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**
- **Compost**
  - Using plant and food waste to fertilise the soil
- **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
- **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
Crop rotations

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.

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 with in 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.

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).

Agroforestry

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

On farm feed production

Growing any livestock feed requirements within the farm.
Seed banks

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

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.

Machinery and equipment

Collectively

owned machinery Buying and creating equipment within community-led programs.