

## DRIVERS OF REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE: THE NEXT GENERATION OF SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION

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**Abstract:** Agriculture needs rapid and fundamental transformation to enhance its efficient and sustainable operation. Lately, Regenerative Agriculture (RA) has emerged as a comprehensive solution for the challenges of food production and climate change. Unlike the prohibition-based approach of organic farming, RA operates as an outcome-oriented, flexible framework focused on active ecosystem restoration. This study presents a systematic literature review based on the PRISMA guidelines to identify the key drivers of RA adoption and to provide clear recommendations for its effective introduction. The analysis highlights four categories of drivers that distinguish RA from other sustainable practices: economic (reducing input costs), ecological (restoring soil and climate resilience), social (peer networks and mentoring), and intrinsic (ecological mindset and autonomy). It is important to note that the findings primarily reflect Western farming contexts, which clarifies the generalisability of the results. To support the successful introduction of RA, policymakers and extension services should prioritise young, eco-friendly farmers operating on a smaller scale as the primary target group, while NGOs should directly organise farm visits and provide hands-on mentoring as necessary tools for successful adoption. Furthermore, for large-scale operations, the implementation of financial incentives linked to carbon markets and certification schemes is essential to encourage broader uptake. According to the findings, although change is fundamentally driven by individual mindsets, the deliberate implementation of these specific suggestions can significantly aid large-scale adoption and the development of more resilient agriculture.

**Key words:** agriculture, soil, sustainability, innovation, environment, review, regenerative, farmer.

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## Introduction

Modern agriculture faces the dual challenge of ensuring food security for a growing global population while minimising environmental harm. Conventional methods relying on synthetic fertilisers and pesticides have increased yields (de la Cruz et al., 2023; Knapp et al., 2023), but have also contributed to soil degradation, water pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions (Tripathi et al., 2020; Abebe et al., 2022; Xu et al., 2023). Although organic farming provides a more environmentally friendly alternative (Canwat and Onakuse, 2022), its lower yields and limited scalability raise concerns about its overall sustainability (Thakur et al., 2022; de Ponti et al., 2012). In addition to organic farming, other sustainable paradigms have emerged, such as circular, green, and integrated agriculture. Circular agriculture focuses on closing nutrient loops and minimising waste, while green agriculture emphasises the reduction of negative externalities through technological efficiency (Jurgilevich et al., 2016; Koochafkan et al., 2012). Integrated agriculture seeks to achieve a balance by combining biological and chemical tools to optimise production (Atapattu et al., 2024). However, while these approaches primarily aim to reduce the “footprint” or maintain current resource use, regenerative agriculture (RA) is emerging as a holistic approach that not only avoids environmental harm but also seeks to restore ecosystems through practices such as reduced tillage, organic amendments, and biodiversity enhancement (Wiltshire and Beckage, 2022; Rehberger et al., 2023; Villat and Nicholas, 2024). Regarding productivity, quantitative LCA evidence shows that organic agriculture typically yields the lowest output per hectare, while RA produces intermediate yields – lower than conventional but often higher than organic (Cavallito et al., 2026). Unlike the mitigation-focused approach of green or integrated methods, RA’s distinctive value lies in its proactive soil-building and carbon-sequestering capacity. These practices promote soil health, carbon sequestration, and resilience, with potential socio-economic benefits for smallholder farmers, who contribute over 30% of global food production (Ricciardi et al., 2018). Despite their critical role, small-scale producers often face constraints in resources and access (Ruml and Qaim, 2020; Quaicoe et al., 2024). Therefore, understanding the factors influencing their adoption of RA is essential to designing targeted interventions that enhance both environmental outcomes and farmer livelihoods.

Hence, this paper aims to explore the factors influencing farmers’ transition to RA by analysing the findings of selected peer-reviewed scientific articles.

## Material and Methods

Conducting a systematic literature review is a structured way to examine all the available high-quality studies related to a particular topic (Sarkis-Onofre et al.,

2021). This method is based on the identification, evaluation, and analysis of scientific works that fulfill the requirements of the specified search criteria (Mishra and Mishra, 2023). This study was carried out following the mixed-methods systematic review guidelines of the Joanna Briggs Institute (Aromataris et al., 2024). This approach combines qualitative evidence with the synthesis of quantitative findings (Gough, 2015). The mixed methods systematic reviews (MMSRs) are mostly applied in healthcare-related studies because the integration of the various study types provides a more comprehensive basis for making informed decisions (Lizarondo et al., 2022). To find as many relevant studies as possible, three major academic databases: Scopus, Web of Science, and Science Direct, were searched (Page et al., 2021).

