

Agriculture Adventures for Families

As the snow begins to melt away, signs of soil begin to show. Soil is full of life. It is often said that a handful of soil has more living organisms than there are people on planet Earth. Soils are the stomach of the earth, consuming, digesting, and cycling nutrients and organisms. Soil is a key resource for food production and influences the worldwide distribution of plants, animals, and people. What can we do and what are farmers doing?

Let's take a look.

SOIL

Farmers:

Conservation Tillage

Farmers use conservation tillage, such as no-till and strip-till. These methods leave the previous year's crop residue, such as corn stalks or soybean stubble, on the fields after harvest to protect soil over the winter when nothing is growing



Cover Crops

Farmers plant cover crops after harvest. Cover crops can add nutrients back into the soil and "cover" the soil- protecting it from wind and water erosion.



Crop Rotation

Farmers rotate crops. This practice, called crop rotation, is when farmers grow different types of crops in the same area in sequential seasons. It helps ensure that the soil is not depleted of certain nutrients. It also helps reduce soil erosion and increase soil fertility and crop yield.



Technology

Farmers use technology, such as global positioning systems (GPS) to see pictures, or soil maps, of the land to spot and address erosion.



Contour Farming

Instead of planting crops in rows of straight lines, farmers plant rows which follow the natural shapes of the land to slow water runoff and reduce erosion.

Buffers

Farmers use stripes of permanent vegetation, called buffers, to intercept nutrients and sediment carried by surface water, allowing plants to absorb and use the water and nutrients.

You:

Cover Soil

Cover bare soil with new plants or mulch. Soil coverings, like mulch, help keep soil in place.



Plant Vegetation

Plant trees, shrubs, bushes, flowers and other forms of vegetation. Plant roots help prevent soil erosion.

Manage Waste

Follow guidelines when disposing of contaminants like paint. Waste can hurt the soil as well as human, plant, and animal health.

Use Walkways

Stay on sidewalks, trails, and other walkways. When you walk where it is designated, you protect soil by not carrying it away on your shoes and clothing.



Inform Friends

Tell others how important soil is for survival and encourage them to protect soil. More people protecting soil will help make sure it stays in place and stays healthy for future generations.

Reduce, Reuse & Recycle

Practicing the 3 Rs (reduce, reuse & recycle) every day is important for healthy soil, as well as a healthy environment.

Source: www.agintheclassroom.org

March Word Search

Buffers
Conservation
Contour
Cover
Crops
Erosion
Farmers
Nutrients

Protection
Recycle
Rotate
Soil
Tillage
Technology
Vegetation
Water

F E K R I C M R B S U G B R E
A S T N E I R T U N D U I G V
R V K V M V B R S O F L A X E
M E R O S I O N E F T L B W G
E J H E R F K C E C L N W F E
R U M Q M Z J R Y I Y C O D T
S Y C U E H S P T I W C O C A
Y G O L O N H C E T Z H L J T
C O N S E R V A T I O N D E I
N O I T C E T O R P C F Q H O
R O T A T E K E J L R E N F N
F R U M P O T D I V O T L P B
X H G B D A Y O J C P B S H W
X U S K W O S J H T S S S B Y
P F Q G Q Z G O J F O Z W G M

Name: _____

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(If a choice is not made, movie tickets will be sent)

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Ag Adventures Word Search

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Fax to: 708-579-6056

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