

# THE FARM CHARM



## Materials

- Small zippered plastic jewelry bag with a hole punched at the top
- 12"-24" piece of cord for necklace
- Coffee \_\_\_\_\_ **Soil**
- Peat moss \_\_\_\_\_ **Organic Matter (O.M.)**
- Blue shredded paper \_\_\_\_\_ **Soil organisms**
- Confetti trees \_\_\_\_\_ **Plants**
- Corn seeds \_\_\_\_\_ **Corn**
- Soybeans \_\_\_\_\_ **Soybeans**
- Confetti animals \_\_\_\_\_ **Animals**
- Rock salt \_\_\_\_\_ **Fertilizer**
- Flour \_\_\_\_\_ **Pesticides**
- Blue confetti \_\_\_\_\_ **Water**
- Gold confetti \_\_\_\_\_ **Sunlight**

## DIRECTIONS

The farm is the source of most of the food that we eat. Some farms grow material used to shelter us or make some of the clothes we wear. Farms depend on land; land is a non-renewable resource. Once it is gone it is very hard to create more.

People who own and work the land know of the close connection between the land and the environment. They want to protect them both for future generations. The Farm Charm reminds each of us of the importance of farms in our lives and of the need to protect the environment.

Place some of each material in the jewelry bag and zip closed. Students can then hang the charm around their necks using the cording.

Soil is used to grow animals and plants. Healthy soil is critical in agriculture.

Organic Matter (O.M.) is old plant or animal material which is broken down by composting, or decomposing in the ground. O.M. helps ensure that the soil absorbs water and provides a habitat for important soil organisms.

Soil Organisms are present in healthy soil. These plants and animals are important to the breakdown of organic matter and fertilizers.

Plants may be trees, grass or other crops. They provide food for humans and wildlife, help prevent soil erosion, and add to the beauty of our environment. They produce oxygen for us to breathe.

Corn is used to feed humans and animals. It is also used to make other products such as plastic, sweeteners and oil. Corn can now be used to make a fuel called ethanol, helping conserve non-renewable fuels like oil.

Soybeans are a very valuable crop. Thanks to modern technology, they are now used to make building products and diesel fuel, as well as for food. These new uses contribute to the conservation of nonrenewable resources and help decrease pollution of the Earth and atmosphere.

Animals contribute to the welfare of humans. They provide power in some countries. Humans use some animals

for food or to make clothing.

Fertilizer is necessary to produce healthy plants for human and animal consumption. All plants need nutrients, but often the soil cannot supply enough for proper, abundant growth so fertilizers are applied. Farmers have learned to use fertilizers safely and effectively.

Pesticides are used to control insects, weeds and diseases. Farmers today use fewer pesticides than ever before. Many farmers now use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices, which reduce the number of chemicals used on their crops. IPM uses beneficial insects to control a crop's pest population, and often uses plants which have been genetically-engineered to resist disease.

Water is necessary for plant and animal life. The human body is 75 percent water!

Sunlight provides warmth and, of course, light. Both contribute to the chemical and biological actions that help plants grow.

**Credit:** Steve Connelly, Maryland Ag in the Classroom