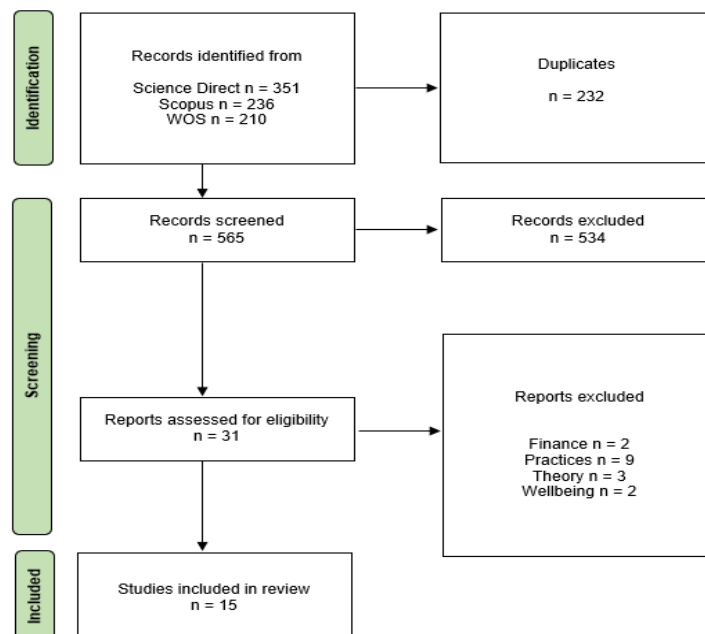


Figure 1. Stages of the applied PRISMA method.

Source: Author's elaboration.

This study specifically aimed to identify and synthesise the existing evidence on the factors driving farmers to adopt regenerative agriculture (RA). The brightest pool of studies was created by the keyword of “regenerative agriculture”, which had to appear in the title, or in the abstract, or in the keywords. During the selection process, only studies published in English and released on or before 4 March 2024 were included. This initial search identified 797 articles. To manage this large number of articles, Rayyan (2024), a free online platform designed to conduct

systematic reviews, was used. Only studies based on primary data were considered. To broaden the number of relevant publications, even the references of the selected studies were also scanned, but no additional works were included. However, the share of the selected articles did not provide such a bright pool of qualitative studies suitable for the proper application of the described method. Since the presented MMSRs could be considered as an extension of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses for Protocols (PRISMA) approach – both of the guidelines based on the same searching, and selection methods – the study follows these guidelines in presenting the results (Stern et al., 2020). The stages of the applied method are shown in Figure 1.

It is important to note that RA, due to its eco-friendly approach and major influence on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is widely researched. This broader interest resulted in the exclusion of many irrelevant studies. After the rigorous selection, only fifteen academic publications remained directly relevant to the defined topic of interest.

## Results and Discussion

To provide a comprehensive overview of the existing knowledge, the published review articles were studied. The data collection method was exactly as described above. However, this time only “review” articles were considered. Two hundred and fourteen publications were found in the database, before detecting the duplicates, but none of them has studied the farmers’ drivers, or attitudes regarding the implementation of RA. The studies mostly focused on the comparisons of various agricultural systems/methods or on soil, as shown in Figure 2.

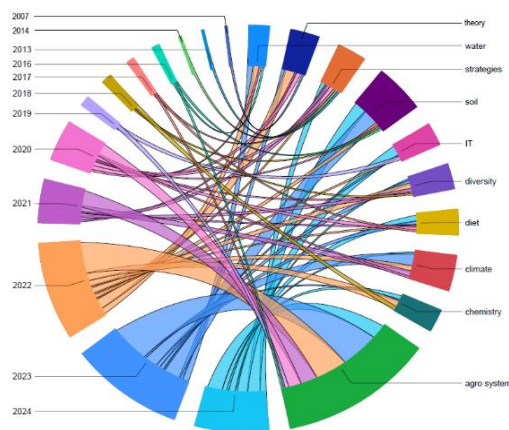


Figure 2. The directions and the publication years of the RA reviews.  
Source: Author’s elaboration.

