

Your Sustainable Kitchen

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What Sustainability Is

1. Zero- and Low-Waste; Minimalism and Medialism and Maximalism—a continuum
2. “Sustainability” and “Carrying Capacity”
3. Bringing back frugal. Before you spend money, even on “green” products, think carefully and be creative with what you have. Do I really need this?
4. Choosing second-hand products over new ones.
5. Being wary of “Wish-cycling”—when in doubt, throw it out. Don’t wish it were recyclable; recycle only what you know your local recycling center can take.
6. Starting with those changes that will produce the “biggest bang for the buck”, greatest return on your health and the planet’s health. Examples: the two most important GHG-reducing food actions are eliminating food waste and eating an all or mostly plant-based diet.

Top Waste-Reducing Tips!

- Eliminate or reduce single-use items: paper towels, napkins, straws, produce & shopping bags
- Replace plastic wrap/bags with silicone covers or beeswax
- Buy unpackaged foods or the best eco-packaging, e.g. loose tea/coffee instead of tea bags or pods
- Buy only the foods you will eat, avoid over-purchasing
- Compost

Why Strive for “Sustainable”

1. **Everyone Benefits:** For you + the other people, animals, plants, ecosystems... benefits are at the individual and planetary levels!
2. **Savings:** We save money when we buy without packaging, plastic, waste, and toxic products,
3. **Ease:** Less clutter simplifies our lives, makes them easier, less stressful.
4. **Priorities:** Long-term livability takes priority over short-term convenience. “Convenience” foods are more expensive AND amazingly inconvenient for those to come.
5. **Health:** Societal norms and marketing convince us that foods are “better” or “healthier” if they come from a factory or in a package with a fancy label.

How We Become Sustainable

Main Points

1. It’s a continuum (maximalist-medialist-minimalist)
2. Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
 - a. Refuse: Can I make do without this? If so, how much do I need? Avoid unnecessary purchases. Marketing persuades us we need things we don’t really need.
 - b. Reduce: Use less of everything; e.g., 2 squares of toilet paper instead of 6.
 - c. Reuse: reuse before recycling or buying new—both sides of paper, backs of cards, empty spaghetti sauce jars, etc. Shop thrift stores, following public health guidelines.

Top Water-Saving Tips!

- Greatly reduce or eliminate consumption of animal parts and products; reduce rice and almonds
- Keep a bowl in the sink to catch water when washing hands or veggies; use it to water plants or rinse dishes before putting in dishwasher or cans/jars before recycling them
- Use a full dishwasher, which uses less water than handwashing dishes

- d. Recycle: even your recycling bin should not have much in it. Don't "wish-cycle."
3. Look for Cradle to Cradle products (aka "closed loop").
4. Choose reusable over single-use, disposable products. Examples: rags, not paper towels; washable plates over compostable ones.
5. Choose no or minimal, biodegradable packaging over packaged, plastic-wrapped goods; buy loose products from bins.
6. Choose biodegradable, non-toxic over non-biodegradable and toxic products; avoid sodium lauryl sulfate, fragrances, etc. (See Environmental Working Group database)
7. Overcome barriers: family differences need to be discussed respectfully; educate each other.

Grocery Shopping

1. Take your own reusable cloth produce bags, not just hauling bags.
2. Take your own washable bags, jars, or stainless steel tins for bulk oats, berries, beans, rices, oil, vinegar, nuts, seeds, flour, peanut butter, raisins, herbs, detergents, salt, soaps, tea, etc.
3. If your usual store doesn't provide necessities without packaging, see our Resources list below for My Organic Market, Glut Food Co-op, TPSS Food Co-op, Fullfillery, or Yes.

Food Storage

1. Lunch Box: replace plastic bags, paper bags, napkins, utensils.
2. Restaurant Carry Out: take your own containers.
3. Cling Wrap Substitutes—CoverBlubber, watermelon (silicone covers or cover with a plate); microwave plate/bowl covers.
4. Coffee: find options instead of Keurig.
5. Tea: buy loose leaf instead of bagged and use metal tea strainers (For how to measure loose tea, see <<https://www.teatulia.com/tea-101/how-to-measure-loose-leaf-tea-for-brewing.htm>>.)
6. Fill ice cube trays with lemon juice, spaghetti sauce, etc. that goes bad before you use it up.

Dietary Choices

1. Plant Rich Diets
 - a. For the environment
 - b. For your health (do not exceed 10% of calories from animal parts and products); beware of food fads, "superfoods", etc.
2. Social Justice
 - a. Organic: applying pesticides harms farmworkers
 - b. Palm Oil, Coconut Oil
3. Buy Local
4. Food Safety: follow safe food-handling practices.

Kitchen Cleaning: Food & Dishes

1. Produce Scrub Brush & Spray
2. Hand Soap:
 - a. unwrapped bar vs liquid bulk
 - b. avoid anti-bacterials which can destroy the needed, healthy bacteria in your gut and harm the water supply.

Top Energy-Saving Tips!

1. Replace old, inefficient refrigerators with a STAR-rated fridge & get a rebate for the old fridge.
2. For efficiency, keep refrigerators and freezers full and vacuum fridge coils.
3. Turn out lights and electronics not being used.
4. Lower the temperature of the hot water heater.
5. Use cold water when rinsing dishes, washing clothes, etc.
6. Insulate attics & windows. "Warm windows" insulate to R value of 8 compared to glass at 1.3!
7. Grow your own vegetable garden.
8. Buy organic produce.
9. Shop local to reduce pollution incurred with transporting goods.
10. Change light bulbs to LEDs.

