Practice: Compost Tea

- Brewed liquid extract from compost
- Amplifies the microbes in compost
- Folliar spray or side dress

*Why? Compost Tea increases the microbial population in the soil, improving soil health*
Practice: Compost Tea

- Brewed liquid extract from compost
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Why? Compost Tea increases the microbial population in the soil, improving soil health.
5. Soil Nutrient Management

Practice: Injection of Soluble Nutrients

- Inject seaweed and soy based nitrogen
- Use 40 gal sprayer to inject into drip lines

Why? Nutrients go right to the root zone of plant

- Nutrients pumped into drip line
Practice: Installing an Irrigation Canal Turnout

Digging channel for culvert into field

12” turnout into field

Why? Controls flow of surface water from canal into field
Practice: Concrete Box to Distribute Water Into Pipeline

Why? Distributes surface water into buried 12” pipeline
6. Irrigation - Surface Water Management

Practice: Buried Pipeline with Alfalfa Valves

12” buried pipeline

Why? Buried pipeline distributes surface water to alfalfa pop-up valves
Practice: Berms to Control Water Flow

Berm covered in vegetation

Why? Controls flow of surface water within the field and adds habitat
Practice: Field Laser Leveling

Why? A level field assures even water flow and conservation of water.
6. Irrigation- Well Water Management

Practice: Drilling a Well

- Use with drip tape and micro-sprinklers
- Year-round farming
- Water testing for quality is important

Why? Well water is ideal for drip tape and micro irrigation systems
Practice: Drip Tape Micro Irrigation

Permanently buried manifold and distribution lines

Irrigation lines spaced every 30”

Every row has buried control box

Why? Permanently buried lines assure ease of operation
6. Irrigation- Well Water Management

Practice: Drip Tape Irrigation Zone Control Station

Why? Controls and monitors the flow rate, volume and pressure in the drip lines

Flow rate meter and valves

Zone control station directing well water into drip lines
6. Irrigation- Well Water Management

Practice: Tensiometers

Why? Assures accurate irrigation based on plant needs

- Measures soil moisture
- Measures true water needs of plant

Prepping tensiometers for placement in field

Field placement at different depths
Practice: Drip Tape in Cash Crop Rows

Why? Efficient use of water, able to inject nutrients

- 1, 2 or 3 drip lines per row
- Long lasting (4-5 years) 15 mil thick tape
- Each row with own control box
6. Irrigation - Well Water Management

Practice: Micro Sprinklers in Orchard

- Waters both trees and cover crop
- One sprinkler head per tree
- Efficient use of water

Why? A healthy orchard cover crop provides nutrients to trees
Summary

1. As a soil health Bio Farmer, we are always growing 2 crops: one for us (cash crop) and one for the microbes (cover crop).

2. Quality compost- either made on farm or brought in- is most important amendment

3. Use biological inoculants and biologically based pesticides: they work with nature rather than against it.

4. Grow cover crops on all fields: before and after a cash crop.

5. Avoid chemicals and pesticides that will kill the microbial life in the soil.

6. Your farm is a unique eco-system where every practice affects all aspects of your farm.
NRCS Practices Listed by Category

1. Soil Health Improvement Practices
   #340- Cover Crops
   #327- Conservation Cover
   #328- Conservation Crop Rotation
   #329- Tillage Management, No till
   #345- Tillage Management, Reduced Till
   #324- Deep Tillage
   #612- Tree Establishment
   #490- Tree site Preparation
   #660- Tree Pruning

2. Habitat enhancement for pollinators
   #386- Field Border
   #422- Hedgerow Planting
   #647- Habitat Development
   #645- Wildlife Habitat Management
   #390- Riparian Cover
   #644- Wetland Wildlife Habitat
   #603- Wind Barrier

3. Farm Infrastructure management
   #561- Heavy Use Area Protection
   #342- Critical Area Planting
   #672- Building Envelope Improvement

4. Pest and weed management
   #595- Integrated Pest Management
   #585- Strip Cropping

5. Soil nutrient management
   #484- Mulching
   #317- Composting
   #590- Nutrient Management

6. Water management
   #320- Irrigation Canal or Lateral
   #587- Structure for Water Control
   #430- Irrigation Pipeline
   #362- Diversion Channel
   #443- Irrigation, surface and subsurface
   #464- Laser Land Leveling
   #642- Water Well
   #355- Ground Water Testing
   #441- Micro Irrigation
   #449- Irrigation Water Management
   #557- Row Arrangement
   #442- Sprinkler System
THANK YOU!

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Minor is available to consult on:

- Transitioning to organic practices
- Organic System Plan development
- Holistic farm planning
- NRCS practices
- Soil Health Management Systems
- Biologically based farm practices