Even within the reviews, diverse articles considered different practices and approaches as RA, since there is no unified definition. The review of Newton et al. (2020) aimed to define it from both process and outcome-based perspectives. However, given the great variety of approaches presented, the authors instead suggested the free application of RA. Notwithstanding the absence of a unified definition, the various forms of RA (Newton et al., 2020) and a framework to track the agricultural changes (driven by RA) have been identified (O'Donoghue et al., 2022). The use of the framework-based collected data can support further studies and innovations in the agricultural sector, fostering the refinement of our knowledge. The resulting outcomes could specify, for example, by territory or species, the most ideal circumstances for the application of RA. Considering that the latest meta-analysis-based evidence states that none of the studied RA practices simultaneously increase soil carbon and the yield (Jordon et al., 2022). In contrast, the work of Khangura et al. (2023) stresses the need for more specific data. Their review highlights the possibility of achieving both outcomes at the same time, but notes that the various climate zones, plants, livestock, and soil types have to be considered in these analyses. These reviews suggest that a holistic approach – applying multiple practices together – is considered as “expected” by the (lacking) definition, and that such practices can strengthen each other's effects.

#### Academic papers

Considering that RA embodies various concepts, the studies cover a wide range of approaches, as presented in Table 1.

As systematised above, what truly distinguishes RA from other sustainable practices is not merely its ecological awareness, but also its systemic approach to risks and outcomes. While organic agriculture operates as a highly regulated, prohibition-based system focused on input substitution (replacing synthetic inputs with organic ones), RA is perceived by farmers as an open-ended, continuous process of ecological regeneration. Farmers often accept initial yield fluctuations because RA fundamentally changes the metric of success: it shifts the focus from maximising gross yields to maximising ecosystem resilience and net financial stability by reducing dependence on external inputs. Therefore, these diverse aspects present slightly different contexts, although their main findings were revealed. Van den Berg et al. (2018) analyse how political-economic pressures and environmental degradation prompted farmers to explore innovative, ecologically sound farming strategies. Soil erosion and declining yields due to conventional practices, combined with rising fertiliser costs, encouraged farmers to adopt RA practices, which enhanced soil fertility and reduced dependence on external inputs. Gosnell et al. (2019) find that the transition to RA was often triggered by personal or financial crises, which led farmers to question conventional methods.

Table 1. Theoretical frameworks and perspectives of the studied articles.

Article	Focus	Research Gap	Location	Data
van den Berg et al. (2018)	Agricultural innovation, sustainable farming practices, farmer cooperation	Lack of studies on the long-term impact of cooperative farming models on sustainability and economic outcomes.	Brazil	Interviews with farmers
Gosnell et al. (2019)	Shift from conventional to regenerative farming practices	Lack of understanding of the long-term economic viability of regenerative farming in different regions.	Australia (New South Wales)	Interviews with farmers
Rosenzweig et al. (2020)	Shifts in cropping systems and soil health management	Further exploration needed on the role of insurance and policy in the adoption of continuous cropping systems.	USA (Colorado, Nebraska)	Interviews with farmers
Gosnell et al. (2020)	Motivations behind the adoption of regenerative practices	More research on the economic impacts of regenerative farming practices and the role of financial incentives.	Australia, USA	Interviews with farmers
Gosnell (2022)	Influence of chemical fertilisers and soil microbe on farmers' shift to RA	Further research needed on the emotional and mental hurdles farmers face in transitioning to regenerative practices.	Australia, USA	Interviews with farmers and consultants
Kenny and Castilla-Rho (2022)	Exploring the difficulties and possibilities for adopting RA	Further exploration needed on how government policies and subsidies could support or hinder the transition to RA.	Australia	Interviews with farmers
Page and Witt (2022)	How Australian beef farmers perceive RA and their farming goals	Additional research on the perceived role of science and technology in regenerative practices is needed.	Australia	Interviews with farmers
Beacham et al. (2023)	Farmer perspectives on adopting RA	More research on the barriers caused by market regulations and uncertainty, such as certification and subsidies.	England (East, South-West)	Interviews with farmers
Jordon et al. (2023)	Reasons for non-adoption of RA among sheep and beef farmers in England	Further research on the role of older farmers and their resistance to RA could provide deeper insights.	England	Interviews with farmers
Keshavarz and Sharafi (2023)	Barriers to the restoration of degraded agroecosystems in developing countries	Research needed on how global and local policies interact to either support or hinder the adoption of RA in developing countries.	Iran	Interviews with experts

Table 1. Continuation.

