



Toolkit:

Soil Conservation Council of Canada (SCCC)

Soil Your Undies Campaign



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National Soil Conservation Week happens during the third week of April each year. It is a perfect opportunity for Canadians to highlight the importance of soil health and soil science to our economy and our future. This year, from April 21-27, 2019, the Soil Conservation Council of Canada invites you to get involved by performing the *Soil Your Undies challenge*. It is a fun and simple soil science experiment that tests one of the indicators of soil health – its biological activity.

Why is soil health important?

Soil produces 95% of the food we eat. Soil is a living breathing system that provides nutrients and water to crops as well as homes to billions of soil organisms. These organisms feed growing crops by turning dead plant material into useable nutrients. They also help create soil organic matter, which holds water and reduces the risk of soil erosion.

Even though healthy soil is critical to the economic and environmental sustainability of the agri-food industry, it is increasingly under stress. These stresses include:

- the expansion of our cities and communities;
- increased demands on soils to grow food for growing populations;
- changes in cropping, tillage and other practices that can degrade soil health; and
- increased frequency of extreme weather due to climate change, which can speed up soil degradation.

The annual cost of soil degradation in Canada is estimated at over \$3 billion each and every year, and this will only increase if nothing is done.

So what can we do? Farmers and land managers need support to implement best management practices that mitigate many of these risks, but it is not solely their responsibility. Every Canadian that enjoys the abundance of safe and nutritious food should be aware of the threats to our soil and support the conservation of this precious resource. Be vocal and share your concern for Canada's soil health through social media and with your local industry/community group or politician.

What is Soil Your Undies?

Soil Your Undies was initiated by the Innovative Farmers Association of Ontario. The Soil Conservation Council of Canada gives this project a national perspective.

As part of National Soil Conservation Week 2019, the Soil Conservation Council of Canada encourages the Canadian public to take part in the Soil Your Undies challenge. Soil Your Undies is a fun soil science experiment that investigates biological activity in farm fields, backyard gardens or anywhere soil is found.



What to do

Bury a pair of 100 per cent white cotton underwear in 15 cm of topsoil. Mark the spot and come back in about two months. Carefully dig the undies out and examine the state of decomposition of the cotton. If there's not much left of the underwear you have good biological activity, which is one indicator of healthy soil. If the underwear looks nearly intact, with little decomposition, this may mean your soil is lacking something. Your Soil Your Undies experiment can start any time before mid-summer, but it is best to get started in the spring. Check out soilcc.ca for a helpful step-by-step guide on how to properly Soil Your Undies. Take photos and send us your story. We want to share it with others.

What you'll need

- New pair of white 100% cotton briefs (no dyes or polyester blends)
- Shovel
- Marker flag

Now get to it

- Dig a narrow trench and bury the underwear in the top 15 cm of soil
- Leave the waistband showing a little and mark the place with a flag so you'll be able to find it again
- Leave the underwear buried for about two months
- Dig it up carefully and wash it in a bucket of water to remove the soil

Compare soil management practices

- Test similar soil types under different rotations and tillage management
- Keep track of each pair by writing an identifying number on the waistband
- Bury all underwear being compared on the same day and for the same amount of time

Community Engagement

To help our message make an impact, the Soil Conservation Council of Canada invites you to join the Soil Your Undies challenge by organizing your own event. By doing this, your organization gains hands-on learning on soil health and you can help keep soil health top-of-mind by sharing your experience with your networks.

There are many ways to increase public awareness and get your community involved in soil health events. Here are some suggestions:

Community Centres

Work with your local community centre today! Sponsor a community Soil Your Undies event where kids and program leaders can come together and bury underwear in a designated area on the centre's grounds.



This is a great way to introduce new generations to the importance of soil conservation, and teach them about soil health in a fun, interactive way.

Community gardens

Community gardens have popped up in cities across the country. Host a Soil Your Undies party in a community garden near you and test the biological activity of the soil. You could even have a competition between community gardens and offer a prize for the most decomposed pair of undies.

School groups

Why not bring soil health to today's youth? Students are always learning and subconsciously hungry for more information. Bring Soil Your Undies to the classroom and create a conversation around soil health in a tangible and interactive way. What kid doesn't like playing in the dirt?

Team building

Not sure what to do for a fun team building exercise with your staff or coworkers? Need to get out of the office on a nice spring day? Why not organize Soil Your Undies challenge for your workplace? Give everyone a pair of 100% cotton underwear and spend a few minutes outside. It's a great way to create a conversation around soil health throughout the office.

Social Media

Become part of the conversation during National Soil Conservation Week this year and engage with the Soil Conservation Council of Canada on social media to see some of the great things going on across the country.

Twitter

Use the following hashtags and accounts on Twitter to help reach a wider audience.

