

FARMING GOD'S WAY

Introduction

Today, the world faces a desperate poverty and food insecurity problem. This is attributed to many reasons, including: badly degraded soils and landscapes, poor agricultural practises, declining sizes of agricultural land, rising input costs, rapid population growth, government negligence, conflict, a growing biofuel industry at the expense of food supply, food wastage and climate change. According to the 2021 United Nations Statistics, there are more than 800 million people worldwide who are undernourished, which is a staggering 1 in every 10 people! The statistics for Africa are significantly worse, with 1 in every 5 Africans not able to feed themselves. Agriculture is one of the biggest sectors of untapped potential in developing countries worldwide. It has the potential to provide national food security whilst employing the highest percentages of the population. In Africa, for instance, more than 45% of the population is involved in agriculture. The environment is also bearing the brunt of unsustainable human activities - with soil erosion, siltation, eutrophication and deforestation as some of the devastating results.

Biblical Basis for Hope

From a biblical perspective, God's creation is suffering the ills of mankind, the very creature designated by the Creator to care for the it – as stewards (Romans 8:22 “For we know that the whole of creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.”). Luckily, there is hope. The Word of God is full of the promise of restoration - when we, as God's people, obey His Word and remain faithful to our stewardship role. For Christians, we know that God expects mankind to exercise dominion over His creation with love, care and responsibility, as commanded right from creation time:

Genesis 1:28 – “God blessed the man and said to them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground”.

Genesis 2:15 – “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it”.

What is Farming God's Way?

[Farming God's Way](#) (FGW) is a biblical, holistic model of agriculture, helping farmers across the world to deal with the negative parameters facing them – applicable on both small- and large-scale farms. It has 3 interrelated spheres of influence, namely; Biblical, Management and Technology (called the 3 pillars). FGW is an amazing Godly solution to the food security and poverty crisis facing the world today. It incorporates some of the oldest technologies on the planet, which were designed by the Creator God before man was even on the face of the earth, when He put His laws in place to govern His diverse creation, and their complex inter-relations with one another. This includes aspects such as little or no soil disturbance; a thick blanket (mulch) cover on the surface of the ground; and a great biodiversity of species.

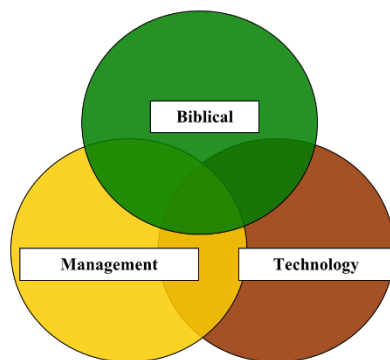
History of FGW

FGW is accredited to Brian Oldrieve, as the founder in 1986. Brian was a manager in a large-scale farm in Zimbabwe in the 1980s, at a time when the farm was experiencing losses- largely

due to high production costs and declining yields. As a Christian, Brian sought God’s counsel on the best way to bring the farm to profitability, and FGW was the result. Since then, Grant Dryden, an early ally of Brian, has, through intensive research, developed the model and published [many resources](#) to help adoption by farmers across the world. Many of these resources can be accessed for free on the FGW website.

The Footprint of FGW

Today, Farming God's Way has been embraced and used successfully by thousands of churches, missional organizations, NGOs and individuals all around the world. As at 2022 there were 63 **Accredited Trainers** who were working in different organizations and churches; along with hundreds of wholehearted non-accredited trainers, successfully extending Farming God's Way through their own spheres of influence. The approach is present in at least 30 countries (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, United States, Canada, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Paraguay) in 6 continents of the world (Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, South America, and Oceania).



Schematic representation of the Pillars of FGW

Each of the 3 spheres of influence has keys (for more information see appendix 1).

FGW and Ecosystem Restoration

Tree growing is a strong component of the overall goal of creation care of FGW, WITH biodiversity as a key focus as well. Integration of the right species of trees and different crop varieties are encouraged to ensure sustained soil fertility, high productivity and profitability. However, the actual number of trees grown through FGW is not readily available, since this is done by individual farmers and groups, without centralized reporting mechanisms. In Kenya, FGW is promoted by NCreation Stewards International (CSI) based at Kijabe, and report to have planted more than 6,000 indigenous tree species with different church groups and individuals who have gone through their regular trainings. CSI runs tree nurseries at their demo plots and supplies high quality indigenous tree seedlings at competitive subsidized prices.



Some of the seedlings at the CSI tree nurseries

Restoration of Farmlands Through FGW

As mankind strives to go “green”, many advances in the agricultural sector have come about – including Minimal till, Zero till, Conservation farming and Regenerative farming techniques. FGW incorporates most principles from these, but, more importantly, brings on board the biblical component – from which spiritual motivation is drawn.

By promoting accumulation of organic matter on the soil surface rather than incorporation into the soil, FGW sequesters huge amounts of carbon that would otherwise lead to global warming. The blanket cover on the soil surface has many other advantages, including stabilizing soil temperatures (which is good for plant growth), controlling weeds, and checking soil erosion.

