

A Soil School in Greece

Touch the Soil, touch the Soul



Soil School is an initiative that invites to a deeper connection with Nature. It calls for our attention to go back to soil, perceive it as a living entity and explore the relationships among all life forms.

Importance of Soil. Soil is a (the!) key factor for the success of all farming activities. At a country's level it is the base for its economic prosperity. At a global level it stands as one of the conditions for world peace.

Soil in Greece. In the whole of the Mediterranean area, soils are quickly “burned” under the rays of the summer sun and as a result very quickly lose their **organic matter**. In Greece soils are among the poorer in Europe: their organic matter content is usually close to only **1%**, while a good fertile soil should have at least 5 or up to 10 times this much.

Soil & Earth Care. In the Soil School farmers and people who would like to become growers, can be educated in Soil or Earth care; by mastering techniques and methods as **composting** and **green manures** (from Organic agriculture), **raised beds** (from Permaculture) or/and mainly, **Biodynamics (b-d)**. The School is inspired by the impressive results of the b-d method whether in soil improvement, or plants' health (resistance to disease) or the nutritional quality of its produce. Something that we have confirmed e.g. during our pilot research work “Humus Project” in Karystos – Euboea island (in the desertification zone), where humus content was raised from 1.6% to 4.5% with b-d alone.



Reconnection with Nature. Young people and children while in the farm can experience that the land they stand on, is a living organism, and not a dead substrate or support.

They are assisted in various ways to sense this “entity” of **living earth**. And to further on keep and cultivate the great gift of being connected with life.

As future citizens they evolve to adults who are well rooted in their selves and can act as guardians of the natural world.

A new culture. Way of Council (WOC), sitting in circle, is the basic communication pathway used in the setting up and functioning of Soil School.

The Soil School is flexible and open to organize events and educational activities on related topics **at a local, national and international level.**



Biodynamic (b-d) Agriculture.

A hidden potential lies in every plant and soil. In the b-d method, with the use of special preparations (of mineral, plant, or animal origin) and the resonance with cosmic rhythms (with the help of the b-d calendar), this potential is awakened and expressed. B-d took off in 1924 grace to the impulse brought forward by the Austrian philosopher, scientist and clairvoyant, Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925).

A Biodynamic Grape Farm for the Soil School.

We are about to establish a model b-d farm to host the School and currently are looking for the land. Our plan is a diversified farm with vineyards as its main theme. Vine growing is deeply rooted in the tradition of Greece and its people. The focus will be on the fresh fruit of the vine, i.e. **table grapes and grape juice**, which have excellent health benefits (see Resveratrol and the “French paradox”). Biodynamic production will further ensure their high quality; it has been recently acknowledged by specialists as R. Parker (for wine in this case), that b-d vineyards provide such a higher quality.

The farm part of the **Soil School** would also like to be a positive example for a **country in crisis**, as Greece is at the moment. When the land is fertile its produce is better in both quality and quantity. Thus it offers a solution and hope in times of financial crisis: **a fertile soil not only supports humans’ health but also their survival.**



Marios Desyllas studied Agronomy and was amongst those who initiated ecological agriculture in Greece as with the first organic olive oil project in Mani, 1988-91. He has since then supported many farms to convert to organics. Funding and/or leading member of associations or initiatives such as SOYE (pioneering Association for Organics in Greece), DIO certification organization and the “en dynamei” group for the promotion of biodynamics in Greece.

Teaches farmers, students, gardeners and school kids. Author of books, such as “Elements of Organic Agriculture”, (through which this subject was introduced in Greek secondary education) and articles, (columnist with the “Kipouros” magazine, “Kathimerini” newspaper, 2010-2014).

He loves growing and experimenting with all kinds of Mediterranean crops, on his own or with friends (astikosagrosx.blogspot.com).



Georgia Dousikou. I was born in the land and the first thing I remember was my attempt to step on her. I am now standing and feeling... A real miracle is happening just under my feet, and this is the soil, the land where I stand and walk on, sit or lay on, smell, hear and touch... This land is supporting me in every move I make. Nature was my first teacher and soon I have learned how to follow her traces. This led me to study Health Psychology and combine it with nature, poetry, shamanism and education. I am deeply touched by the miracle that lies in the simplicity of everyday life.

To support our initiative and for your donations or enquiries please contact:

Tel: +30-6937 290888, +30- 210-9888.602 (answering machine), e-mail: soil.school@yahoo.gr