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Institute Information

The Institute for Alternative Agriculture is a nonprofit, tax-exempt research and education organization established in 1983 to encourage and facilitate the adoption of low-cost, resource-conserving and environmentally-sound farming methods. It works closely with producer groups, public research and education institutions, and government agencies in promoting a sustainable agriculture system.

Its programs include providing a national information clearinghouse, serving as a voice for sustainable agriculture in Washington, and developing and implementing research and educational outreach programs. It holds an annual scientific symposium and publishes a monthly newsletter.

The Institute is governed by a grass roots Board of Directors, which includes several commercial-scale organic farmers, and maintains a small professional staff. It is supported by memberships and donations and grants from foundations, corporations, and individuals.

Cover Photo

The cover photo illustrates the importance of organic amendments for improving the tilth, fertility, and productivity of marginal soils. Shown here, is the growth response of corn (*Zea mays* L.) on a marginal soil in Maryland, USA. The soil on the right was amended with 25 tons of sewage sludge compost per acre and no chemical fertilizer was applied. The soil on the left received the recommended rate of chemical fertilizer for optimum corn yields. Photo provided by J. F. Parr, Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Beltsville, Maryland.