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JOHN'S CORNER:

NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS

by John Ferguson

Researchers at the University of Indiana have released a new study on microbes. They compiled 20,376 surveys from 35,000 locations around the world including 14,862 sampling efforts on trees, birds, and mammals. Using sampling and statistical methods, they found that the earth is home to **one trillion** microbial species of which only 0.001 percent have been discovered.

Another study from the Harvard School of Public Health and Brigham Women's Hospital published in the Journal Environmental Health Perspectives has found that women in the USA whom live in homes surrounded by vegetation have significantly lower mortality rates than those that do not. Another benefit was an improved mental health and lower rates of depression.

Another study from the American Journal of Preventive Medicine has found that higher "greenness" in the environment was linked to significantly lower rates of diabetes, hypertension, and cholesterol, as well as fewer chronic health conditions.

A study from Washington State University has found that organic farming can feed the world. In addition, organic farming provides more benefits from environmental impact, economic viability, and social well-being. Other studies have shown that organically grown foods have higher nutrient density, more enzymes, vitamins, and other compounds required for good health.

Lots of good reasons to be an organic gardener!