Article	Focus	Research Gap	Location	Data
Wojtynia et al. (2023)	Adoption of regenerative farming practices	Limited research on how the global farming system impacts small-scale regenerative farming.	Netherlands	Interviews with farmers
Ntawuhiganayo et al. (2023)	Adoption of recycling and regenerative practices	Exploration of barriers to adoption beyond training and extension visits, such as policy or community-level factors.	East Africa (Rwanda, Kenya)	Survey
Miller-Klugesherz and Sanderson (2023)	Transition from conventional farming to RA	Longitudinal studies on the personal and social transformation of farmers during RA adoption.	USA	Interviews with farmers
Frankel-Goldwater et al. (2024)	Motivations for adopting RA	Lack of focus on specific policy support for RA adoption across different regions.	USA	Interviews with farmers
Phelan et al. (2024)	Engagement with soil carbon sequestration programmes	Research gap in assessing the long-term financial benefits of soil carbon sequestration for farmers.	UK	Survey with farmers and interviews

Source: Author's elaboration.

The adoption of RA allowed them to align ecological processes with farm operations, promoting low-input systems that reduced costs and improved profitability. However, major obstacles included scepticism from peers, institutional resistance, and the psychological difficulty of abandoning entrenched paradigms. Rosenzweig et al. (2020) highlight that perceptions of profitability, risk management, and ecological resilience were central to farmers' decisions to intensify cropping systems. Motivated by soil health campaigns and dissatisfaction with conventional advice, farmers pursued crop diversification to reduce input costs, yield volatility, and market risk. However, challenges such as labour demands, crop insurance limitations, and insufficient support for non-traditional practices posed significant barriers to adoption. Gosnell et al. (2020) explore the motivations behind farmers' adoption of RA, emphasising that environmental resilience, cost reduction, and improved forage quality are among the key incentives. Regenerative practices such as holistic grazing enhance ground cover and reduce dependency on inputs, thereby lowering financial risk and increasing ecological stability. However, the transition is challenging; the initial phase is labour-intensive, requiring a shift in mindset and the acquisition of new monitoring and decision-making skills. Farmers often encounter emotional resistance, especially when conventional success metrics no longer

apply. Gosnell (2022) delves further into the psychological and cultural dimensions of this transition. Farmers' increasing dissatisfaction with chemical inputs, due to rising costs and declining efficacy, motivates a search for alternatives. However, fear of failure, social stigma, and entrenched norms – such as valuing tidiness and weed-free fields – pose significant psychological barriers. Adopting RA involves redefining one's identity as a farmer and often entails overcoming community disapproval and institutional inertia. Despite these challenges, gaining knowledge and a sense of autonomy fosters empowerment and sustains the transition process. Kenny and Castilla-Rho (2022) reinforce this perspective by highlighting systemic obstacles to RA adoption. They argue that institutional support for conventional agriculture – reflected in policy, education, and consumer expectations – creates a self-reinforcing cycle that resists change. The perceived benefits of RA, though substantial, are not yet widely recognised or valued enough to outweigh the perceived risks, costs, and labour demands, particularly in the absence of targeted policy interventions or cultural shifts. Page and Witt (2022) reveal that farmers' perceptions of RA vary across a spectrum of value systems, with some prioritising productivity, others favouring environmental goals, and a third group navigating both. While farmers motivated by ecological outcomes see RA as aligned with their values and lifestyle, those more focused on productivity remain sceptical, viewing technology and conventional science as more reliable tools. Across all groups, tension remains between the perceived long-term environmental benefits of RA and the short-term economic risks, particularly amid market volatility and limited data. Beacham et al. (2023) also find that, although RA is viewed as environmentally beneficial and potentially profitable, significant barriers to adoption persist. These include uncertainty about certification, shifting government policies, and scepticism regarding the authenticity of RA practices. Many farmers express a desire for regulatory clarity and market incentives to make regenerative labelling more meaningful and profitable. Additionally, social and generational dynamics influence the depth of farmers' commitment – some follow RA trends without internalising its principles, which undermines transformational change. Jordon et al. (2023) emphasise the practical and structural impediments to adoption, especially among older farmers and those managing smaller or less diversified operations. High upfront costs for infrastructure and equipment, reluctance to adopt labour-intensive practices, and concerns about yield uncertainty limit RA uptake. The study identifies distinct farmer profiles, ranging from enthusiastic adopters to resistant traditionalists, each influenced by different motivations, risk perceptions, and financial priorities. Keshavarz and Sharafi (2023) focus on broader systemic and policy-level barriers in developing agricultural contexts. They identify economic insecurity, weak institutional support, outdated technologies, and fragmented land ownership as major hindrances to RA

