

# Praise for Farmers of Forty Centuries

“The classic on eastern agricultural methods.”

— Bill Mollison and David Holmgren,  
founders of Permaculture

“...a book which no student of farming or social science can afford to ignore....a classic.”

— Lord Northbourne,  
founder of the west’s organic farming movement

“A classic...by adhering to this principle the Chinese peasant has intensively and continuously cropped his soil without loss of fertility for forty centuries”

— Lady Eve Balfour,  
author of *The Living Soil*.

Can a farm produce food indefinitely?

By the dawn of the 19th century in the United States, this seemed unlikely. Erosion, falling yields, and depleted soils — wherever soil scientist Franklin Hiram King looked, he saw evidence that the nation’s agricultural practices were destroying the very land farmers relied on to feed the population.

Disgusted over the USDA’s refusal to provide leadership, King quit his post in the organization and set out to find evidence of a better way. He found it on his 1909 tour of China, Korea, and Japan.

In *Farmers of Forty Centuries*, King records how an unbroken chain of peasant farmers managed to not only maintain, but actually increase their soil fertility and crop yields over a span of 4,000 years. King describes the methods, results, and ingeniously simple technology and tools of these men and women. The 240 photographs and illustrations provided by King have been digitally remastered for this edition. Also included are a new biography, and forward by Joe Jenkins, author of *The Humanure Handbook*.