



INPUT REDUCTION

Input reduction refers to using agroecological practices to reduce or eliminate dependency on purchased inputs by carefully planning and managing rich and diverse ecosystems that create synergies between different components of the agricultural system.

This creates more efficient farms that use free natural resources such as solar radiation, atmospheric carbon, nitrogen, biological processes, and that recycle biomass, nutrients and water, which increases the autonomy of the farmer and increases resilience to natural or economic shocks.



**PURCHASED
INPUTS:**



**CAN BE REPLACED BY
A SET OF
AGROECOLOGICAL
PRACTICES SUCH AS:**



**Nitrogen
Fertilizer**



Legumes

valuing their ability to catch nitrogen from the air (Biological Nitrogen Fixation)



Manure

Grazing animals through arable land, or importing their manure from one part of the farm (or a neighbouring farm) to the other



Compost

Using plant and food waste to fertilise the soil



Silvopasture

Grazing animals through productive (e.g. fruit or nut) trees in order to fertilise the soil



Direct drilling

Sowing crops directly into the previous season's crop stubble in order to engage in no-till practices and benefit from the nutrients found within the stubble

Pesticides and Herbicides

Crop rotations

Rotating different varieties of crops on the same parcel of land in order to control weed growth and manage pests without chemicals

Intercropping

Growing different varieties of plants in the same plot, at the same time, in order for crops to benefit from one another by repelling pests, attracting beneficial insects and managing weeds

Functional biodiversity within agroecosystems

Including functional biodiversity within agroecosystems (i.e. around the fields) enhances the regulation of pests (see the role of hedges in the factsheet on synergies)

Feed

Grazing

Using grassland and rangelands for feed to increase animal welfare, environmental benefits, biodiversity and economic stability

On farm feed production

Growing any livestock feed requirements within the farm

Agroforestry

Using branches, nuts, fruits and leaves from trees to supplement other feed requirements

Waste products

Using by-products from local industries that would otherwise go to waste for feed (e.g. spent grain from breweries fed to pigs)

Patented Seeds

Saving seeds

Instead of farming with seeds owned by corporations that need to be repurchased each season, saving seeds from the previous cycle in order to create autonomy and use seeds that are adapted to local conditions

Seed banks

Utilising community-led seed saving which increases biodiversity, the regional adaptation of crops, and diverse and culturally appropriate diets

Machinery and equipment

Collectively owned machinery

Buying and creating equipment within community-led programs



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