adoption. The lack of reliable markets, inadequate infrastructure, and limited access to credit or technical expertise compound these challenges. Cultural and psychological barriers, including risk aversion and low collective action, further inhibit progress. According to Wojtynia et al. (2023), farmers are primarily motivated by tangible outcomes such as improved soil health, aesthetic satisfaction, and collaboration with like-minded peers. They also expressed a strong desire to contribute positively to society. However, systemic barriers persist, as most advisory services, subsidies, and educational programmes favour conventional farming. Farmers cited a lack of impartial advice and public support, noting that consumers demand sustainable farming without offering price premiums. Some have begun differentiating through direct-to-consumer sales, though changing mindsets and practices remains challenging. Media distrust and perceived public criticism further complicate the transition. According to Ntawuhiganayo et al. (2023), the farmers' motivations to adopt RA are influenced by both practical and ideological factors. Many farmers are driven by the potential for improved soil fertility, which they perceive as essential for long-term agricultural productivity. Additionally, formal training and support from extension agents significantly increase the likelihood of adoption, highlighting the importance of education in facilitating the transition. The opportunity for enhanced food security through sustainable practices also motivates farmers to shift towards RA. However, barriers remain, including financial constraints and the persistence of traditional farming norms, which hinder the adoption process. Proximity to protected areas was found to reduce the likelihood of adopting RA, possibly due to regulatory restrictions or a lack of clear benefits. Despite these challenges, training and community-level interventions are critical to overcoming adoption barriers and encouraging wider implementation of RA practices. Miller-Klugesherz and Sanderson (2023) analyse farmers transitioning from conventional agriculture to RA. Transitions were often triggered by financial or personal crises, with farmers undergoing significant identity transformations during the shift. The adoption of RA often led to social isolation, as farmers distanced themselves from conventional agricultural communities, including friends and family. Motivations included both financial necessity and environmental concerns, particularly regarding chemical use. While most adopted one or two RA practices within two years, implementing three or more took an average of eight years. The early phases were especially difficult due to income instability. Farmers reported a growing connection between ecological and personal well-being and expressed a desire to promote RA to challenge industrial agriculture norms. Frankel-Goldwater et al. (2024) found that environmental concerns and financial stability are central motivators. While some farmers had the resources to experiment with RA, others faced significant financial constraints. A recurring challenge was balancing

environmental goals with economic sustainability. Many participants believed RA could address systemic issues in agriculture, particularly for small-scale farms. Some identified market potential in value-added “regenerative” products. The study identifies two distinct groups: one more privileged, driven by large-scale ecological goals; and another, more financially vulnerable group focused on survival and legacy preservation. Despite their differences, both groups strongly opposed conventional farming due to its reliance on synthetic inputs. Phelan et al. (2024) explore farmers’ perspectives on regenerative practices, focusing on soil carbon sequestration. Their main motivations for RA adoption included declining soil fertility, extreme weather, and climate change concerns. While farmers were generally open to new practices, most expected financial compensation. Few were willing to adopt innovations without payment, and a comparable share only sought compensation for existing practices. The study highlights both openness to RA and the importance of financial incentives for widespread adoption.

