Many heavy metals exist in minute amounts in natural agricultural soil. However, when their amounts exceed a certain level due to pollutants brought from outside, there arises a soil contamination problem, leading to the contamination of agricultural products.

There are many cases of heavy metal contamination originating from old mines and smelters in Japan, and soil contamination of agricultural land is a social issue today. In particular, cadmium (Cd) is the most harmful heavy metals. If agricultural products have absorbed Cd in an excessive concentration, they adversely affect the health of people, and so tolerance concentration is regulated by law. For Cd-contaminated agricultural lands, measures for minimizing the absorption of Cd by agricultural crops are necessary. These measures include 1) soil dressing, 2) water management (paddy field), 3) chemical cleaning of soil, 4) phytoremediation, and 5) use of different varieties and rootstock.