

# Dual Sensor Dynamics: A Comparative Analysis of Plant Health Assessment

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**Abstract**— The rapid advancement of remote sensing technologies has revolutionized plant health monitoring, offering valuable insights for precision agriculture and environmental management. This paper presents a comprehensive comparative analysis between the widely employed Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) and state-of-the-art Hyperspectral sensors in the context of plant health assessment. The study aims to elucidate the weigh ups of spectral resolution. Employing a diverse range of vegetative environments, the research utilizes simulated datasets to evaluate the performance of NDVI and hyperspectral sensors in detecting subtle variations indicative of plant stress, disease, and overall vitality. Through meticulous data analysis and statistical validation, this study highlights the superior performance of hyperspectral sensor across the parameters used.

**Keywords**—Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI), Hyperspectral Sensor, Spectral Resolution.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Technologies related to remote sensing holds a crucial position in advancing plant health monitoring by offering a comprehensive and non-invasive means of assessing vegetation conditions. These technologies, typically deployed through satellites, drones, or aircraft, capture multispectral or hyperspectral imagery, enabling the collection of crucial information related to plant health. Indices which are key such as the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) are derived from these images, offering insights into the photosynthetic activity, stress levels, and overall vitality of vegetation. The capability to monitor wide areas with intense temporal frequency allows for timely detection of anomalies, diseases, and stressors, facilitating precision agriculture, environmental management, and ecosystem analysis. Remote sensing technologies continue to evolve, with hyperspectral sensors offering even greater spectral resolution and the potential for more detailed and accurate assessments of plant health, thereby contributing significantly to sustainable land management practices.

The Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) has long served as a fundamental tool in remote sensing for evaluating plant health. Calculated from the contrast between near-infrared and red-light reflectance, NDVI offers a simplified yet effective means of gauging photosynthetic activity and overall vegetation vigor. Its accessibility and ease of computation have facilitated large-scale monitoring efforts, proving especially advantageous in applications such as crop yield prediction, land cover change analysis, and ecological assessments. However, the inherent simplicity of NDVI comes with limitations in capturing detailed information about specific vegetation characteristics.

In contrast, hyperspectral sensors have emerged as a more advanced technology, capturing a spectrum of narrow bands

across the electromagnetic range. This meticulous spectrum study permits hyperspectral sensors to discern subtle variations in vegetation properties, providing a more nuanced understanding of plant health compared to NDVI. Hyperspectral data enables researchers to identify specific biochemical and biophysical markers, making it invaluable for applications demanding a higher level of precision, including disease detection, stress monitoring, and the identification of plant species. The ongoing exploration and comparison of NDVI and hyperspectral sensors contribute to the optimization of remote sensing strategies, aiding researchers and practitioners in selecting the most suitable approach for their specific plant health monitoring needs.

The paper henceforth is organized into six sections. In section II, related works are discussed. NDVI sensor analysis is presented in section III. Section IV is focused on the Hyperspectral sensor analysis. The simulation settings and the results concerning the comparison between them is discussed in section V. The work has been concluded in section VI.

## II. RELATED WORKS

Addressing the escalating need for advanced remote sensing (RS) image classification, the author in [1] comprehensively reviews two prominent methodologies: pixel-based (PB) and object-based (OB) approaches. A central focus is on the Support Vector Machine (SVM), recognized for its proficiency in managing small training datasets and achieving heightened classification accuracy. Despite its advantages, SVM encounters challenges, notably overfitting due to suboptimal kernel function choices. The survey proposes strategic enhancements to alleviate these concerns, aiming to optimize SVM's performance in RS image classification. Additionally, it outlines future research directions, offering a valuable roadmap for researchers navigating the dynamic terrain of RS image classification methodologies. [2] delves into the myriad health benefits offered by tomato plants, ranging from blood pressure maintenance to blood sugar reduction in diabetic individuals. Recognizing the significance of cultivating tomatoes with precision, the paper introduces an innovative approach that amalgamates Deep Learning and Internet of Things (IoT) technological advancements for enhanced plant health monitoring. Leveraging Convolutional Neural Networks, the methodology excels in disease detection within tomato leaves. Complementing this, soil moisture, temperature, and humidity sensors offer comprehensive data to farmers via a user-friendly application. [3] navigates the challenges faced by Indian agriculture, including small landholdings and limited resources. It underscores the transformative role of Earth observations, incorporating satellite, aerial, and in situ systems, in comprehensively studying and monitoring natural resources. Focusing on precision agriculture, the survey delves into the multidisciplinary evolution of research in

