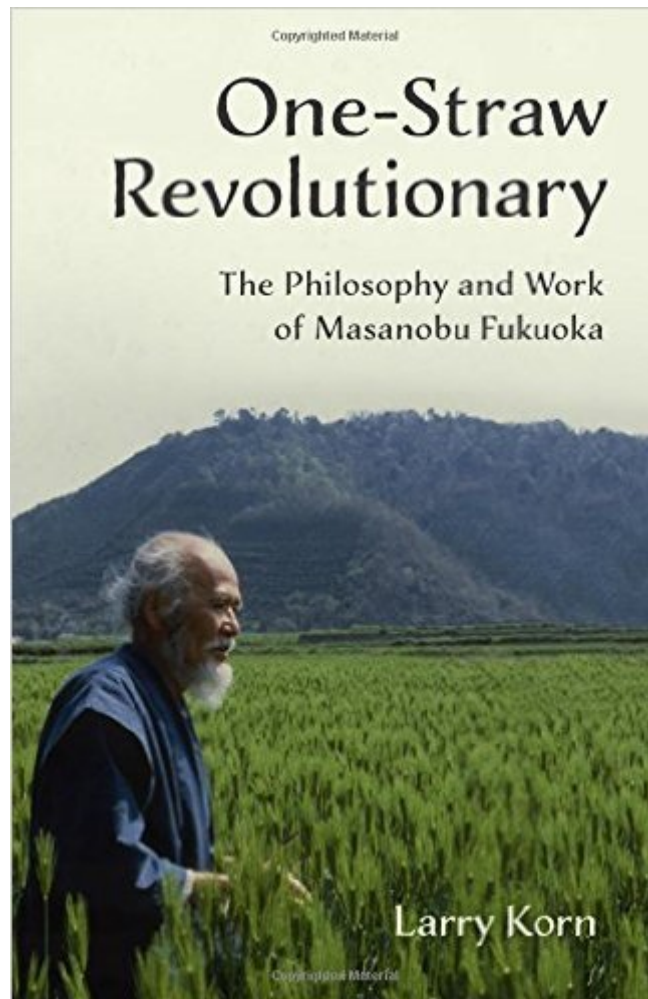


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One-Straw Revolutionary: The Philosophy And Work Of Masanobu Fukuoka



Synopsis

One-Straw Revolutionary represents the first commentary on the work of the late Japanese farmer and philosopher Masanobu Fukuoka (1913 – 2008), widely considered to be natural farming’s most influential practitioner. Mr. Fukuoka is perhaps most known for his bestselling book *The One-Straw Revolution* (1978), a manifesto on the importance of no-till agriculture, which was at the time of publication a radical challenge to the global systems that supply the world’s food, and still inspires readers today. Larry Korn, who apprenticed with Mr. Fukuoka in Japan at the time, translated the manuscript and brought it to the United States, knowing it would change the conversation about food forever. *The One-Straw Revolution*, edited by Korn and Wendell Berry, was an immediate international success, and established Mr. Fukuoka as a leading voice in the fight against conventional industrial agriculture. In this new book, through his own personal narrative, Larry Korn distills his experience of more than thirty-five years of study with Mr. Fukuoka, living and working on his farm on Shikoku Island, and traveling with Mr. Fukuoka to the United States on two six-week visits. *One-Straw Revolutionary* is the first book to look deeply at natural farming and intimately discuss the philosophy and work of Mr. Fukuoka. In addition to giving his personal thoughts about natural farming, Korn broadens the discussion by pointing out natural farming’s kinship with the ways of indigenous cultures and traditional Japanese farming. At the same time, he clearly distinguishes natural farming from other forms of agriculture, including scientific and organic agriculture and permaculture. Korn also clarifies commonly held misconceptions about natural farming in ways Western readers can readily understand. And he explains how natural farming can be used practically in areas other than agriculture, including personal growth and development. The book follows the author on his travels from one back-to-the-land commune to another in the countryside of 1970s Japan, a journey that eventually led him to Mr. Fukuoka’s natural farm. Korn’s description of his time there, as well as traveling with Mr. Fukuoka during his visits to the United States, offers a rare, inside look at Mr. Fukuoka’s life. Readers will delight in this personal insight into one of the world’s leading agricultural thinkers.

Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Chelsea Green Publishing; Reprint edition (September 14, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1603585303

ISBN-13: 978-1603585309

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.6 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars See all reviews (17 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #257,176 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #84 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Ethnic & National > Japanese #184 in Books > Science & Math > Agricultural Sciences > Sustainable Agriculture #201 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Professionals & Academics > Environmentalists & Naturalists

Customer Reviews

Long, long ago, hip folks in the Beatles era were jabbering about Masanobu Fukuoka's book, *The One-Straw Revolution*. It explained how he grew healthy food via natural farming, a low budget, low impact approach. On his farm in Japan, Fukuoka was growing grain, fruit, and vegetables without plowing, cultivating, chemicals, compost, fertilizer, fossil energy, erosion, pruning, or regular weeding. He farmed like this for more than 25 years, and his yields were comparable to those at conventional farms. The Japanese edition of his book was published in 1975, at a time when oil shocks had spurred interest in energy efficiency. When the English version was published in 1978, it was an international smash hit, and Fukuoka became a celebrity. Larry Korn was the book's translator. He's a California lad who worked on Fukuoka's farm for more than two years. Now, in 2015, Korn has published *One-Straw Revolutionary*, which is the subject of this review. It describes Fukuoka the man, and his philosophy, with glowing praise. Korn detests conventional industrial farming, because it has so many drawbacks. A bit less troublesome is organic farming done on an industrial scale. At the positive end of the spectrum, he sees Fukuoka's natural farming as very close to the ideal, both environmentally and philosophically. A bit less wonderful than natural farming are permaculture and old-fashioned small-scale organic farming. The ideal is something like the California Indians that were fondly described in M. Kat Anderson's book, *Tending the Wild*. They were wild hunter-gatherers who included wild plant seeds in their diet. They devoted special care to the wild plant species that were important to their way of life.

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