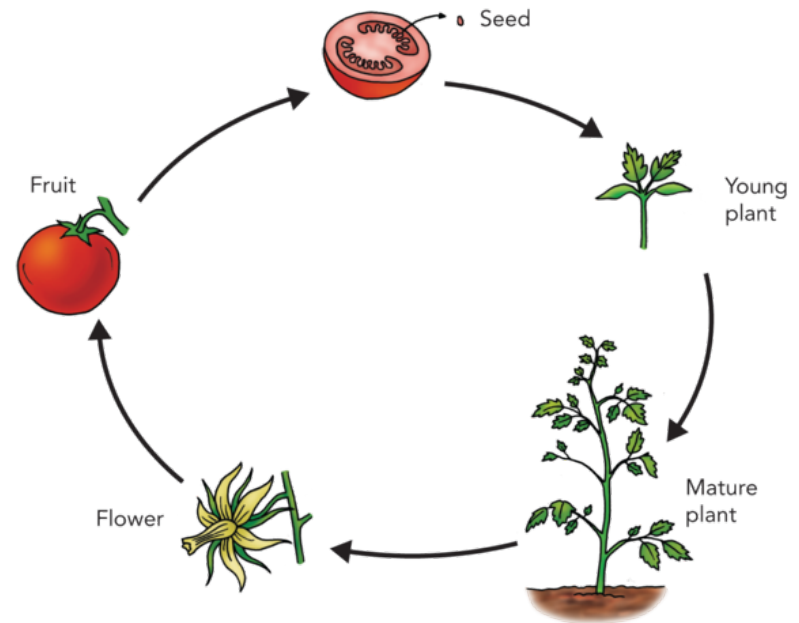


Keeping the Soil Healthy

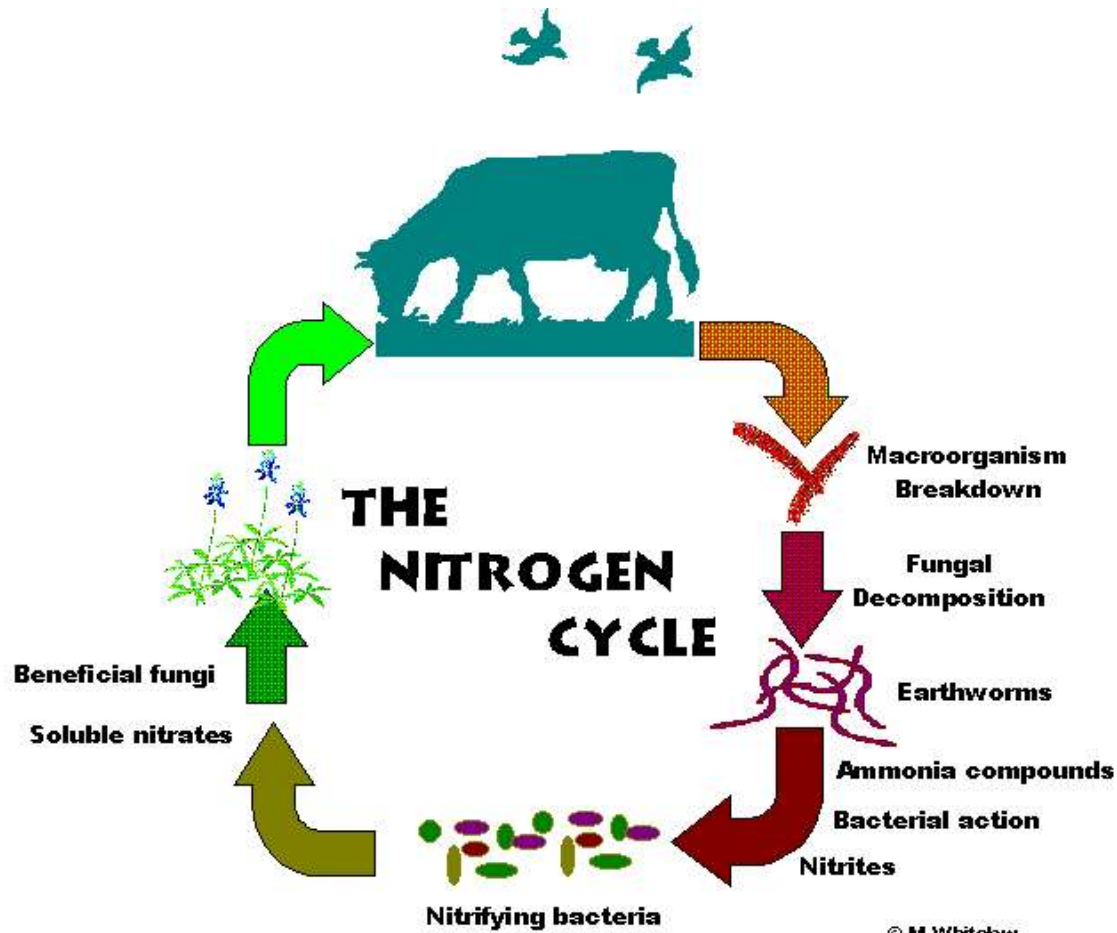


What does a plant need to grow?

- Sun
- Water
- Nutrients from soil
- Air
- Space



Life Cycle and Nutrient Cycle

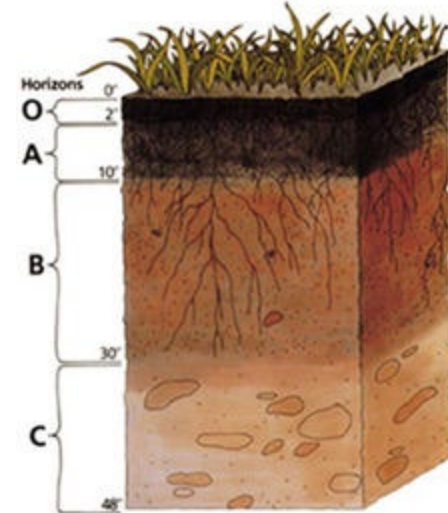