- c. reconsider fragrances/scented soaps, which often are harmful to you and the air and water supply
3. Dishwashing Soap/Automatic Dishwasher Soap, Rinse Aid (vinegar)
4. Rags, Towels, Dishcloths: Ditch paper, go real cloth!
5. Keep a bowl in the sink to save the water from washing hands/veggies, etc., and use it to rinse dishes before putting in the dishwasher or use it to water plants.
6. A full dishwasher uses less water than washing dishes by hand.

Kitchen Cleaning: Sink, Countertops, Stoves, Flooring

1. Most Basic: Baking soda and vinegar
2. Glass Spray Bottles: simple formulas, bypass essential oil fragrances (get bottles at MOMs)
 - a. The alcohol-vinegar-baking soda spray formula on the brown bottle quickly sterilizes kitchen countertops, sinks, appliances, and other surfaces.

Compost

1. Buy a countertop compost catcher or use an old stainless-steel mixer bowl. Can store it in the fridge in hot weather.
2. Residential vs commercial composting options.

Potlucks & Picnics!

See separate handout for all the info you need.

Resources, Resources!

Where to Find Information, Recipes

1. Free, online guide to the health and eco-impact of the products you buy: Consumer Guide Database, Environmental Working Group, https://www.ewg.org/consumer-guides#.W6zU1_YpBEa
2. Free recipes and tips via online searches: type in what you're searching plus "zero waste", such as "Zero waste tile cleaner"
3. Zero Waste, Zero Judgement Facebook Page, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1814853925469112/>
4. Plant-Based Diet Resources:
 - a. Minimalist Baker—<https://minimalistbaker.com/>
 - b. Forks Over Knives—<https://www.forksoverknives.com/recipes/#gs.yhazw0>
 - c. Mary Rooker's food website—<http://www.shamanicspring.com/food.html>
 - d. Movies: Forks Over Knives, Vegucated (UU director!), What the Health
 - e. Website: NutritionFacts.org
5. Pesticide Wash for Produce: A 10% salt solution appears to work as good or better than full-strength vinegar. Mix one-part salt to nine-parts water and scrub produce with veggie brush. Rinse all of the salt off before eating. NutritionFacts, <https://nutritionfacts.org/2017/04/20/the-best-way-to-wash-fruit-and-vegetables/>

Reduce Buying New & Recycling Problems

Refuse/reduce/reuse to reduce costs associated with producing new items & recycling issues:

- Choose used stone countertops, doors, hardware, plumbing, cabinetry, and even appliances (Community Forklift, for example)
- Reuse emptied glass jars for food storage and for bulk purchasing.
- Leave empty, clean containers in your car (if you have one) for restaurant leftovers home.

6. Compost Resources:
 - a. Apartment Composting—<https://www.goingzerowaste.com/blog/composting-for-apartments>
 - b. Backyard Composting—<https://www.goingzerowaste.com/blog/2015/10/25/backyardcomposting>
 - c. More—have fun searching online. “Going Zero Waste” website is good, but find your own favorite!
7. Tea—Measuring Loose Leaf Teas—<https://www.teatulia.com/tea-101/how-to-measure-loose-leaf-tea-for-brewing.htm>
8. Videos: Minimalism (Netflix), No Impact Man.

Where to Find Zero/Low Waste Items

My Organic Market, “MOMs”, 9801 Rhode Island Ave., College Park, MD 20740. (301) 220-1100. Mon-Sat, 9am-9pm, <https://momsorganicmarket.com/maryland/>

Takoma Park-Silver Spring Food Co-op, 201 Ethan Allen Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912, (301) 891-2667. Mon-Sun 8 am to 10 pm, <https://tpss.coop/>

Glut Food Co-op, 4005 34th St., Mt. Rainier, Md 20712, (301) 779-1978, Tuesday-Friday 9am - 8pm Saturday-Monday 9am - 7pm, <https://glut.org/>

The Fullfillery Shop, 6411 Orchard Ave., Takoma Park, MD (Pop-up shop, not permanent storefront), (301) 244-9187, Email <fullfilleryshop@gmail.com>, <http://fullfillery.com/>; <https://www.facebook.com/Fullfillery/>?

March hours (call or email for current schedule):

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 10am - 2pm; Saturday/Sunday 11am - 4pm

Or by appointment—call or email

Current Products: <http://fullfillery.com/current-stock-price-list/>

“Your local low/zero waste refill shop in Takoma Park—carrying plastic-free or bulk items for household cleaning and body care.”

Yes! Organic Market, 5331 Baltimore Ave Suite 101, Hyattsville, MD, (301) 779-1205, Daily, 7am-10pm, <http://www.yesorganicmarket.com/our-story-1>

Where to Find Reusables or “Green” Appliances-Kitchen-Bath-Home

Community Forklift, 4671 Tanglewood Dr, Edmonston, MD 20781, (301) 985-5180, Open seven days a week from 9am - 7pm. <https://communityforklift.org>

Habitat for Humanity Restore, 12006 B Plum Orchard Dr., Silver Spring, MD 20904, (301) 947-3304, restore@habitatmm.org

Amicus Green, 4080A Howard Ave in Kensington, MD, 301-571-8590, Monday - Friday: 10:00 - 6:00, Saturday: 11:00 - 5:00 (& by appointment after-hours), Sunday: Closed, <https://www.amicusgreen.com/>