

A Slice of Soil



One of the most important Natural resources on the earth's surface is soil. Many living things depend on it as a source of food, either directly or indirectly.

Our land is a precious resource. Scientists and farmers are looking closer to find ways of growing more food. Biotechnology is one method being used to help farmers grow more food. Someday, farmers also could grow food on land that before was not good for farming. For example, a crop could be grown on very dry land or very rocky land.

You can conduct the following demonstration to show how little of the earth's surface is actually used for food production.

Materials:

Large apple (softer apples work better)
Paring knife (or heavy plastic knife)

Procedures:

1. Cut the apple into four equal parts. Three parts represent the oceans of the world. The fourth part represents the land area.
2. Cut the land section in half lengthwise. Now you have two $1/8^{\text{th}}$ pieces. One section represents land such as deserts, swamps, Antarctic, arctic, and mountain regions. The other $1/8^{\text{th}}$ section represents land where man can live and may be able to grow food.
3. Slice this $1/8^{\text{th}}$ section crosswise into four equal parts. Three of these $1/32^{\text{nd}}$ sections represent the areas of the world which are too rocky, too wet, too hot, or where soils are too poor for production, as well as areas developed by man.
4. Carefully peel the last $1/32^{\text{nd}}$ section. This small bit of peeling represents the soil of our earth on which mankind depends for food production!


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