satellite and aerial photography. Emphasizing the practical utilization of remote sensing and geographic technological systems, the paper sheds light on their fundamental aspects, contributing to the realization of precision agriculture as a tangible and beneficial solution for India's agricultural landscape. [4] explores the transformative role of satellite remote sensing in optimizing power systems. Recognized for its efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and autonomy, satellite remote sensing augments on-site monitoring, compensating for inefficiencies and environmental challenges. Amid China's socioeconomic growth, heightened demands for power system stability prompt advancements in remote sensing technology. Improved Earth observation resolution and intelligent data analysis align with this trajectory. The synergy of China's military-civilian integration policy and a more accessible aerospace industry fosters a favorable environment for satellite remote sensing in power systems. In the next paper [5] author explores the transformative impact of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) on modern remote sensing utilizations, emphasizing the substantial role played by Artificial Intelligence - Machine Learning (AI-ML) and Cloud Computing. Recent advancements pave the way for a novel approach, treating remote sensing utilizations as System-of-Systems (SoS). Integrating a SoS approach offers a great understanding of the dynamics of interactions among constituent systems like swarm UAVs and ground stations. The paper advocates systematically analyzing relationships between Measures-of-Effectiveness (MOEs) of the SoS and its components, facilitating optimal utilization of technology advancements for the evolution advancements of remote sensing applications. [6] navigates the transformative landscape of precision agriculture, driven by the integration of smart technologies and traditional farming practices to address climate change, population growth, and food security. Precision agriculture leverages data from the Internet of Things (IoT), satellites, and Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) for informed decision-making, optimizing yields, and minimizing environmental impact. With the evolution of remote sensing, particularly through miniaturized electronic components, the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) emerges as a pivotal tool for vegetation assessment. [7] delves into the extensive utilization of vegetation indices, particularly the normalized difference vegetation index (NDVI), for estimating vegetation density from satellite and airborne imagery. The paper introduces a novel statistical framework to analyze NDVI, addressing issues of saturation in highly vegetated regions. By adopting a statistical perspective, the study proposes linearized and more reliable measures beyond the traditional red and near-infrared bands, incorporating blue and green bands. [8] explains about the imperative research domain of accelerated processing of remote sensing big data, emphasizing the prevalent use of large-scale clusters for remote sensing image processing. Acknowledging the challenge of optimizing computing power within individual nodes, the study introduces OpenAcc-NDVI, a rapid parallel extraction method, leveraging the collaborative efforts of Nvidia, Grady, PGI, and CAPS to establish a new programming standard. The author in [9] addresses the underexplored realm of vegetation detection, specifically focusing on the fusion of omnidirectional (O-D) infrared (IR) and color vision sensors for unmanned robotic platforms. While existing approaches concentrate on O-D color vision for tracking and mapping, the fusion of O-D IR and O-D color vision sensors remains an insufficiently addressed area. [10] addresses the evolving field of

hyperspectral image (HSI) synthesis, emphasizing the limitations of linear spectral mixing models in recent studies. Recognizing the challenges in accurately modeling nonlinear spectral mixtures, the survey explores a novel approach utilizing implicit neural representations (INRs). The proposed method adapts mixture models for each pixel based on spectral signature and surroundings, enabling accurate HSI synthesis from RGB inputs. [11] highlights the significant advancements in remote sensing facilitated by the latest generation of spaceborne hyperspectral sensors, exemplified by DESIS, PRISMA, and the forthcoming EnMAP. With over a year of data acquisition, these sensors are shaping the landscape of twenty-first-century satellite remote sensing. In [12] according to the author, for the last three decades, hyperspectral imaging has advanced significantly, becoming a crucial tool in civil, environmental, and military applications. Modern sensors offer expansive coverage with high spatial, spectral, and temporal resolutions. This review explores the fundamentals of hyperspectral image analysis and its diverse applications, including food inspection, forensic science, medical diagnosis, and military use. It highlights recent developments, particularly in ground-based applications, emphasizing areas such as electronic imaging for food safety, medical surgery, forensic document examination, defense, homeland security, precision agriculture remote sensing and water resource management. [13] reviews three prevalent machine learning algorithms (KNN, SVM, 3D-CNN) and conducts experiments on the Pavia University hyperspectral remote observation dataset, yielding average accuracies of 85.34%, 92.53%, and 96.86%, respectively. The findings highlight the superior performance of the 3D-CNN algorithm in hyperspectral image classification, followed by SVM and KNN. [14] contributes valuable insights into the comparative effectiveness of machine learning algorithms for hyperspectral data analysis. Urban green space (UGS) is a vital component of urban ecology, yet extracting it faces challenges due to complex urban structures causing saturation in traditional vegetation indices.

