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Trends of Soil Conservation Practices Related To Crop Production in Spain for the Last Twenty Years

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Erosion is highly associated to activities related to Agriculture. Because, of the increase in productivity during last decades, new conservation techniques have been used by producers in order to conserve soil. These practices are of great importance in semiarid countries, as Spain, where erosion is a main problem, specially the one related to water. In order to study the consequences of the increasing productivity on soil erosion processes, the present study evaluated the soil losses related to productivity of most important crops grown in Spain during the last twenty years. The indicators selected estimated the losses in soils as a function of fruit productivity, tons per year per kg and economical income of produced item. The productions studied were the most significant for all the regions of the Spanish territory: tomato, orange, olive, grapes, wheat, barley, corn, beet, limon, tangerine, melon, grapefruit and sunflower. The results showed that farmers have improved their productivity at the same time that soils losses have been decreased from 1987 to 2007 for most of the 52 Spanish regions. Although some years presented some exception, mainly related to weather conditions and market tendencies, the trends showed that farmers are producing more quantity of fruits, cereals and vegetables than twenty years ago decreasing the erosion processes in all the cases where soil conservation practices have been applied.