

## A Field Checklist for Soil Life

### *Are you feeding your soil?*

- 1. Shallow rooted annual plants building Soil Organic Matter (SOM) in the topsoil.
- 2. Deeper rooted perennial plants building Soil Organic Matter (SOM) in the subsoil.
- 3. Balanced Residual Dry Matter (RDM)
- 4. Manure well distributed
- 5. Oak trees pumping moisture to topsoil, & cycling deep nutrients to topsoil in leaf fall.
- 6. Nitrogen fixing plants

### *Is your soil food chain complete?*

#### Soil Organism

#### Indicator

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Bacteria  | Nodules on roots of legumes<br>Soil not compacted causing denitrification   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Fungi   | Decomposers on dead plants<br>Mycorrhiza on live roots  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Protozoa and Nematodes  | 50% pore space<br>Not compacted<br>Soil retains moisture  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Insects, spiders, mites, sowbugs,<br>centipedes, millipedes, scorpions | Pitfall trap  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11. Earthworms   | Count earthworms, fecal casts and burrows<br>in a moist spadeful of soil<br>(10 to 50 earthworms / square foot is good) |