What is in healthy soil?

Healthy soil has

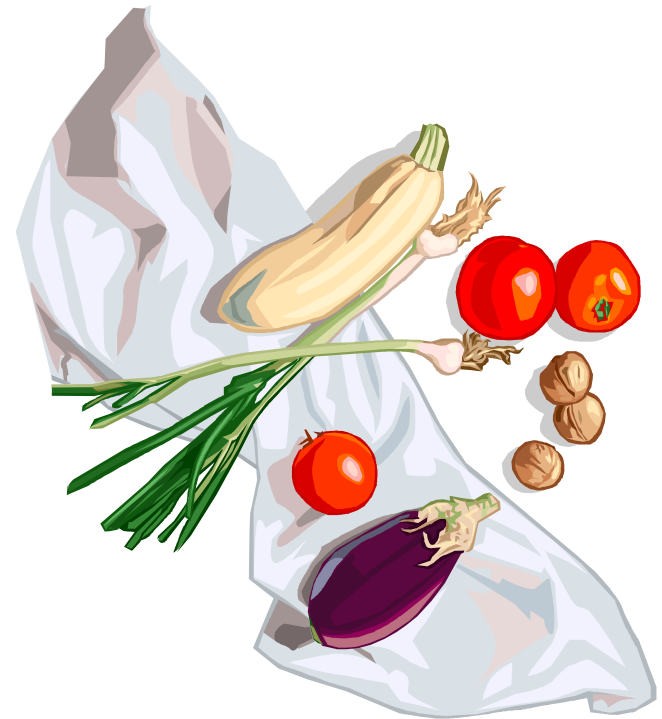
- humus, organic matter
- fungi, bacteria, protozoa,
- Worms
- Has structure to hold water and nutrients

Humus in soil – dark



Why is it important to keep our garden soil healthy and full of nutrients?