#### Systematisation of drivers vs. barriers and distinction from organic agriculture

To provide a comprehensive overview, the factors influencing the adoption of RA must be systematised in direct relation to the persistent structural barriers. Rather than operating in isolation, each positive driver directly counters or reshapes a specific hurdle, altering the farmer’s decision-making matrix. Furthermore, while both organic agriculture and conventional sustainable practices share the ecological dimension of reducing environmental harm, RA is distinguished by a distinct operational philosophy. Table 2 systematises these dynamics, highlighting the interplay between drivers and barriers, as well as the specific features that differentiate RA from organic farming.

As systematised above, what truly distinguishes RA from other sustainable practices is not merely its ecological awareness, but also its systemic approach to risks and outcomes. While organic agriculture operates as a highly regulated, prohibition-based system focused on input substitution (replacing synthetic inputs with organic ones), RA is perceived by farmers as an open-ended, continuous process of ecological regeneration. Farmers often accept initial yield fluctuations because RA fundamentally changes the metric of success: it shifts the focus from maximising gross yields to maximising ecosystem resilience and net financial buffering by reducing dependency on external inputs.

Table 2. Systematisation of RA adoption factors (drivers vs. barriers) and differentiation from organic agriculture.

Dimension	Drivers	Barriers	Compared to organic farming
Economic and input	Rising input costs	High upfront investment costs	Focuses on lowering input costs rather than paying for rigid, expensive organic certifications.
	Focus on net profitability	Early-phase income instability	
	Carbon market potentials	High market and yield volatility	
Ecological and env.	Active soil restoration	Fear of short-term yield decline	Organic limits negative inputs; RA actively rebuilds soil health and ecosystem functions.
	Enhanced water retention	Lack of baseline ecological data	
	Resilience to drought/floods		
Social and operat.	Peer-to-peer networks	Institutional bias	RA offers a context-specific framework without strict, legally codified prohibitions.
	Farm demonstrations/workshops	Lack of impartial advisory services	
	Support from extension agents		
Psychological	Ecological mindset shift	Social stigma and peer pressure	Driven by internal values and systemic cognitive shifts rather than compliance with external checklists.
	Desire for operational autonomy	Fear of transition failure	
	Securing farm legacy	Cultural norms of “tidy” fields	

Source: Author’s elaboration.

The reviewed literature predominantly explores the factors motivating farmers to transition to RA, with a strong emphasis on exploratory, interview-based studies. Most research is concentrated in Australia and the United States, which shapes the findings toward Western farming contexts, while limited attention is given to African or developing regions. Across studies, participants often cited environmental concerns and a desire to contribute to sustainability – whether local or global – as key motivations. Critical turning points frequently included personal or environmental crises, such as droughts, floods, or rising input costs, particularly for fertiliser and fuel. Many farmers reported declining fertiliser effectiveness and financial strain due to price surges, prompting a reassessment of conventional practices. In only a few cases was RA adopted solely to enhance soil fertility. A recurring distinction emerged between motivations and predisposing characteristics for RA adoption. A mindset aligned with ecological harmony was consistently

linked to openness to transition. Although participant characteristics such as climate zone, plant/livestock focus, and age were rarely central in the studies, their influence was evident – particularly in cases where mixed crop-livestock systems supported RA goals. Age often played a role, with older farmers more resistant due to impending retirement, adherence to conventional norms, or reluctance to change. Farm size and ownership also impacted adoption decisions, with larger farms facing greater logistical and financial barriers. Interestingly, individuals entering farming from other professions – sometimes referred to as “career-changers” or “new entrants without an agricultural background” – often showed more willingness to adopt RA, lacking preconceptions from conventional agriculture. Successful transitions were frequently associated with small-scale, consumer-facing food production, reflecting increased public demand for traceable or affordable food. Hobby farmers also viewed RA as a viable model. External support structures were critical: few farmers cited national programmes as helpful, but where government or NGO-led initiatives were available, they were taken seriously. In contrast, agrochemical companies were often viewed as obstructive, influencing agricultural policies, education, and insurance systems. The value of trusted information sources – such as workshops, farm demonstrations, or peer networks – was widely acknowledged. Information access, particularly in less developed regions, was seen as both a key barrier and an opportunity. A summary of the identified factors is presented in Figure 3.

