



# **“Soil Your Undies” campaign**

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# What is „Soil Your Undies“ challenge?

- Originates from Oregon, USA
- Launched in 2018
- Fun way to build public interest in soil health
- Done all around the world: USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Estonia, Latvia, Poland etc.

# Why?

- Focus on soil health
- Raise public awareness
- Talk more about soil in general
- Engage farmers
- Have fun!

# How?

- Bury a pair of 100% cotton underpants into the soil that you are curious about
- Mark the place with a flag
- Keep the undies underground for about 12 weeks
- Carefully dig out the remainings
- Inspect, dry and weigh them



# What happens?

- Healthy soil contains billions of microscopic organisms
- One teaspoon of soil contains more microbes than there are people in the planet!
- Soil microbes are constantly feeding on organic matter
- Cotton is also an organic substance that decomposes like any other natural material (like straw for example)
- If the soil is healthy and has a good biological activity then the underpants decompose almost completely
- If there are problems, like compaction, low pH, soil is too wet or too dry, then living conditions of micro organisms are poor and decomposition won't happen

# “Soil Your Undies” 2021 in Estonia, Latvia, Poland

- Launched the campaign in April 2021
- 100 participants in Estonia, 70 in Latvia and 50 in Poland
- Sent out ~300 pairs of cotton underpants
- Were interviewed and published in newspapers, TV, podcasts
- In Estonia, underpants were buried by AHHA Science Centre, Estonian Agricultural Museum, daily newspaper in EE, national TV of EE
- School students buried 15 pairs of pants to different locations and wrote a scientific research based on the results

# Results in Estonia

- Initial weight of the pants was 70 g
- The average weight of decomposed undies was 49,9 g
- 29% of cotton was eaten by organisms living in soil
- Best result was 22g, which is 68,6% of reduction in weight
- Worst result was 66g, which is only 5,7% of reduction in weight
- School students project's best result was 14 g



# Conclusion

- “Soil your undies“ campaign served it’s purpose
- We gained public interest
- Raised awareness of soil health
- Aroused interest among farmers about their soils
- Had fun!





**Thank you!**

