this questionnaire

For Purchasers

This questionnaire is designed to help school nutrition programs, nonprofit partners, distributors, and other food purchasers better understand the practices on farms or ranches that do not have certifications verifying regenerative or climate-smart practices.

This questionnaire is not a certification program and is not intended to determine whether a farm or ranch is definitively “regenerative” or “climate-smart.” Rather, it is intended to help uncertified producers share information about their practices and help food purchasers better understand how those practices align with their procurement goals.

For Producers

Please answer each question based on your current practices. There are no right or wrong answers. For questions marked with a ★, please choose one answer that best describes your production system. For questions marked with a ☑, please choose all of the answers that apply to your farm or ranch. If a question does not apply to your production system, select “Not applicable” where available.

Are you certified?

If YES, you do not need to complete this survey. This questionnaire is intended for farmers and ranchers who do not hold certifications that already encompass robust regenerative practices, such as USDA Organic, Regenerative Organic Certified, Real Organic Project, Certified Regenerative by AGW, or Demeter Biodynamic.

FARM INFORMATION

Farm / Ranch Name:

Producer Name:

Location:

Primary crops / livestock:

Acres in production:

1. Standards & Certifications

1.1 Does your farm participate in any programs, certifications, or initiatives that verify your farming practices?

☐ **Yes** (please name all relevant certifications or programs):

☐ **No** certification or verification program

2. Pest Management & Agrochemicals

2.1 What best describes your use of pesticides (note that the term 'pesticides' includes herbicides, fungicides, and insecticides)?

 **Choose the best answer**

- ☐ We do not use synthetic pesticides (including herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides).
- ☐ We use only pesticides permitted under the [USDA organic standard](#).
- ☐ We avoid [pesticides considered highly hazardous](#) to people or the environment.
- ☐ We restrict pesticide use through a farm policy, buyer requirement, or other standard.
- ☐ We select lower-risk pesticide options when treatment is necessary.
- ☐ We avoid some specific pesticide due to toxicity to health or environment (please list):

☐ We use pesticides routinely as part of our production system.

☐ Other:

2.2 Do you use any practices to prevent or manage pest problems before using pesticides?

 **If yes, check all that apply**

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Crop rotation | ☐ Sanitation / removal of diseased plant material |
| ☐ Planting pest- or disease-resistant varieties | ☐ Adjusting planting dates |
| ☐ Cover crops | ☐ Physical barriers or traps |
| ☐ Intercropping / diversified plantings | ☐ Biological controls / beneficial organisms |
| ☐ Regular field scouting / monitoring for pests | ☐ Mechanical weed control |
| ☐ Planting beneficial insect habitat | ☐ Other non-chemical prevention practices: |
| ☐ Hedgerows or flowering borders | <div></div> |

3. Treated Seeds & GMOs

3.1 Do you use pesticide-treated or pesticide-coated seeds?

 **Choose the best answer**

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes, rarely or only when there is no practical alternative
- ☐ Yes, on some crops
- ☐ Yes, on most or all applicable crops
- ☐ I'm not sure

If yes, which crops?

3.2 Do you plant genetically modified (GMO) seeds?

 **Choose the best answer**

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes, for some crops
- ☐ Yes, for most or all applicable crops
- ☐ I'm not sure

If yes, which crops?

4. Habitat & Biodiversity

4.1 Are there habitat or biodiversity practices present on your farm?

 **If yes, check all that apply**

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Hedgerows | ☐ Riparian buffers |
| ☐ Native plantings | ☐ Wetlands or wetland buffers |
| ☐ Pollinator strips | ☐ Tree plantings / agroforestry |
| ☐ Flowering borders | ☐ Uncultivated field margins |
| ☐ Provide flowering plants throughout the growing season | ☐ Other: |
| ☐ Beetle banks or beneficial-insect habitat | |
| ☐ Maintain nesting habitat | |
| ☐ Maintain pesticide-free habitat areas | |
| ☐ Reduce or avoid pesticides harmful to pollinators | |

5. Fertilizer & Nutrient Management

5.1 Which statement best describes your use of synthetic fertilizers?

 **Choose the best answer**

- ☐ We do not use synthetic fertilizers.
- ☐ We use very limited amounts of synthetic fertilizer.
- ☐ We have reduced synthetic fertilizer use over the past five years.
- ☐ We have specific goals to reduce synthetic fertilizer use in the future.
- ☐ We track fertilizer use and adjust applications based on crop needs.
- ☐ We use synthetic fertilizers without a specific reduction goal.
- ☐ Other:

5.2 Do you use any of the following practices to build soil fertility?

 **If yes, check all that apply**

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Compost | ☐ Green manure |
| ☐ Biological amendments besides compost
(e.g., microbial inoculants, biochar,
seaweed meal) | ☐ Livestock integration |
| ☐ Animal manure | ☐ Purchased organic fertilizer |
| ☐ Cover crops | ☐ Other: |
| ☐ Crop residues | <input type="text"/> |

5.3 Approximately where do most of your fertility inputs come from?

 **Choose the best answer**

- ☐ Primarily produced on the farm
- ☐ Mostly produced on the farm, with some purchased inputs
- ☐ About half on-farm and half purchased
- ☐ Mostly purchased inputs
- ☐ Almost entirely purchased inputs
- ☐ Not sure

