

Creating a Healthy and Resilient Organic Agriculture System



Erin Silva

Assistant Professor, Department of Plant Pathology

CURRENT RESEARCH

Exploring alternative agricultural techniques for sustainable ecological systems

Our growing population faces increasing challenges to maintain a stable supply of healthy, nutritious food. With the greater frequency of extreme weather, including hotter temperatures, longer periods of drought, and more incidence of flooding, the need to create agricultural systems that provide sustainable and resilient solutions designed to best meet our food production needs has never been greater. As an ecological management system, organic agriculture strives to produce food in a way that sustains the environment and people; both the consumers of food and farmers, the stewards of the land. While organic agriculture has many demonstrated benefits in sustainability—environmental, social, and economic—it is a complex management system for which research efforts have largely been ignored, prior to the last decade. Dr. Erin Silva, Assistant Professor at University of Wisconsin-Madison, is one of the few U.S. researchers solely devoted to researching and understanding organic agricultural and ecological systems. Her research optimizes practices that allow farmers to successfully produce organic crops, while enhancing the environmental benefits that organic agriculture provides.

Dr. Silva's agroecological research on organic crops include grains, vegetables, and pastures. She works broadly across management systems in organic agriculture to create a long-term alternative way to meet our growing food production needs in the U.S. and globally, while creating a healthy environment. Her research focuses on producing food in a more ecological manner by using a variety of techniques that promote a resilient and healthy organic system. These include helping farmers grow diverse crops using systems-based...

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AFFILIATION



University of Wisconsin-Madison

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. in Horticulture, 2002, Washington State University

RESEARCH AREAS

Environment, Agriculture, Ecology, Agriculture

FUNDING REQUEST

Your funding will help support the \$575K annual funds needed to continue Dr. Silva's research in organic agriculture. Her research is solidly launched; she is at the cusp of making significant continued strides in creating organic agriculture techniques that improve soil, food, and pasture quality. \$375K is needed to support personnel, \$75K funds field and lab supplies, and \$225K supports land rent and associated labor costs. Support her work toward a sustainable organic agricultural system; fund Dr. Silva.

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