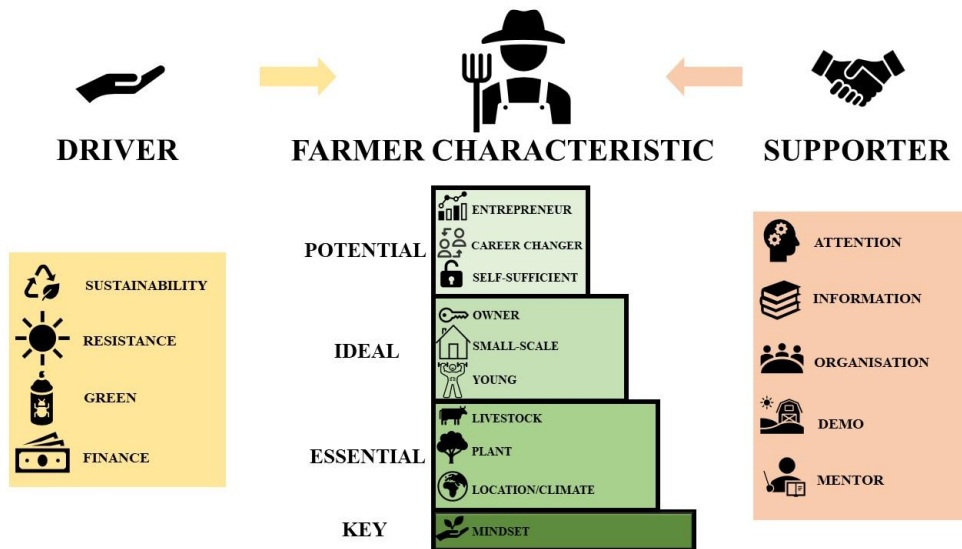


Figure 3. Factors influencing the farmers' transition to RA.

Source: Author's elaboration, 2025.

In Kenya, for example, lack of knowledge related to RA was identified as the main constraint (Otara et al., 2023). Participatory approaches, such as monitoring and evaluation processes, not only enhanced learning but also deepened understanding of the benefits of RA (Luján Soto et al., 2021). In developed countries, RA has the potential to complement or extend organic farming practices (Gordon et al., 2023). This complementarity operates through a functional synthesis: while certified organic farming provides a rigorous, legally regulated framework for eliminating synthetic chemicals, it often relies heavily on intensive mechanical tillage for weed control, which can inadvertently degrade soil structure. RA extends these practices by introducing intensive soil-building techniques – such as continuous living cover, complex crop rotations, and non-inversion or zero-tillage (no-till) systems – directly into organic protocols. By combining the chemical prohibitions of organic farming with the functional, process-driven soil restoration practices of RA, farmers can achieve greater ecological synergy, actively rebuilding soil organic matter, and enhancing microbiological biodiversity while remaining chemical-free. In less mechanised regions, openness to RA may be higher due to closer ties to nature (Daum & Birner, 2020). Community-based knowledge sharing has been proposed as a pathway for RA adoption in such contexts (Ogunyiola et al., 2022). Broader uptake – particularly among large-scale operations – may depend on financial incentives and integration into mechanisms such as carbon markets and certification schemes (Stephens, 2021; Reed et al., 2022; Gordon et al., 2024). Future research should therefore move beyond identifying barriers and systematically investigate the positive adoption factors, particularly how economic, ecological, social, and intrinsic drivers interact across diverse farming systems and regions.

## Conclusion

Agriculture plays a critical role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through its effective operation, multiple SDGs – particularly climate action, soil protection, and responsible production – could be advanced and addressed simultaneously. Lately, widely adopted agricultural approaches have been reconsidered, developed, and discussed, but the precise socioeconomic, behavioural, and intrinsic factors driving farmer adoption toward RA are sporadically studied. Traditional agricultural paradigms often treat sustainability as a set of rigid, top-down regulations. This study directly addresses this gap by mapping the internal and external decision-making matrix of the farmer. The main factors for RA implementation are economic (reducing dependency on costly synthetic inputs and improving net profitability), ecological (restoring soil health, water retention, and climate resilience), social (access to peer networks, farm demonstrations, and mentoring), and intrinsic (an ecological mindset, desire for