As the organic matter decomposes, the soil is enriched with nutrients, while the micro-organisms in the soil are nourished and multiply to create the biological balance required in the soil. Also, the use of organic inputs (such as wood ash, compost and manure) encouraged in FGW helps enrich the soil with the full range of nutrients. Over time, the soil is “healed”, with gradual but eventually tremendous increase in yields from the first year of adoption.



Compost pile and heap of cut grass ready for application

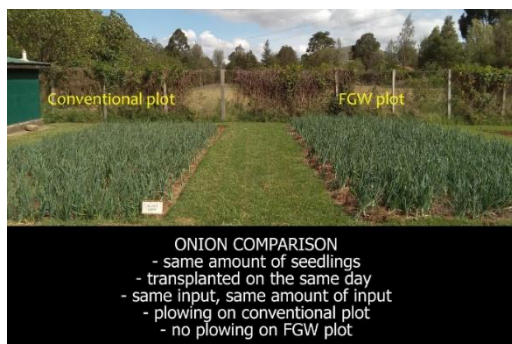
Farming God's Way promotes restoration of degraded farmlands by using sustainable farming practices such as crop rotation, cover cropping, and composting. These practices help to improve soil fertility, reduce erosion, and increase water retention, which in turn helps to

restore and maintain healthy ecosystems. Emphasis on use of organic inputs such as wood ash, ant-hill soil, compost and manure help to reduce chemical contamination of the soil.

Crop rotations ensure biodiversity of crops, sustained soil fertility, improved nutritional balance for the household, while also helping control pests and diseases – thus reducing the need for application of chemicals.

Does Farming God’s Way Really Work?

Over the years, farmers who have embraced FGW continue to share [testimonies](#) of how the approach has transformed their landscapes and their lives. Many [demonstration gardens](#)



have also been established in different regions, growing a wide variety of crops. Results have demonstrated that “healed” landscapes produce higher yields and give healthier food than conventional farming. On average, it takes 5-7 yrs of consistently following the principles and practices of FGW to restore degraded farms, with yields multiplying significantly. [Regular trainings schedules](#) are posted in advance across different countries, and are usually open for any who may be interested in adopting the approach. Regular updates on other events and activities are also posted on the [Farming God's Way Facebook Page](#), (which one does not need to be a Facebook user to access).

Onion Trial Plots in Kijabe, Kenya

Trial Maize and Beans Trial Plots in South Africa

Below are some comparison statistics from FGW and conventional trial plots from different regions (see more data in Appendix 2):



Crop and year	FGW	Conventional	Increase in yield	Country
Bulb Onions	125kg/plot	70kg/plot	78%	Kenya
Bulb Onions	76.9 kg/plot	17.3/plot	344.5%	Kenya
Bulb Onions	123.9kg	51kg	143%	South Africa
Maize	7.39 tons/ha	3.14 tons/ha	135%	South Africa
Maize	1.19tons/ha	0.549 tons/ha	116.7%	Kenya
Maize	61kg/plot	46kg/plot	32.6%	Kenya
Maize	8.625 tons/ha	-	-	Malawi
Beans	5.8kg/plot	1.57kg/plot	269%	Kenya
*				

**More data to be inserted from different countries.*

The Great Potential in FGW

There is great potential in promoting farmland restoration through FGW. Farmers who undergo trainings become committed not only to restoring their soils; through planting and caring for trees on their farms, they contribute to increasing tree cover and addressing climate change and increasing biodiversity.

Contacts

Website - www.farming-gods-way.org

Email: info@farming-gods-way.org

Social media platforms:

YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UcKrvml2KKMpstMwrfgKCVyw>

Appendix 1: FGW Keys

Each of the 3 spheres of influence has keys, as stated below:

The 6 Biblical Keys are:

1. Acknowledge God and God alone;
2. Consider Your Ways for You are the Temple of the Living God;
3. Understanding Gods All Sufficiency;
4. What you Sow you will Reap;
5. Bring the Tithes and Offerings B ack to God;
6. Stake your Claim

The 4 Management Keys are:

Doing Things

1. On Time;
2. To High Standards;
3. With Minimal Wastage;
4. With the Fruit of the Spirit.

The 6 Technology keys are:

1. No Ploughing;
2. 100% Cover with God's Blanket that is 2.5cm thick;
3. Practicing Biodiversity Through Rotations and other Methods;
4. Feeding Plants from the Top;
5. Ensuring Canopy Cover;
6. Permanence.

Appendix 2: Additional Data on Comparison Plots with Maize in South Africa

Figure 1: Maize Trials in 2018

April 2018						
			Crop	Yield kg	Yield kg/ha	Difference
1	Farming God's Way	Manure	Maize	34.9	9694	91%
2	Conventional	Manure	Maize	18.32	5089	
3	Farming God's Way	Compost	Maize	39.14	10872	125%
4	Conventional	Compost	Maize	17.42	4839	
5	Farming God's Way	Compost	Beans	51.3	14250	1599%
6	Conventional	Compost	Beans	3.02	839	

Figure 2: Maize Trails in 2012-13 in South Africa