### III. NORMALIZED DIFFERENCE VEGETATION INDEX (NDVI)

The *NDVI* (Normalized Difference Vegetation Index) sensor gauges plant vitality by assessing the contrast in reflectance between near-infrared and red light. Elevated *NDVI* values signify robust vegetation, as chlorophyll absorbs red light while reflecting near-infrared. This index is vital for evaluating plant vigor, density, and stress levels, crucial in agriculture, environmental analysis, and land management. *NDVI* sensors, essential in remote sensing, offer insights into vegetation health, facilitating extensive monitoring of ecosystem changes and agricultural practices across vast geographical areas.

*NDVI* sensors, or sensors that capture the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index, are instrumental in environmental applications due to their capability to monitor and analyse different dimensions of the Earth's surface. These sensors play a significant role in tracking changes in land cover, assessing biodiversity, and detecting ecological disturbances. One of their primary advantages lies in early detection, which is fundamental for proficient conservation efforts and informed land-use planning. In the realm of remote sensing, *NDVI* sensors facilitate large-scale monitoring across diverse landscapes, including agricultural fields, forests, and natural habitats.

The *NDVI* algorithm can be given step-wise as Fig.1

Step I. Read the red and near-infrared bands from satellite imagery.

Step II. Check and ensure that both bands have the same dimensions to perform calculations accurately.

Step III. Convert the bands to a double format to enable numerical calculations if they're not already in double format.

Step IV. Calculate *NDVI* using the formula  $(NIR - RED) / (NIR + RED)$ .

Step V. Visualize the computed *NDVI* image using the `imshow` function and add a title ('*NDVI* Image') for identification.

Step VI. Create binary masks for healthy and unhealthy plants based on an arbitrary threshold value.

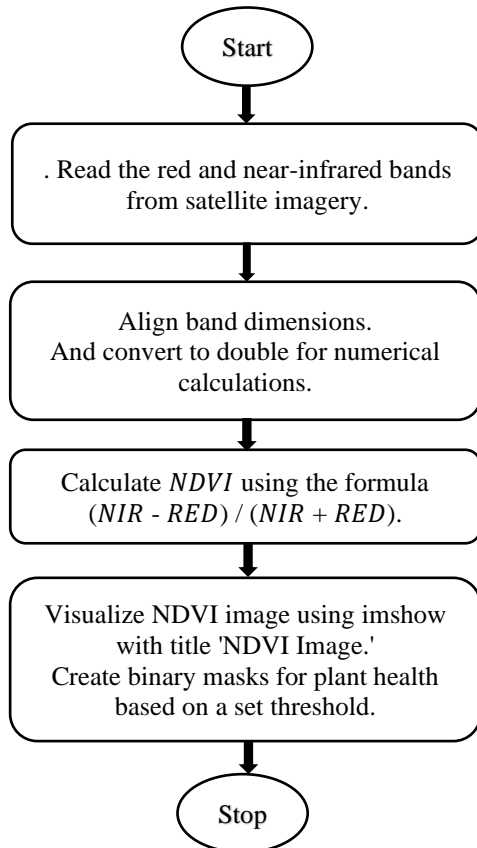


Fig.1: *NDVI* Flowchart

The formula for calculating *NDVI* can be given as,

$$NDVI = \frac{(NIR - RED)}{(NIR + RED)},$$

where, *NDVI* is Normalized Difference Vegetation Index, *NIR* is Near Infrared and *RED* is red bands.