operational autonomy, and securing a farm legacy). The study revealed a structured systematisation of drivers versus barriers across four dimensions, and identified the farmer groups most receptive to transitioning to RA, namely career changers, small-scale consumer-facing producers, hobby farmers, and younger farmers with an ecological mindset. Currently, no comprehensive, behaviour-focused framework exists that synthesises how intrinsic mindsets interact with economic and social barriers during the RA transition. Because such integrated synthesis materials were not previously available, this study was developed to fill this scientific gap. However, further research is needed to fully realise the benefits of these findings, as this study has clear boundaries and limitations. The analysed primary literature is heavily skewed toward Western farming contexts – predominantly centred in Australia and the United States – which shapes the findings and clarifies expectations regarding the generalisability of the results to less mechanised or smallholder regions. Furthermore, the selection process was strictly confined to peer-reviewed articles published in the English language across three major academic databases (Scopus, Web of Science, and ScienceDirect) that were released before the temporal boundary of 4 March 2024. Consequently, highly recent institutional changes or local socio-economic developments after this date have not been captured. Policymakers play a crucial role in creating an enabling environment for this method. By shifting away from conventional subsidy biases, providing targeted funding, and implementing supportive regulations – such as integrating regenerative land covers into verified carbon markets and standardised certification schemes – they could facilitate the widespread adoption of RA. In practical terms, extension services and NGOs should prioritise young, eco-friendly farmers operating on a small scale as the primary target group, directly organising farm visits and providing hands-on mentoring to mitigate the fear of transition failure. For large-scale farms, financial incentives linked to carbon markets and certification schemes are essential to encourage broader uptake. Finally, regarding future research directions, it is essential to focus on addressing the practical challenges identified in this real-world setting. Future empirical studies should explicitly aim to confirm or refute the adoption dynamics identified in this review. Longitudinal research is strongly recommended to monitor long-term farm profitability, while expanding these studies to diverse, non-Western agricultural commodities and regions is critical to establish the universal reliability and scalability of the regenerative paradigm.

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POKRETAČI REGENERATIVNE POLJOPRIVREDE: NOVA GENERACIJA  
ODRŽIVE PROIZVODNJE HRANE

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R e z i m e

Poljoprivredi je potrebna brza i temeljna transformacija kako bi se poboljšalo njeno efikasno i održivo poslovanje. Poslednjih godina, regenerativna poljoprivreda (RP; engl. *regenerative agriculture* – RA) pojavljuje se kao sveobuhvatno rešenje za izazove proizvodnje hrane i klimatskih promena. Za razliku od pristupa organske poljoprivrede zasnovane na zabranama, RP funkcioniše kao fleksibilan okvir orijentisan na ishode, usredsređen na aktivnu obnovu ekosistema. Ova studija predstavlja sistematski pregled literature zasnovan na PRISMA smernicama kako bi se identifikovali ključni pokretači usvajanja RP i pružile jasne preporuke za njeno efikasno uvođenje. Analiza ističe četiri kategorije pokretača koji razlikuju RP od drugih održivih praksi: ekonomske (smanjenje troškova inputa), ekološke (obnova zemljišta i klimatska održivost), društvene (vršnjačke mreže i mentorstvo) i intrinzične (ekološki način razmišljanja i autonomija). Važno je napomenuti da nalazi pre svega odražavaju kontekste zapadne poljoprivredne proizvodnje, što razjašnjava generalizaciju rezultata. Kako bi se podržalo uspešno uvođenje RP, kreatori politika i savetodavne službe trebalo bi da daju prioritet mladim, ekološki osvešćenim poljoprivrednicima koji posluju na manjim posedima kao primarnoj ciljnoj grupi, dok bi nevladine organizacije (NVO) trebalo da organizuju posete poljoprivrednim gazdinstvima i obezbede praktično mentorstvo kao neophodne alate za uspešno usvajanje ovih praksi. Za velike poljoprivredne sisteme, primena finansijskih podsticaja povezanih sa tržištima ugljenika i šemama sertifikacije je od suštinskog značaja za podsticanje šireg usvajanja. Rezultati istraživanja ukazuju da, iako su promene prvenstveno uslovljene individualnim stavovima i načinom razmišljanja, planska primena predloženih mera može značajno doprineti njihovoj široj primeni i razvoju otpornijeg poljoprivrednog sektora.

**Ključne reči:** poljoprivreda, zemljište, održivost, inovacije, životna sredina, pregled, regenerativno, poljoprivrednik.

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