6. Soil Health

6.1 Do you use cover crops?

 **Choose the best answer**

- ☐ Yes, on most or all of our acreage
- ☐ Yes, on more than half of our acreage
- ☐ Yes, on some acreage
- ☐ Yes, occasionally / on a small portion of acreage
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not applicable to our production system

6.2 Which statement best describes your approach to reducing soil disturbance?



Choose the best answer

- ☐ We use a very low-disturbance system. Soil disturbance is minimized across most or all of our production, using practices such as no-till, permanent beds, strip-till, or other low-disturbance approaches.
- ☐ We use reduced-disturbance practices across much of our production. We limit tillage intensity, depth, frequency, or the number of tillage passes.
- ☐ We use some soil-disturbance reduction practices. We reduce tillage or use low-disturbance equipment on some crops, fields, or at certain times.
- ☐ We occasionally reduce soil disturbance, but tillage remains a regular part of our production system.
- ☐ We do not currently use practices specifically to reduce soil disturbance.
- ☐ Not applicable to our production system.

6.3 Do you use crop rotations?



Choose the best answer

- ☐ We rotate three or more crops and/or include a pasture phase.
- ☐ We rotate two crops.
- ☐ We occasionally rotate crops.
- ☐ We primarily grow the same crop year after year.
- ☐ Not applicable / perennial crop system

6.4 How much of your soil is generally covered?



Choose the best answer

Think about the period between cash crops and the off-season.

- ☐ Soil is covered (ie. cover crops, crop residue, mulching) year-round on nearly all fields.
- ☐ Soil is covered (ie. cover crops, crop residue, mulching) most of the year on most fields.
- ☐ Soil is covered (ie. cover crops, crop residue, mulching) part of the year or on some fields.
- ☐ Soil is frequently bare between crops.
- ☐ Not applicable / perennial system

7. Livestock

If your farm does not raise livestock, select “Not applicable” for the questions in this section.

7.1 What best describes your livestock’s access to the outdoors?



Choose the best answer

- ☐ Animals have year-round outdoor access and spend most of their time on pasture.
- ☐ Animals have regular outdoor / pasture access.
- ☐ Animals have seasonal outdoor / pasture access.
- ☐ Animals have limited outdoor access.
- ☐ Animals are primarily housed in confined systems.
- ☐ Not applicable — we do not raise livestock.

7.2 Which animal welfare practices or standards do you follow?



Check all that apply

- ☐ Certified Organic
- ☐ American Grassfed
- ☐ American Humane Certified
- ☐ Animal Welfare Approved by AGW
- ☐ Certified Humane
- ☐ Global Animal Partnership
- ☐ Other:

- ☐ None
- ☐ Not applicable

7.3 How are livestock integrated into your farm system?

Check all that apply

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Livestock graze crop residues | ☐ Livestock are used as part of nutrient cycling |
| ☐ Livestock graze cover crops | ☐ Livestock are intentionally integrated to improve soil health |
| ☐ Livestock graze pasture | ☐ Not applicable |
| ☐ Manure is used to build soil fertility | |
| ☐ Livestock help manage weeds | |

7.4 Which grazing practices do you use?

Choose the best answer

- ☐ We use adaptive or rotational grazing and adjust animal movements based on pasture conditions (e.g. pasture regrowth, soil cover, animal health, soil compaction).
- ☐ We use planned or rotational grazing with regular movement between grazing areas and monitor outcomes (e.g. pasture regrowth, soil cover, animal health, soil compaction).
- ☐ We rotate animals occasionally, but grazing is not consistently planned or monitored.
- ☐ Animals primarily graze continuously with limited active grazing management.
- ☐ Grazing is generally unmanaged.
- ☐ Not applicable — we do not raise livestock.

7.5 Where does most of your livestock feed come from?

Choose the best answer

- ☐ Primarily produced on our farm
- ☐ Mostly produced on our farm, with some purchased feed
- ☐ About half produced on-farm and half purchased
- ☐ Mostly purchased feed
- ☐ Almost or entirely purchased feed
- ☐ Not applicable

7.6 If you purchase feed, what is the primary type of feed that you purchase?

Choose the best answer

- ☐ Always or primarily certified organic feed (which encompasses non-GMO)
- ☐ Always or primarily certified non-GMO feed
- ☐ A mix of certified organic, certified non-GMO, and/or conventional feed
- ☐ Always or primarily conventional feed
- ☐ Other:

- ☐ Not applicable

8. Farm Goals & Continuous Improvement

8.1 Which areas are you currently working to improve?

Check all that apply

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Reducing pesticide use | ☐ Supporting pollinators |
| ☐ Reducing use of higher-risk pesticides | ☐ Improving water conservation |
| ☐ Reducing synthetic fertilizer use | ☐ Improving livestock welfare |
| ☐ Increasing use of compost or manure | ☐ Improving grazing management |
| ☐ Increasing cover crops | ☐ Increasing on-farm nutrient cycling |
| ☐ Increasing crop diversity | ☐ Reducing purchased inputs |
| ☐ Reducing tillage | ☐ Other: |
| ☐ Increasing soil cover | <input type="text"/> |
| ☐ Improving soil health | |
| ☐ Increasing wildlife habitat | ☐ We are not currently working toward additional changes |

9. Optional Additional Information

Is there anything else you would like food purchasers to know about your farming practices?

