

GO Green in YOUR Kitchen

With rising energy prices and global warming at the forefront of debate, there is a growing need for Montana communities to conserve energy and to make eco-friendly choices. On the individual level, making our kitchens and eating habits greener is a simple and effective way to positively impact the environment. Fortunately, going green not only helps Montanans preserve our beautiful state but it also helps us to save our pennies. Give your kitchens a “green makeover” meanwhile eating smarter, saving money, and helping the environment.

By Valida Holder and Rebecca Morley

10 Tips to Make Your Kitchen Green

1. Make meals at home. Make simple, nutritious meals at home by using fresh ingredients and by avoiding frozen meals and processed foods. For great sustainable food recipes check out www.sustainabletable.org/kitchen/

2. Create a menu. Plan meals before going to the store and purchase only what you will need. If you find yourself throwing out food each week, buy and prepare less.

3. Buy local foods. Local foods are usually fresher and tastier, they may also be healthier. Buying local helps support the local economy.

4. Buy in bulk. Bulk foods are less expensive and cut down on the amount of trash and packaging we throw away. Even better, bring a re-usable container from home to store bulk items.

5. Develop a “green thumb”. Growing your own fruit and veggies saves you money and provides fresh foods for you and your family. Ask any gardener how much fun it can be.

6. Breastfeed your babies, moms. Breast milk is not only healthier for your baby but is less expensive than formula. Breastfeeding prevents waste because it doesn't employ all the cans, bottles, shipping, processing, and advertising that goes into promoting infant formula. Furthermore, breastfeeding is energy efficient it's on tap at the perfect temperature

7. Compost your plant based foods. Leftovers and/or “aged out” produce can make nutrient rich fertilizer for your garden. Composting helps prevent landfills from overflowing with food.

8. Conserve water. Use tap water instead of buying bottled water. Also, pay attention to how much water is going down the drain and avoid turning the faucet on “full-blast”. Store water in a pitcher inside the refrigerator to keep water cold and consider using a water filter if the taste of tap water is found unpleasant.

9. Recycle, Recycle, Recycle. Create a recycle center in your kitchen using bins to separate aluminum, plastic, newspaper. Learn the recycling guidelines for your area. Re-use plastic food containers to store leftovers and bulk foods. Recycle glass jars for water glasses, vases and storage. Wash and re-use plastic baggies.

10. Ditch the plastic and paper bags. Use as few plastic and paper bags as possible by bringing your own cloth bag from home to carry groceries. Remember, recycle the plastic and paper bags that you do use.

The following sites provide more information on how to “Go Green”:

www.eatrightmontana.org/,
www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com,