

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE®

1992
Volume 7, Number 4

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Subscription Information

The *American Journal of Alternative Agriculture* (ISSN 0889-1893) is published quarterly (winter, spring, summer, fall) by the Institute for Alternative Agriculture, Inc., 9200 Edmonston Road, Suite 117, Greenbelt, Maryland 20770. The IAA is not responsible for statements and opinions expressed by authors. Journal subscription rates: Institutions \$44 a year (\$59 foreign); Individuals \$24 a year (\$39 foreign); Students \$12 a year (\$27 foreign). Second Class postage paid at Greenbelt, MD. Postmaster: Send address changes to *American Journal of Alternative Agriculture*, 9200 Edmonston Road, Suite 117, Greenbelt, MD 20770.

Institute Information

The Institute for Alternative Agriculture is a non-profit, tax-exempt research and education organization established in 1983 to encourage and facilitate the adoption of low-cost, resource-conserving and environmentally-sound farming methods. It works closely with producer groups, public research and education institutions, and government agencies in promoting a sustainable agriculture system.

Its programs include providing a national information clearinghouse, serving as a voice for sustainable agriculture in Washington, and developing and implementing research and educational outreach programs. It holds an annual scientific symposium and publishes a monthly newsletter.

The Institute is governed by a grass roots Board of Directors, which includes several commercial-scale organic farmers, and maintains a small professional staff. It is supported by memberships and donations and grants from foundations, corporations, and individuals.

Cover Photo

The cover photo shows a test/demonstration area in the Sudan-Sahelian Zone of Niger, West Africa, and emphasizes the importance of proper utilization of crop residues on land to improve the tilth, fertility, productivity and long-term sustainability of agricultural soils. The standing crop is pearl millet (*Pennisetum glaucum* L.) which is the dominant food grain crop that is grown, largely on marginal (sandy and infertile) soils, throughout this drought-prone, semiarid region. The study was conducted cooperatively by scientists from USDA, USAID and Texas A&M, with invaluable participation by villagers, both young and old, who maintained the area and ensured that the goats and other ruminant animals were excluded during the test period. Photo provided by Dr. J.F. Parr, Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Beltsville, Maryland.