

**M**any agricultural experts have argued that no single technological intervention can improve African agriculture. Instead, they recommend that farmers use several different approaches across diverse farming systems.

As alternatives to industrial monoculture, agro-ecological approaches promote soil health and fertility, sustainable food production and increased farmer incomes. They include:

- fallow cropping – leaving lands idle to recover over a period;
- pit storage of manure and composting;
- boosting organic matter – including soil from ant heaps, animal manure and rotting leaves;
- intercropping grain with legumes, such as cowpeas and bambara nuts;
- nitrogen fixing;
- crop rotation – for example, grain, groundnuts and tree legumes (*faidherbia albida*);
- agroforestry – a combination of trees, crops and livestock; and
- diverse and well-supported farmer managed seed systems.

Current agro-ecological approaches are based on traditional farming practices refined over centuries by African farmers. These practices belong to the farmers, who must be included in any research and development processes that affect them.

# FARMERS HAVE ALTERNATIVES

## TO THE GREEN REVOLUTION APPROACH



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