



SOIL AND WATER

stewardship

*soil to spoon – connecting
our food back to the soil.*

SAMPLE



Soil to Spoon

Each day people take a spoon of food and put it in their mouth. Where does all of that food come from? How does it get from the soil to the spoon? It is a long process that depends on many people across the country, and sometimes around the world.

Our consumption of natural resources plays a vital role in the sustainability of planet Earth. Increasing our “capacity to endure” will involve international and national policies, urban planning, transportation infrastructure, consumerism as well as individual lifestyle choices. What kind of impact does your lifestyle have on Earth’s capacity to endure? Food production and food consumption are vital issues for you, no matter where you live.

The world population is on the rise, while agricultural land is shrinking. The year 2011 saw the world population increase to 7 billion, and it is estimated to increase to 8.2 billion by 2050. At the same time, usable agricultural (arable) land is disappearing. Former agricultural lands are used in a variety of ways. Some has been converted to development for new family homes or shopping plazas. It is a difficult balance for our society that needs more room for more people, but also needs more food to feed the people.

Each product you use can be traced back to the soil, and soil is an important ingredient in the production process. Most people rarely think about the important role of soil in the food they eat daily. Farmers and ranchers take great care of their soil. Most of them have been working the same land for generations and they understand the important link between healthy soil and healthy food. Soil can’t be treated like dirt!

America’s network of 3,000 conservation districts across the country are working on the ground each and every day with local farmers, ranchers and landowners to protect our soil, water and air for future generations. Conservation districts have been involved in delivering locally-driven conservation across America for more than 70 years. Among other things, districts help: implement farm, ranch and forestland conservation practices to protect soil productivity, water quality and quantity, air quality and wildlife habitat; conserve and restore wetlands; protect groundwater resources; assist communities and homeowners to plant trees and other vegetation; give us help in controlling soil erosion and protecting water and air quality during construction; provide technical expertise to landowners to identify, apply for, and participate in local, state and federal conservation programs; and much more. To find your local conservation district visit: www.nacdnet.org/about/districts/locate.

At your next meal, try and think where each product came from, and how far it had to travel before it reached your plate. And remember to thank your local agriculture community members for their work to provide for our nation and the world.

“When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.”
-- John Muir

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Stewardship Week is one of the largest conservation-related observances. The 3,000 conservation districts that make up NACD manage soil and water conservation programs in virtually every community in the United States. Since 1955, NACD has sponsored the national Stewardship Week program by selecting a theme and developing materials for schools, communities and churches of all denominations. *Stewardship Week, celebrated annually between the last Sunday in April and the first Sunday in May*, reminds us of our personal responsibility to care for the natural resources for which we all depend. The celebration and observance of Stewardship continue throughout the year - not for just one week. The concept of Stewardship involves personal and social responsibility. We have a duty to learn about and improve natural resources as we use them wisely. www.nacdnet.org



National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD)

509 Capitol Court, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Ph 202.547.6223

www.nacdnet.org | stewardship@nacnet.org

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