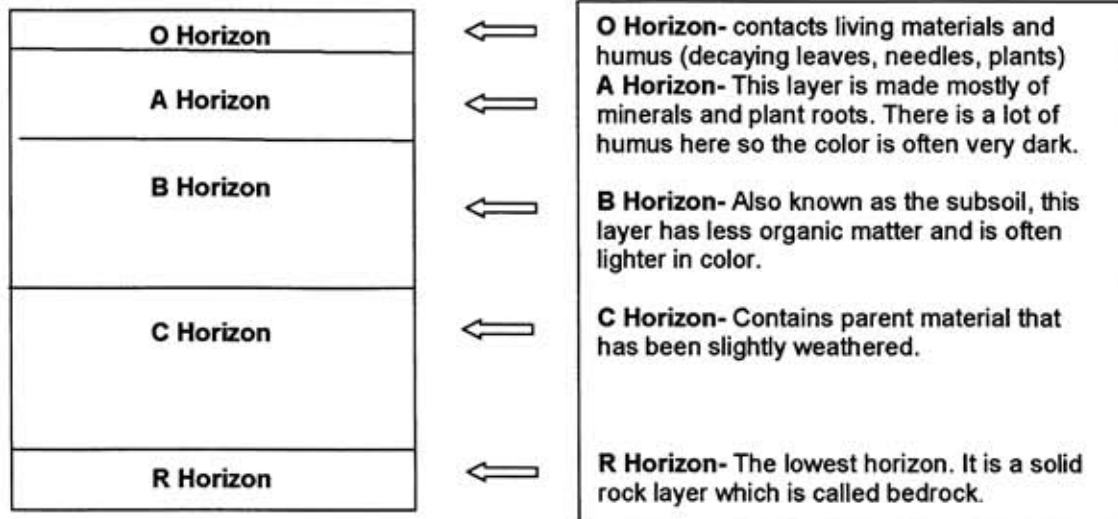


FUN FACES OF WISCONSIN AGRICULTURE CHRISTMAS TREES AND THE ENVIRONMENT



It starts with soil – Soil Profile and Horizons



How it all happens: Soil formation is a slow process! **It takes 100 years to form 1" of soil.** New soil starts from **parent material** which could be organic material, volcanic ash, sediment, or rock. The **weathering process** is caused by wind, rain, freezing and thawing, chemical activity and other factors. The **climate** of an area affects how much precipitation there is and the temperatures. The parent material is broken down into smaller particles over time which creates different layers (**horizons**). **Organic matter** (plants and animals) plays an important role in soil formation because of the **decomposition** and activity they create. **Plant roots** that move into the layers also affect the amount of **air** and **water** that mix with the layers. **Humans** cause changes in soil formation with buildings that are put up, agricultural practices, and movement of the soil. New soil is always being formed – it's just a slow process!

Christmas trees and recycling

- **Air** - Photosynthesis is the synthesis of sugar from light, carbon dioxide and water, with oxygen as a waste product. In other words, trees absorb carbon dioxide and send out oxygen!
- **Soil** – Christmas trees help hold soil in place (by their roots), protect water supplies and provide shelter for wildlife.
- **Prevent artificial trees from going into landfills**- Artificial trees are usually made with petroleum-based products. It takes many years for the trees to breakdown in landfills. The average artificial Christmas tree is used for 6-9 years.
- **Re-use that live tree**- people use "live" trees in pots that can be planted after the holidays. Trees can also be chopped up for mulch, made into decorations or used for wildlife habitat.