

An ecosystem approach to sustainable agriculture : energy use efficiency in the american south

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Abstrak

Modern industrial agriculture is not sustainable because of its heavy reliance on petroleum, a non-renewable source of the energy used in farming, and because of pollution caused by petroleum products such as fertilizers and pesticides. A systems analysis of farming suggests that agriculture will be more sustainable when services of nature, such as nutrient recycling by soil micro-organisms and natural controls of insects, replace the services now provided by energy from petroleum. Examples are drawn from the Southeastern USA, but lessons learned can be applied worldwide.