ANTH 340

March 27, 2015

Soil Quality and Food Sustainability

 A good cook can tell you that the better the quality of the ingredients the better the taste of the food. A good farmer will tell you the better the quality of the soil, the better taste and nutrition in the food. The better quality the soil, the more sustainable the food system will be. Chemicals are like politicians; they make a lot of empty promises they cannot or have no intention of keeping, they look good in advertisements, but their delivery is often unsatisfactory, and many do more damage than good. Chemicals are expensive. They strip the soil of nutrients and then the nutrients must be put back in the soil again. The soil is not healthy. It cannot produce quality food consistently, and puts the farmer in debt. Soil matters. Soil health matters more. Food sustainability does not mean that there will be plenty of food for everyone, as the industrial farm chemical companies suggest, but by having sufficient high quality food that is grown in high quality soil. Chemicals do not produce healthy soil. Organic farming does. To have sustainable sources of agricultural products it is necessary to have healthy soil. Healthy soil is the foundation of a sustainable food chain, from which healthy food is grown and seeds can be produced for future harvests without the threat of soil degradation.