

Decomposition & God's Blanket

There is a desert created by the destruction or incorporation, through ploughing, of surface crop residues. This desert is unsuitable for the sustenance of the complex interactions of biotic life which occur in the soil by God's instruction. This desert effect has a successional transition of the biotic life pushing them right back to early pioneer species compositions which are far from ideal for nutrient release of high demand agricultural crop types.

So once we start to implement Farming God's Way, initially we see the huge termite almost "migration" to the Farming God's Way land, but what we don't see are the bacterial decomposers. There can be as many as 600 million per gram of soil & up to 20,000 bacterial species per gram. So although we don't see them they are there & decomposing much faster than any other living organisms we can see. They will be breaking down the organic carbons rapidly & releasing nutrients in very small amounts having been starved in the desert type environment devoid of all organic matter for so long.

What must happen is the soil "game reserve" must get into balance – this takes time & is a part of the redemptive stage of Farming God's Way. The early pioneer stage of the succession must move gradually over time to accommodate firstly a proliferation of bacterial species thereafter their predators to bring them into order & thereafter only can the more beneficial organisms in turn start to take their place in the biomass allowing for a more stable & beneficial state for plant growth & nutrient uptake. This may take several seasons & therefore we encourage Farmers who are venturing into Farming God's Way to embrace a long term view of five years to attain the full benefits.

Early years of God's blanket's presence are mostly beneficial due to the deep penetration & conservation of moisture. Later years improvements due to the nutrient level increases biotic balances & still later years due to the restoration of organic Carbon levels as well as the cumulative affect of the previous years benefits.

To encourage you Dixon Shuwali who farms in the lower shire:

1st year:

Preplanting God's Blanket – only minimal area covered
 Post Harvest - 40% mulch covers
 Result – he got 720kg/ha compared to his brothers 0kg/ha because of the drought.

2nd Year

Preplanting - 0% cover – that was in 6 months – huge rates of decomposition **ie 40% to 0% cover**
 Post harvest he had an 70% cover
 Result - he increased his yields 9 times to 6.6 t/ha

3rd season

Preplanting 30% cover ie 70%-30% in 6 months
 Post harvest in 2007 he had a 95% cover
 Result – 4.5 t/ha

4th Season

Preplanting 60% cover ie 95%-60% in 6 months

Harvest year	2005	2006	2007
Yield t/ha	0.72	6.6	4.5
Conditions	Severe Drought	Wet season	Widespread Flooding
Average % Cover preplanting	0	0	30
Average % Cover post harvest	40	70	95

This shows graphically the increase in mulch covers over time & how within 4 seasons he has gained a significant microbial & faunal balance within his soil.

This in turn is only best depicted (historically) by a 5 year cycle so he still has a way to go but it is really exciting to see what God does in His redemptive purpose on the land.

Take courage.