#### IV. HYPERSPECTRAL

Hyperspectral sensors, with their extensive wavelength range, provide in-depth plant analysis. By collecting data across numerous narrow, contiguous spectral bands, they unveil intricate details about plant health and composition. These sensors offer precise insights into vegetation physiology, identifying stress, diseases, and nutrient

deficiencies. The high-resolution spectral information aids in precision agriculture, environmental monitoring, and managing agricultural landscapes sustainably. This technology facilitates targeted interventions to boost crop yields, detect anomalies, and effectively monitor vegetation dynamics.

The Hyperspectral algorithm can be given step-wise as Fig.2

Step I. Read hyperspectral image using `hdr` read from the specified file path.

Step II. For each band in the hyperspectral image display the band in a new figure.

Step III. Extract red and near-infrared bands from the hyperspectral image.

Step IV. Calculate *NDVI* using the formula  $(NIR - RED) / (NIR + RED)$ .

Step V. Display the *NDVI* image in a new figure, including a color bar for reference.

Step VI. Set a threshold value for plant health classification (e.g., 0.5).

Step VII. Create binary masks for healthy and unhealthy plants based on the threshold.

Step VIII. Create a new figure with two subplots:

- Display areas classified as healthy plants in one subplot.
- Display areas classified as unhealthy plants in another subplot.

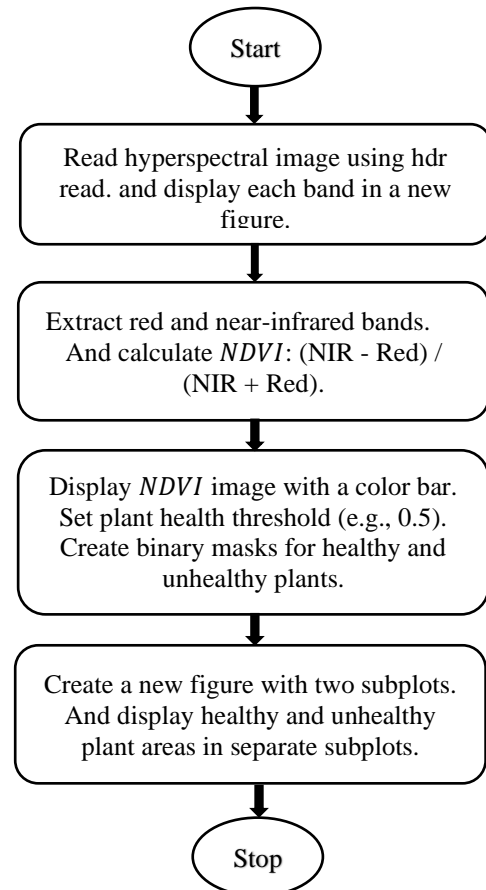


Fig.2: *Hyperspectral* Flowchart

## V. SIMULATIONS RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

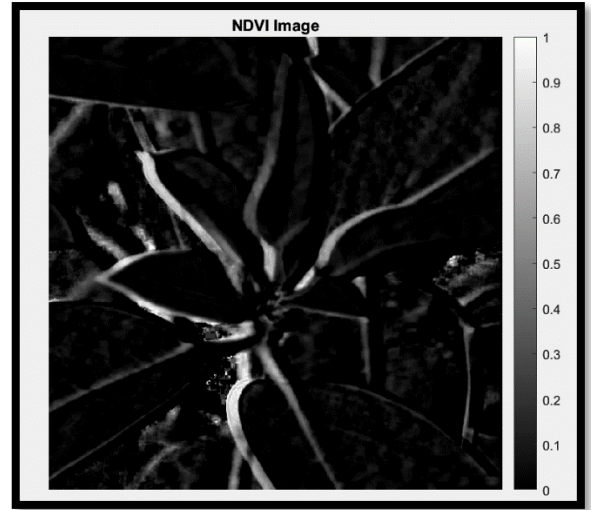
This section presents the findings from the analysis of the performance of the proposed system. The analysis was carried out using MATLAB R2022b on a system with an Intel(R) Core (TM) i5-115G7 processor running at 2.5 GHz, 4 cores, and 8 logical processors.

The investigation extensively assessed plant health through combined NDVI and hyperspectral algorithm analyses on an image dataset. While NDVI offered an initial gauge of vegetation vigor, the hyperspectral algorithm's band segmentation enabled a detailed evaluation. Selecting Band 1 for red and Band 3 for infrared enhanced the precision of NDVI computation. This amalgamated approach aimed to capture minute spectral intricacies essential for understanding plant health in agricultural and environmental contexts. By fostering nuanced insights, this methodology aids informed decision-making and promotes sustainable practices in land management and ecological preservation. Fig.3 portrays an image of a plant with some pale and fresh leaves which is used as the sample image for the examination of NDVI and Hyperspectral on the basis of spectral resolution which is used for analysis of healthy and unhealthy parts of the plant.



