



Biological Farming Vocabulary

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Welcome to our first installment of "Word Wednesday"! Every week we'll pick 2 or 3 terms we use on a regular basis and share our definitions.

Let's start with the basics:

Sustainable Farming. We doubt any term in our industry has been so over-used or so over-defined! Various definitions address agricultural practices in terms of ecological impacts, economic viability, philosophical beliefs, and/or social issues. In fact the ideas promoted by "sustainable farming" and "sustainable agriculture" advocates are so numerous and so diverse that the term almost defies definition. We think the majority of farmers we know might define "sustainable farming" as a systems approach unique to their operation that maintains yields, keeps their family farm economically viable, and maintains their farm family's health and lifestyle. At AgriEnergy Resources, we attempt to move beyond sustainable; to move beyond just maintaining and on to improving, enhancing and revitalizing.

Biological Farming. When a farmer focuses on cultivating his crop of microbes below the soil surface, so they will flourish and help him feed and protect his above-ground cash crop, he is practicing "biological farming". By optimizing conditions for the microbes, the biological farmer allows these tiny "under-cover crops" to work steadily all season long at breaking down organic materials into forms that plant roots can identify, absorb, and use to grow a healthy plant.

Biological farming leads to soil health and soil wealth. A biologically teeming soil can reward its caretaker with reduced input costs because of enhanced nutrient cycling, great water-holding capacity, changes in both soil color and tilth, and large root masses with active rhizospheres. (*AgriEnergy Resources has several products to assist biological farmers including our signature microbial products: [SP-1™](#), [Residue®](#), and [Myco Seed Treat®](#).*)

Organic Farming. Organic farmers are biological farmers who follow an additional set of rules – the USDA organic regulations. The voluminous USDA regulations cover organic crop production, organic livestock production, and organic processing facilities. Of particular note on the crop production side, farmers are required to (1) use organic seeds, (2) practice crop rotation, (3) control weeds, insects and diseases with mechanical and physical practices or with a limited number of approved biological pesticides, and (4) abide by the National List of allowed, restricted and prohibited inputs. (*AgriEnergy has a complete line of biological products, fertility products, and pesticides that are [allowed in organic crop production](#).*) Organic crop farmers may NOT (1) use synthetic fertilizers, (2) apply sewage sludge or biosolids to their soil, (3) use any genetically modified materials, (4) use any synthetic herbicides or pesticides, or (5) use any seeds treated with fungicides.

Next week, we'll define "under-cover crops"! In the meantime, give your AgriEnergy Resources representative a call to learn which one of our signature microbial products could be implemented into your operation!