

REVIEW

Grassroots Rising: A Call to Action on Climate, Farming, Food, and a Green New Deal

By Ronnie Cummins



This book is an unabashed manifesto for action to reverse climate change and create a livable planet for us all. The main ways to do this are regenerative agriculture and renewable energy. The book is full of lists of things you can do and ideas about how to do them. I would suggest you start by reading the book. Then write your name on the front page and give it to someone else with the message to read it and do the same. And so on until the book is so worn out no one can read it again. Then use it for compost. It's printed with plant-based inks on recycled paper, so that will work.

Australia, governed by fossil fuel proxies, is burning while a massive propaganda campaign denies climate change. The military has been deployed to evacuate people from the shores. America seems to be following that example, as anyone who has been outside in the past few years can attest. We burn, flood, desiccate and poison our environment while agricultural and energy corporations do their best to deny such facts. The American President has murdered an Iranian general and people are worried about retribution, but no one has asked what that act cost the American public or what it costs to maintain a system capable of doing such things.

We do not count the costs of the military-industrial complex. Nor do we count the costs of our degenerative food system. You and I and every taxpayer pays those costs – whether for weapons or for subsidies for degenerative food. Corporations profit. Their time horizon is three months – a quarter of a year. But some of them have adopted ethical standards to insure they act responsibly. Yet they do not. The triple-bottom-line rhetoric and others of that ilk are part of a massive propaganda program designed to keep us on course to the pending meltdown.

The solution? Something like the Green New Deal, a program of replacing fossil fuel with renewable energy sources and regenerative agriculture that will sequester carbon in the soil. That requires a massive transformation of the American food system. It's not just about cleaning up our air, water and soils. It's also about enacting an equitable economic system in which all have some kind of stake besides suicide.

Corporations can't change a system from which they profit. In the end we can't eat money. Organizations that are all about money are parts of the problem and cannot be parts of any solution. That's the bottom line. "Judgment Day has arrived. The time for action is now." That's the message of this book.

We already know what to do and how to do it. People who read this and similar magazines have the solutions for regenerative farming. It's just a question of joining them with a wider program of social justice so that everyone has a stake in changing the system that is destroying us all.

Who feeds the world? The degenerative agricultural system of the U.S.? No. The world's smallholders "... feed 70 percent of the world's people with 25 percent of the resources." That's efficiency. Scale it up? We don't need to. We need to just copy it. Consider that "the average American now spends ten hours a day in front of computer, TV, and cell phone screens, and very little time in the kitchen or seated together at the family dinner table."

So we need to realign our political system from the massive subsidies for the degenerative food system and toward regenerative food production. We need massive social change to bring the U.S. more in line with the programs and practices of other industrial countries. Sounds radical? What could be more extreme than sacrificing a planet in return for the wealth of the richest 1% of its inhabitants? That's extreme. That's suicidal. And it has to stop. Read the book and pass it on.

— Paul Durrenberger

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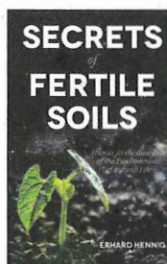
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