#soilyourundies

#CdnSoilWeek19

#soilconservation

@Soilcouncil

#soilhealth

@StanfieldsLtd

Suggested Twitter Posts

- 1) The #soilyourundies challenge is a fun soil science experiment that tests the biological activity in farm fields or backyard gardens. Join @soilcouncil and share a before and after photo of your @StanfieldsLtd undies to show off your #soilhealth. #CDNSoilWeek19



SOIL CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF CANADA CONSEIL CANADIEN DE CONSERVATION DES SOLS

*The face and voice of soil conservation in Canada
Le visage et la voix de la conservation des sols au Canada*

- 2) Anyone can investigate biological activity in soil, find out how [*HERE](#) and try it for yourself #SoilYourUndies @SoilCouncil @StanfieldsLtd #CDNSoilWeek19
- 3) Check out @SoilCouncil and the #SoilYourUndies video below! [*Attach video link](#) #CDNSoilWeek19
- 4) In honour of National Soil Conservation week, @SoilCouncil and @StanfieldsLtd encourages you to take part in the #SoilYourUndies challenge. Find out how [*HERE](#) #CDNSoilWeek19
- 5) Hey Canada, let's celebrate our soil! Take part in the #SoilYourUndies challenge to test your #SoilHealth. @StanfieldsLtd @SoilCouncil #CDNSoilWeek19
- 6) Let's talk about the importance of #SoilHealth and soil science! Participate in #SoilYourUndies during #CDNSoilWeek19 from April 21 to 27.

Resources

Video



Web banners

Facebook



Twitter



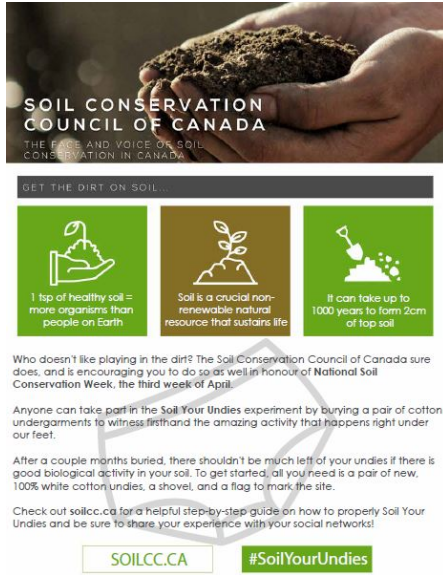
Email



Infographic



Ad Copy / Newsletter



SOIL CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF CANADA
THE FACE AND VOICE OF SOIL CONSERVATION IN CANADA

GET THE DIRT ON SOIL...

- 1 tsp of healthy soil = more organisms than people on Earth
- Soil is a crucial non-renewable natural resource that sustains life
- It can take up to 1000 years to form 2cm of top soil

Who doesn't like playing in the dirt? The Soil Conservation Council of Canada sure does, and is encouraging you to do so as well in honour of National Soil Conservation Week, the third week of April.

Anyone can take part in the Soil Your Undies experiment by burying a pair of cotton undergarments to witness firsthand the amazing activity that happens right under our feet.

After a couple months buried, there shouldn't be much left of your undies if there is good biological activity in your soil. To get started, all you need is a pair of new, 100% white cotton undies, a shovel, and a flag to mark the site.

Check out soilcc.ca for a helpful step-by-step guide on how to properly Soil Your Undies and be sure to share your experience with your social networks!

SOILCC.CA #SoilYourUndies

How to



SOIL CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF CANADA
CONSEIL CANADIEN DE CONSERVATION DES SOLS

Hey Canada!

It's time to #SoilYourUndies...
in the name of soil conservation

Do your own fun soil science experiment to see how healthy your soil is and share your experiences @SoilCouncil.

Anyone can investigate biological activity in farm fields or backyard gardens. Bury a pair of 100 per cent white cotton underwear in topsoil for about two months and then check the level of decomposition. If there's not much left of the underwear you have good biological activity which indicates healthy soil. These same soil organisms can break down plant materials in much the same way.

To make a good on-farm comparison:

- Test similar soil types under different rotations and tillage management
- Keep track of each pair by writing an identifying number on the waistband
- Be sure to bury all underwear being compared on the same day and for the same amount of time

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- New pair of white 100% cotton briefs (no dyes or polyester blends)
- Shovel
- Marker flag

- 1) Dig a narrow trench and bury the underwear in the top six inches of soil
- 2) Leave the waistband showing a little and mark the place with a flag so you'll be able to find it again
- 3) Leave the underwear buried for about two months
- 4) Dig it up carefully and wash it in a bucket of water to remove the soil

STANFIELD'S
Proud SOCC supporter of #SoilYourUndies

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Soil Your Undies was initiated by the Innovative Farmers Association of Ontario. SOCC gives this project a national perspective.

View Media Release Here: [Media Release_2019](#)

Sources

www.soilcc.ca

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