

Earth Saving Tips From Earth Share

FALL 2007



Earth Share

Local Bounty



One of the simplest steps you can take to help protect the planet is to buy products that are produced in your own community.

Consider the benefits:

✓ Local products **reduce the amount of energy** that would otherwise be used to transport them long distances. Many of the foods in your typical grocery store have traveled more than 1,000 miles to get there.

✓ Foods that are grown nearby often require **fewer pesticides** than those that must be prevented from spoiling during cross-country commutes.

✓ **Supporting the local economy** often makes it possible for local manufacturers to try new environmental techniques with lower risk.

How you can buy local:

✓ Buy fruits and vegetables at farmers' markets and roadside stands, especially during the fall harvest.

✓ Encourage the grocery store where you shop to carry locally grown produce.

✓ Pick your own fruits and vegetables at open farms and orchards.

✓ Frequent crafts fairs, "mom-and-pop" shops, and support local artisans.


The USDA has a website with listings of farmers markets across the United States:
www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/map.htm


Local Harvest has info on farmers markets, buying clubs, and restaurants:
www.localharvest.org


Seasonal Thanksgiving

Buying local also means buying in season. For most of the country the traditional Thanksgiving meal is a perfect example of a seasonal meal. We have carrots, potatoes, and pumpkins—not spring greens and asparagus—on the traditional Thanksgiving table. In today's age of food transit the pumpkins in your local grocery store might not be local. Here are some tips for celebrating the holiday season while keeping it local.





 Make applesauce out of apples you pick at a local orchard. Or perhaps bake a traditional pumpkin pie with pumpkins grown in a community pumpkin patch.


 Visit farmers' markets for squash, onions, potatoes, carrots, and other vegetables that are harvested in the fall.

 Check with local farms for turkeys raised on pastures instead of feedlots. You may also be able to find pasture raised eggs and dairy products.



 Want more diversity in your meal? There may be many other items in season in your area this fall. Kales and Swiss Chard are healthy cool weather crops. Ask at your local farmer's market what they expect to carry in the fall months.

 Buy freshly baked bread at the local bakery or try baking some fresh at home!

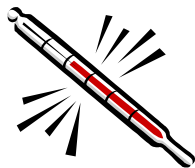
 Keep in mind if you live in Southern California or other arid locations that your fall season will be different. Pomegranates and kiwi might be in season in California rather than carrots and potatoes. In Florida strawberry pie may make more seasonal sense than pumpkin. Check out www.sustainabletable.org/shop/eatseasonal for ideas.

Managing Mercury

You may have recently learned that compact fluorescents bulbs (CFLs) contain a small amount of mercury. They are not the only items in your home that contain mercury. Here is some information about limiting mercury and tips for dealing with the mercury-containing items in your home:



- **Use Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs.** That's right, even though they contain some mercury, overall your "mercury footprint" is probably smaller if you use CFLs than regular incandescent light bulbs. This is because most of the mercury pollution in the U.S. comes from coal fired power plants. Unless you have a clean source of electricity, using less energy means less mercury pollution.
- **Recycle your CFLs.** If you have recently installed CFLs they should last at least a couple of years. Once the bulbs have burned out, be sure to dispose of them properly. Some stores that sell CFLs, like IKEA, will accept used bulbs for recycling. You can call your county or check out www.earth911.org to find a recycling center that will take them.
- **Batteries and thermometers.** There are other household items that contain small amounts of mercury. Watch batteries can contain five times as much mercury as a CFL bulb. Mercury thermometers are likely the largest source of mercury in your house. Some recycling facilities have thermometer swap programs that allow you to recycle a working mercury thermometer in exchange for an electric thermometer. Again, call your county or check out www.earth911.org for recycling centers.



- **Clean up.** You can clean up the mercury from a broken CFL or thermometer yourself, but do it carefully. Make sure that kids and pets leave the spill area immediately. Open windows and use gloves and disposable cleaning rags. For detailed clean up instructions, visit the EPA website:

www.epa.gov/mercury/spills/

- **What's Next?** Light-emitting diodes (LEDs) are even more efficient than CFLs and contain no mercury. The technology for white lights from LEDs is new and comparatively expensive, but watch for more efficient and mercury free lights in the coming years.
- **Get tested.** If you are worried about the amount of mercury you have been exposed to you can do a simple mail order hair test. To order a testing kit from Sierra Club as well as read more about avoiding mercury exposure, visit:

www.sierraclub.org/mercury

Celebrate the end of summer with a fabulous Fall Gerbera Bouquet!

Organic Bouquet's Gerberas are direct from their coastal farm in sun-filled Southern California, and come in an assorted mix of warm, vibrant fall colors – oranges, yellows, and reds! For each purchase made through the link below, a 10% donation will be made to Earth Share.



Please visit:

www.organicbouquet.com/earthsharefallgerbers



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OF OREGON

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www.earthshare-oregon.org

Call us at 503-223-9015, or send an email to info@earthshare-oregon.org.