



How Healthy Is Your Soil? Accept the Challenge to Find Out **Soil Your Undies**

The soil under your feet is a living ecosystem full of life! One teaspoon of healthy soil contains more microbes than there are people on the earth! These microbes break down the organic matter, like cotton, while also helping soil retain nutrients and moisture. Healthy soil is vital to farmers, gardeners, animals, and humans.

Accept the Challenge and Challenge Others!

The **State Fair of Virginia** and the **Fluvanna Farm Bureau Women's Committee** challenge you to **Soil Your Undies!** Choose a location in your yard, on your farm, in the garden, or in the barn lot. Dig a hole at least 4" deep and plant 100% cotton undies, socks, or T-shirt. Mark the spot so you can find it later. Clothes should be buried for at least 60 days for optimal soil health determination.

Who: Individuals, civic groups, agribusinesses, commodity groups, church groups, 4-H and FFA, schools, libraries, youth sports teams—you decide who to challenge

Make notes on a 3 x 5 card:

- Name, address, location of "planting your undies"
- What color is the soil? Is the land managed or farmed?
- Can you see any worms, bugs, roots or other organisms?
- How much rain did you get during the challenge?
- How does the soil feel and/or smell? (Sticky, grainy, hard, soft, stinky)
- How deep was your item buried and for how many days? Recommendation: **60 days**

After 60 days, carefully dig up your undies, socks, or t-shirt. What do you see? **Put your undies, socks, or T-shirt, a sample of the soil in a sealed plastic bag, and your note card** in an envelope that contains your name and address. Mail them so they arrive no later than Monday, September 22.

Horticulture Department
State Fair of Virginia
P O Box 130
Doswell, VA 23047

Items with their note card and bagged soil sample can also be dropped off with other entries that you might be bringing to the fair. Items will be on display in the Horticulture area. Let's see how healthy Virginia's soil is and fill the clothesline.



Questions? Kathryn Burruss, Superintendent, Horticulture,
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