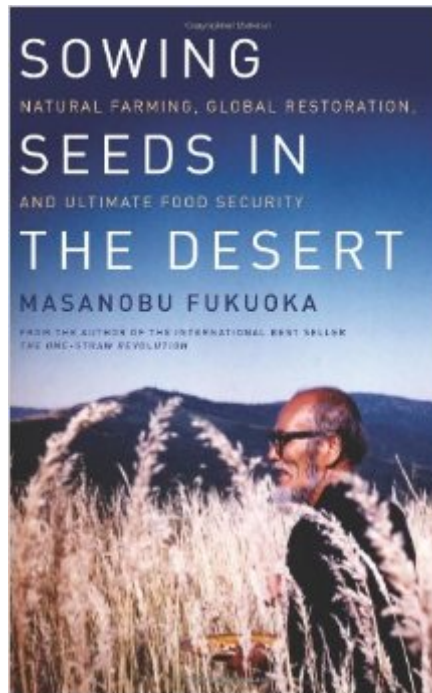


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Sowing Seeds In The Desert: Natural Farming, Global Restoration, And Ultimate Food Security



Synopsis

The earth is in great peril, due to the corporatization of agriculture, the rising climate crisis, and the ever-increasing levels of global poverty, starvation, and desertification on a massive scale. This present condition of global trauma is not "natural," but a result of humanity's destructive actions. And, according to Masanobu Fukuoka, it is reversible. We need to change not only our methods of earth stewardship, but also the very way we think about the relationship between human beings and nature. Fukuoka grew up on a farm on the island of Shikoku in Japan. As a young man he worked as a customs inspector for plants going into and out of the country. This was in the 1930s when science seemed poised to create a new world of abundance and leisure, when people fully believed they could improve upon nature by applying scientific methods and thereby reap untold rewards. While working there, Fukuoka had an insight that changed his life forever. He returned to his home village and applied this insight to developing a revolutionary new way of farming that he believed would be of great benefit to society. This method, which he called "natural farming," involved working with, not in opposition to, nature. Fukuoka's inspiring and internationally best-selling book, *The One-Straw Revolution* was first published in English in 1978. In this book, Fukuoka described his philosophy of natural farming and why he came to farm the way he did. *One-Straw* was a huge success in the West, and spoke directly to the growing movement of organic farmers and activists seeking a new way of life. For years after its publication, Fukuoka traveled around the world spreading his teachings and developing a devoted following of farmers seeking to get closer to the truth of nature. *Sowing Seeds in the Desert*, a summation of those years of travel and research, is Fukuoka's last major work-and perhaps his most important. Fukuoka spent years working with people and organizations in Africa, India, Southeast Asia, Europe, and the United States, to prove that you could, indeed, grow food and regenerate forests with very little irrigation in the most desolate of places. Only by greening the desert, he said, would the world ever achieve true food security. This revolutionary book presents Fukuoka's plan to rehabilitate the deserts of the world using natural farming, including practical solutions for feeding a growing human population, rehabilitating damaged landscapes, reversing the spread of desertification, and providing a deep understanding of the relationship between human beings and nature. Fukuoka's message comes right at the time when people around the world seem to have lost their frame of reference, and offers us a way forward.

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Customer Reviews

I was thrilled to see this book released. This book contains the last writings of Masanobu Fukuoka and they are about the desert regions of the world. I am from a long line of subsistence farmers on two continents and, as far as I know, the only one who has been a high desert grower. One Straw Revolution set my course as an ecological gardener/farmer in the high desert of CA over 25 years ago. This book is helping me realize why some of my experiments worked (and others didn't). To see desert lands addressed by Fukuoka in a way that makes sense to me as a micro-scale farmer is invaluable. On the personal side, I was able to take principles from One Straw Revolution and customize them to my desert environment and help feed my family and friends. From *Sowing Seeds in the Desert*, I am learning ways to continue growing in a marginal environment. The first book was a great inspiration. This current book is a great encourager. On a larger scale, our world is running short of arable land and our groundwater across the planet is being depleted rapidly. There isn't time for another ice age to lay down more deep wells of fossil groundwater. Honestly, we all - from backyard gardeners to commercial farmers - ought to be learning how to grow using water and the land with more wisdom. We need to learn to sit with the land, learn from it, and produce food in ways that make sense for our regions of the world. Along with Fukuoka, we would do well to look at indigenous ways of growing from our particular regions. If you allow it to, this book will inspire you to do just these things. In some places, this book is so strongly innovative that you may wonder - will this really work? I am absolutely betting my farm on Fukuoka. These principles have been working for us for many years.

If you've read "One Straw Revolution" then you have some idea of what to expect in this book. For those who say 'no new information' I wonder if they read beyond the introduction and first chapter. Though the theme is reclaiming the desert, there is a lot of Fukuoka-san's personal beliefs and philosophy interjected throughout. When Fukuoka is discussing the re-seeding of the deserts, he is meaning re-seeding the deserts created by man's misuse of the land. The examples of this would be the San Joaquin valley in California, northeast Africa (Somalia, Ethiopia), and parts of Europe that have had the soil stripped bare of nutrients due to centuries of misuse. Fukuoka-san wrote this book later than his first. What this means is that he had several years more experience and time for reflection before writing "Sowing Seeds in the Desert". Mainly he had finally traveled outside of Japan for the first time (right after the US publication of "One Straw Revolution"). Seeing the state of agriculture first hand in other countries gave Fukuoka-san more reason to ponder the future of humanity in regards to food production. Many of his ideas are far fetched, but the basis for his theories and philosophy are well rooted. He quotes Descartes, Plato, and even the Bible in addition to Buddhist and Shinto beliefs. His philosophy never really comes off as contrived, in one chapter he even discusses with disdain a fraudulent faith healer from Kobe who visited his farm. Fukuoka-san's work is not for everyone. Those who enjoy being blind to the looming crisis in food and water supplies probably wouldn't enjoy this book.

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