- Holds more water and nutrients and air
- Contains more nutrients - used by the plants which we eat
- produces healthier plants that are more resistant to diseases, insects, and drought.



How can we keep our soil health?

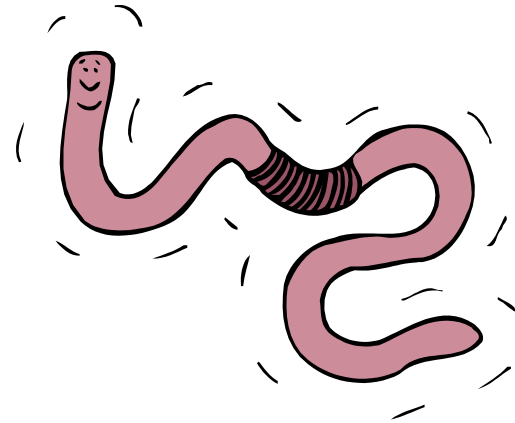
- Add compost
- Cover crop
- Add manure

All ways to add organic matter that is decomposed or broken down



2 Ways to compost

- Compost pile – organic matter that is breaking down or decomposing
- Worm compost bin with red wigglers – works faster than regular compost piles to break down or decompose organic matter



Worms! Yeah! We love Worms!

- 4,400 different kinds of segmented worms
- The largest segmented worm is 10 feet long and 1 inch around
- Worms are sensitive to light. They are photophobic
- Worms can eat half their body weight in one day. That's like you eating 35 lbs. of pizza
- Worms breathe through their skin. If the dirt is too wet, they drown. If it is too dry, they lose their slime and dry out.
- Worms have a brain that controls how they move.
- Worms have 10 hearts = 5 pairs of hearts
- Feed worms vegetable scraps like banana peels, apple cores, carrot peels and coffee grounds then worms make castings – great compost for garden soil

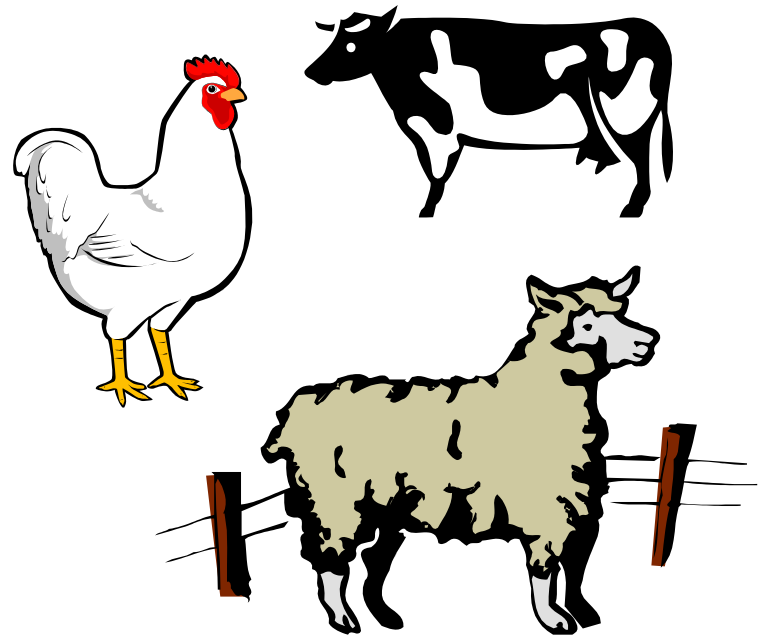
What's a cover crop?



- Easy to grow
- Fixes nitrogen into the soil
- Prevents weeds
- Provides humus (broken down or decomposed organic matter) in the spring

What's manure and why does that help the soil?

- Animal waste is broken down or decomposed organic matter
- It is high in nutrients for the soil
- Also helps build soil structure - humus



Your School Garden has healthy soil



Keep on Gardening Sustainably

