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Biodynamic Farming: A Way to Sustainable Agriculture

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Biodynamic farming is an advanced organic farming system that is gaining increased attention for its emphasis on food quality and soil health. Biodynamic farming is developed by Rudolf Steiner in 1924. A fundamental principle of biodynamic farming is that food raised dynamically is nutritionally superior and tastes better than foods produced by conventional methods. This is a common thread in alternative agriculture; because other ecological farming systems make similar claims for their products. Biodynamic farming was the first ecological farming systems to develop as a grassroots alternative to chemical agriculture. Biodynamic farming is an alternative variant where the chemical fertilizers are totally replaced by microbial (biological) nutrient givers such as bacteria, algae, fungi, mycorrhiza and actinomycetes. A basic ecological principle of biodynamics is to conceive of the farm as an organism, a self contained entity. Emphasis is placed on the integration of crops and livestock, recycling of nutrients maintenance of soil, and the health and wellbeing of crops and animals; the farmer too is part of the whole. There are nine biodynamic preparations for the purpose of enhancing soil quality and stimulating plant life. They consist of mineral, plant or animal manure extracts, usually fermented and applied in small proportions to compost, manures, the soil or directly on to plants, after dilution and stirring procedures called dynamizations. Biodynamic compost is a fundamental component of biodynamic method; it serves as a way to recycle animal manures and organic waste, stabilize nitrogen and build soil humus and enhance soil health. Biodynamic compost is unique because it is made with BD preparations 502-507. Biodynamic compost serves as a source of humus in managing soil health and biodynamic compost emanates energetic frequencies to vitalize the farm. After the compost, preparations 502-506 are strategically placed 507 feet apart inside the pie, in holes poked about 20 inches deep. Preparation no 507 are liquid valerian, is applied to the outside layer of the compost by spraying or hand watering. Valerian (507) is mixed into liquid; a portion is poured into one hole, and the rest is sprinkled over the top of the compost pie. Lunar and astrological cycles play a key role in the timing of biodynamic practices, such as the making of BD preparations and when to plant and cultivate. Recognition of celestial influences on plant growth is part of the biodynamic awareness that subtle the energy forces affect biological systems. For pest attacks herbal extracts should be used only as a final remedy after utilizing and practising all the above control methods. The fact remains that biodynamic farming is practiced on a commercial scale in many countries and gaining wider recognitions for its contributions to organic farming, food quality, and community supported agriculture, qualitative tests for soils and composts. From a practical point of view biodynamics has proved to be productive and to yield nutritious, high quality foods.

Keywords: biodynamic, humus, organic farming, soil health, valerian