*Fig.3: Plant photo with fresh and pale leaves*

The NDVI (Normalized Difference Vegetation Index) image, as depicted in Fig.4, serves as a precious tool for assessing vegetation health in both agricultural and environmental contexts. By leveraging the difference in reflectance between near-infrared and red light, the image effectively highlights areas with robust or stressed plant growth. This information proves crucial for making informed decisions in agricultural management and environmental assessments. In the NDVI image, distinct color bands signify varying levels of vegetation health, offering a visual representation that aids in the identification of areas with differing plant conditions. It is important to note a limitation: the NDVI image exhibits lower spectral resolution compared to a hyperspectral image. This reduced resolution hinders its ability to capture detailed spectral information, limiting the precision of vegetation analysis. Despite this constraint, the NDVI image with its defined threshold value of 0.5 remains a practical tool for distinguishing between healthy ( $NDVI > 0.5$ ) and unhealthy ( $NDVI \leq 0.5$ ) vegetation, therefore providing essential observations into the overall health of the analyzed vegetation in agricultural and environmental analyses.



*Figure 4: NDVI Image*

The segmentation of the hyperspectral image involves dividing it into three bands, beginning from the red spectral range and extending up to infrared. The initial band shown in Fig.5 within this segmentation corresponds directly to the red band spectrum. This deliberate arrangement facilitates a detailed focus on spectral attributes, specifically within the red spectrum range. This strategic band setup aids in capturing precise spectral features essential for accurate analysis, supporting detailed evaluations of vegetation health and environmental characteristics, pivotal in agricultural and ecological assessments.



*Fig.5: Hyperspectral Image Band 1*

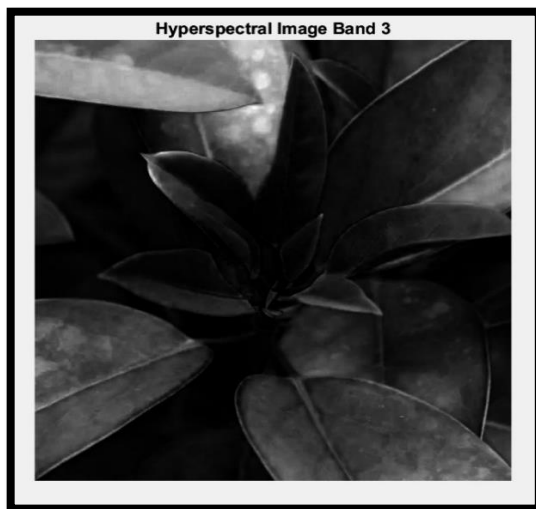
Positioned strategically between the red and infrared bands in Fig.6 of the hyperspectral image, the second band serves an important role as an intermediary segment. Its central location enables the capture of intricate spectral details, acting as a bridge that links the distinct characteristics of the red and infrared spectrums. This unique feature provides researchers with essential observations into the transitional spectral nuances, offering an extensive view for holistic evaluations of vegetation health and environmental conditions. The inclusion of this intermediate band enhances the overall spectral richness of the hyperspectral dataset,

contributing to a additional nuanced understanding of the studied landscape.



*Fig.6: Hyperspectral Image Band 2*

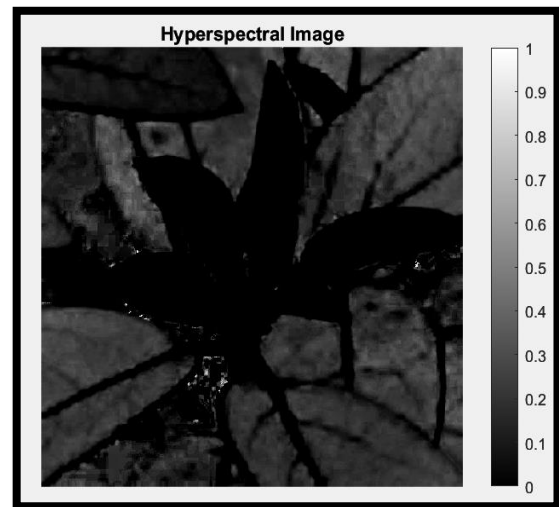
The third band in the Fig.7 hyperspectral image resides within the infrared spectrum, predominantly acquiring spectral data from this range. Focused on infrared specifics, this band is pivotal in understanding vegetation health, soil properties, and environmental characteristics. Its position as the endpoint provides crucial insights into infrared-related spectral features, elevating analyses across agricultural, ecological, and geospatial studies.



