

Module 11, Lesson 2 Handout:

Soil Considerations

Soil might not be something you think about too often, but this overlooked natural resource impacts our health. Basically, the nutrients in our soil get absorbed into the plants that we eat and those nutrients help us thrive, so soil ends up being a pretty big deal for health.

Topsoil is the soil where we grow crops, and we're losing it at an alarming rate. According to scientists, we have about 60 more years of nutrients left in our topsoil before we hit our breaking point.

Nutrients are eroding faster than they are being replaced. Some of this has to do with conventional farming practices, monocropping and heavy reliance on fertilizers. Adding too many fertilizers creates an imbalance in the soil and can kill off living things like worms, ants, insects, and bugs that are key to soil health. It's thought that climate change is playing a role too.

Overall, modern practices to control crops are throwing off the natural balance of the soil, making it less nutrient dense, and making our food less nutrient dense too. Research shows poor soil quality can result in both low crop yields and less nutritious produce, which is also adding to food insecurity and malnutrition issues in underdeveloped countries. We need to prioritize farming practices that support soil health. It's the foundation of our wellness.

What can you & your clients do to support soil health?

- Buy produce from organic farms. Research has shown organic farming practices foster healthy, biodiverse soil which is more sustainable and may result in more nutritious crops
- Compost. There are compost centers where you can drop off your organic waste in most major cities, and some sanitation facilities will also take those apple cores and coffee grounds. Or, compost for yourself at home. You can buy one on Amazon! Check out the resources on the resource handout for more information on composting
- Support sustainable farming organizations and legislation
- In other words, Live Consciously!