

Why should I test my soil?



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Words Explained

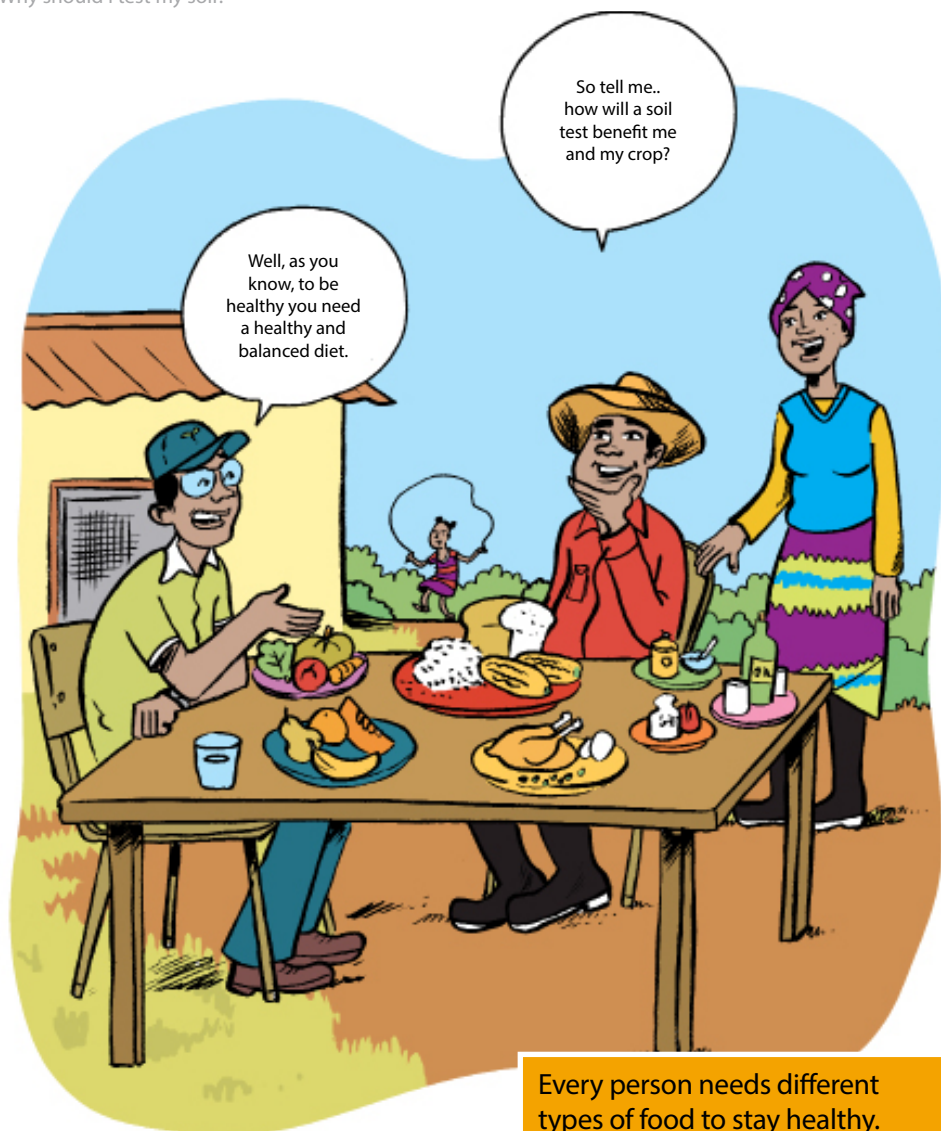
Auger: A tool that is used for taking soil subsamples

Fertilizer: Something added to the soil to help the plants grow

Nutrients: Tiny particles in the soil that a crop needs as food

Soil sample: A bag of soil that represents the part of the field that you want tested

Soil test: The analysis of a soil sample to know the nutrient levels and the acidity of the soil



Every person needs different types of food to stay healthy. Some types of food you need a lot of, others less. For example you need a lot of fruits, vegetables and rice but only a little bit of fat, sugar and milk.





Nutrients are tiny particles in the soil that your crop needs as food. Some nutrients your crop needs a lot of, others less. For example your crop needs a lot of Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P) and Potassium (K) but only a little bit of Boron (B) and Zinc (Zn).





If you don't eat well, you will get sick easily. When you are sick, you need to go to the doctor to find out what is wrong with you.





To make you feel better, the doctor will give you a prescription for the right medicine. Take the right medicine in the right dosage and you will get better.







To test your soil you first need to take a good soil sample. For this you collect soil from all over the field with an auger or a panga and mix it all together. This way you will have a sample that represents your whole field.





SoilCares uses a brand new technology from the Netherlands to analyze your soil. They will give you all the advice you need in a report and explain to you how to use it.





The report not only tells you the status of your soil, it also advises you on what to do so you can grow a strong and healthy crop.





After you receive the report from SoilCares, you can take it to the agrovet to buy the right products.

Now I finally know for sure that I am spending my money on the things that will really help my farm!

The report helps you to spend money on the right inputs that will make your crop stronger and higher yielding.



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By advising the right amount of compost, the soil testing report will help you to keep your soil fertile in the long run.





A soil provided with the correct amount of nutrients will make sure your crop has enough and balanced food. This makes your crop strong and higher yielding.





Higher yields mean a happy, healthy family and more food for sale.



Colophon

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This booklet is part of the Soil Testing Series of SoilCares Foundation. It explains why it is useful to test your soil. It seeks to increase awareness on soil fertility management by enabling farmers to make informed decisions about the quantity and type of fertilizer to use.

Through these training booklets SoilCares Foundation wants to show you how to take care of your soil – so the soil can take care of you.

Other SoilCares Foundation booklets:

Soil Testing Series

1. Why should I test my soil?
2. How do I collect a good soil sample?
3. What do the recommendations of the soil test report mean?

Soil Series

1. What is a fertile soil?
2. How does the soil feed the crop?
3. What can I do to keep my soil fertile?

Fertilizer Series

1. How and why should I apply fertilizer?
2. What are the differences between mineral fertilizers?
3. How do I make compost?



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