

PROFILES IN soil health

Tommy Greenwell

Kona, Hawaii

Operation: coffee

Practice: mulching

Local Farmer Bold with Soil Health

Believe it or not, soil health reduces the cost of farming for Tommy Greenwell. At Greenwell Farms, Inc. they are not spending as much on chemical inputs, thus increasing profits and positively affecting their business.

Making the Change

In Kona, the soil is very thin and erosion is a big concern. In order to grow healthy trees, Tommy had to build up the soil and make it nutritious for the plants. Fortunately, water availability is less of a problem since they have an average rainfall of about 60 inches a year. When Tommy first started, the old method was to spray all of the weeds and not have anything covering the soil, thus exposing the root system.



"We live in paradise but we need to keep the soil healthy so we can grow trees, plants, and food to keep it paradise."

- Tommy Greenwell, Hawaii Farmer

The Practices

Today, Greenwell Farms, Inc. uses mulching and ground cover to protect the soil from erosion. Through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Tommy increases the biological makeup of the soil, which helps to reduce fertilizer, pesticide, and herbicide use. Tommy is proud to use this eco-friendly system which improves the overall health of the soil.



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Healthy Results

Over the past year, their coffee yield was much higher. After seeing the dramatic difference on the farm, Tommy decided to hold meetings for other farmers twice a month so that they can also benefit from increased soil health and decreased costs. By doing this, he ensures that future generations will still be able to farm on the same land.

Contact

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Healthy coffee orchard trees at Greenwell Farms, Inc.



Close up of healthy coffee cherries on the tree.

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