*Fig.7: Hyperspectral Image Band 3*

In the hyperspectral algorithm, segregating the image into three bands designates Band 1 as the red band and Band 3 as the infrared band, establishing distinct spectral ranges. Employing these bands for NDVI computation refines the realization of vegetation health. In the Fig.8 threshold is set to 0.5, areas exhibiting NDVI values above this threshold are labeled 'healthy,' indicating robust vegetation. Conversely, regions with NDVI values below 0.5 are categorized as 'unhealthy,' suggesting potential stress or diminished vegetation vitality. This strategy capitalizes on spectral subtleties in the red and infrared bands, facilitating a nuanced assessment of plant health. The 0.5 threshold operates as a

crucial delineator, enabling accurate differentiation between healthy and stressed vegetation, pivotal in comprehensive agricultural and environmental evaluations.



*Figure 8: Hyperspectral NDVI Image*

The comparison between spectral resolution in NDVI and hyperspectral sensors significantly impacts the precision of vegetation analysis. NDVI, derived from satellite data through two distinct bands (near-infrared and red), offers a simplified evaluation of vegetation health, lacking the detailed spectral insights needed for a extensive analysis. In contrast, hyperspectral sensors elevate spectral resolution by dividing the electromagnetic spectrum into numerous narrow and contiguous bands, providing a wealth of detailed spectral information. This expansive range spans multiple wavelengths, offering an extensive understanding of vegetation reflectance properties and environmental features.

The abundant bands in hyperspectral sensors enhances a more granular assessment of vegetation health. Specific bands align with crucial characteristics such as chlorophyll absorption peaks and leaf water content, pivotal for precise plant health evaluations. This comprehensive spectral data aids in identifying and differentiating vegetation types, stress indicators, and environmental variations. The heightened spectral resolution of hyperspectral sensors surpasses NDVI, as it captures a broader spectrum of information. Hyperspectral data unveil subtle variations in vegetation health that often escape detection with the limited bands used in NDVI analysis. To sum up, while NDVI behaves as a foundational tool for assessing vegetation, hyperspectral sensors excel in spectral resolution. Their detailed spectral data furnishes precise insights into vegetation health, environmental nuances, and ecosystem dynamics. This advantage places hyperspectral sensors at the forefront of advanced agricultural monitoring, environmental assessments, and land management. Their ability to provide comprehensive spectral information empowers informed decision-making, fostering sustainable practices and resource utilization.

For the Hyperspectral spectral resolution, the current system's capability helps to segment the data into three bands, enhancing the analysis. However, further division into additional bands promises heightened precision and accuracy. To achieve this, advanced systems with expanded

band segmentation are imperative. These enhanced capabilities would yield more detailed spectral information, significantly refining the accuracy and precision of vegetation analysis, crucial for comprehensive assessments in agricultural and environmental studies.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In the spectral analysis, employing the NDVI algorithm and hyperspectral algorithm on a plant image revealed distinct insights. The hyperspectral algorithm showcased superior spectral resolution, capturing intricate details with its vast range of narrow, contiguous bands. This higher resolution facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the plant's health and composition, surpassing the NDVI algorithm in providing nuanced spectral information essential for precise analysis and interpretation in agricultural and ecological studies.

The future outlook of hyperspectral imaging involves its utilization in advanced precision agriculture, environmental monitoring, and biodiversity evaluation. Despite its merits, challenges such as high expenses and complexity in data handling persist. Overcoming these hurdles requires technological advancements like more affordable sensors, simplified data processing tools, and user-friendly interfaces. Consequently, despite its limitations, the superior spectral and spatial resolution of hyperspectral imaging makes it more beneficial than NDVI, providing intricate and accurate insights crucial for comprehensive ecological and agricultural assessments.

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