

Greening SMU Newsletter

December 2011

Welcome to Greening SMU, a monthly newsletter to update and connect Saint Mary's University students, faculty and staff on various sustainability initiatives, events, volunteer and job opportunities across the university and in the community.

Past editions of Greening SMU are available at www.smu.ca/sustainability. This newsletter is just one way to keep you connected! You can also find us on Twitter or Facebook by searching "Sustainable Saint Mary's". To contribute to Greening SMU email sustainability@smu.ca

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December 1st, Environment, Sustainability and Society ([More Information](#))

December 2nd, Shale Gas and Fracking: What is at Risk? ([More Information](#))

December 3rd, Protecting our Communities: A Conference on Shale Gas and Fracking ([More Information](#))

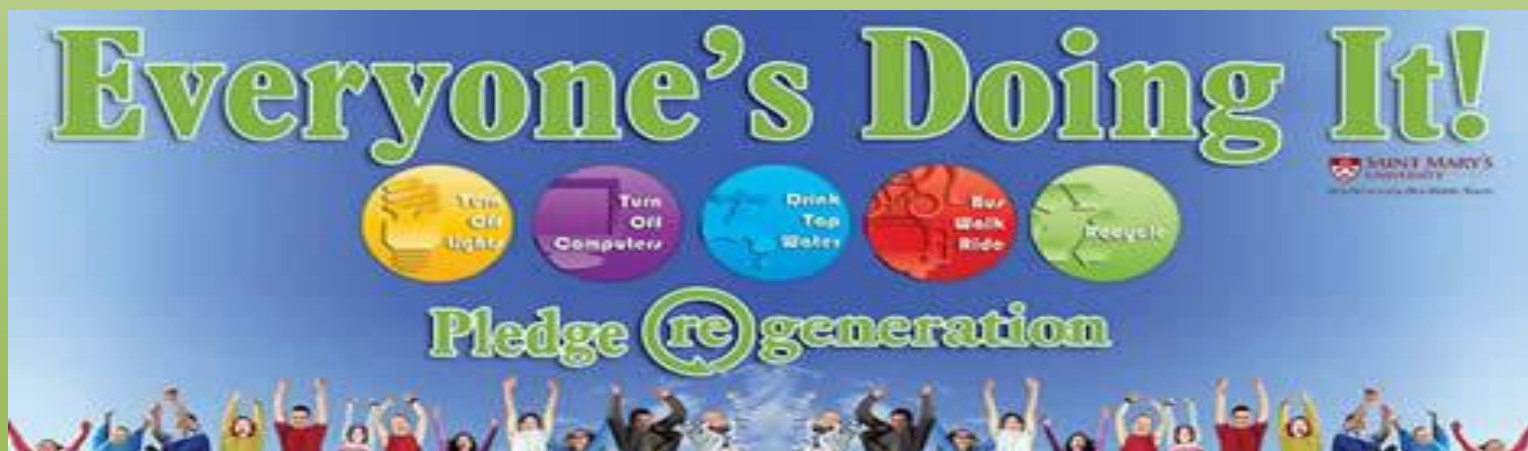
December 7th, The Natural Step Canada Workshops: Embedding Sustainability into the Culture of Municipal Government ([More Information](#))

December 8th, The Natural Step Canada's Sustainability for Leaders Course – Level 1: Foundation ([More Information](#))

December 8th, 50/50 Dinner Benefit – You do not know what you have got 'til it's gone ([More Information](#))

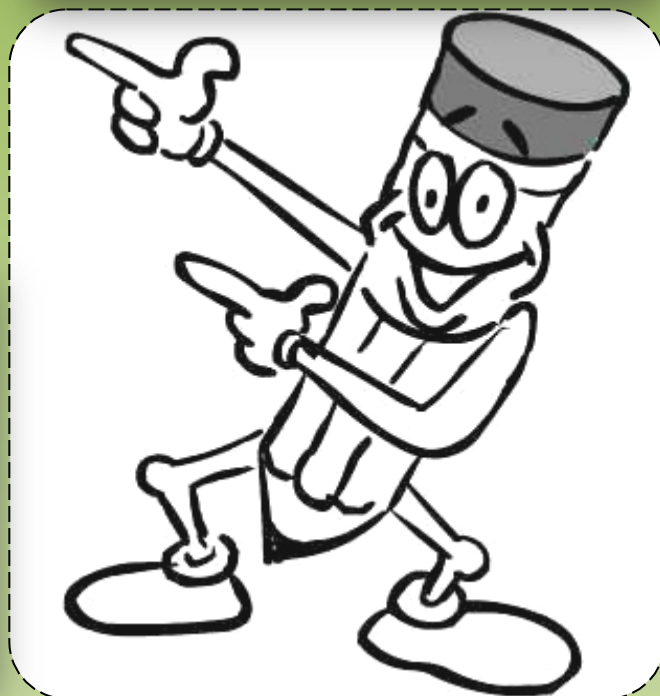
Take Saint Mary's Sustainability Pledge!

Taking the pledge is only the first step to helping our planet. It does not take a lot of work to start living sustainably; it can be as easy as turning off the lights when you leave the room. Click the image below to take the pledge and learn more about sustainability.



Sustainability Week Planning

Saint Mary's University has been holding Sustainability Week Planning in March every year since 2008. Currently, SMU Sustainability Team is planning the Sustainability Week for March 2012. We welcome you to get involved our program to help preparing this project, including defining the theme, creating events, advertising, and making a activities timeline for the sustainability week.



ARAMARK's Farm to Table Program: Carrots

Members of our team recently visited Sawler Gardens Ltd, a family owned business located in the Annapolis Valley. Among other root vegetables, they harvest carrots. Our team had the opportunity to learn some interesting and local facts at the farm.

Most carrots are planted in straight rows. When mature, they are picked by the tops with a harvester. The tops are cut and the carrots are then taken from the field, rinsed and cooled by being placed into ice water for 15-20 minutes. The carrots are dropped on a belt and are sized, graded, cooled, and stored. The carrots are sized according to diameter size and are stored in bulk (plain, not bagged). This is one reason why some employees are needed year-round to hand-pack the produce.



Baby carrots were developed to use carrots smaller than the ideal size (Canada #1 grade carrots cannot have a diameter less than $\frac{3}{4}$ "). Small carrots with a small core are cut into 2" segments. The waste from this process is generally fed to animals. Freezing and canning are no longer done simply because there is no demand. Therefore all carrots are sold fresh.

Carrots are known for their high content of beta-carotene, which the body turns into vitamin A, but these bright veggies also provide vitamins C and K, fiber, potassium, and other health-promoting chemicals (called phytonutrients). Eating carrots as part of healthy diet can help lower your risk of heart disease and some cancers – and yes, they are good for your eyes!

Glazed Carrots

Ingredients List:

- 2 ½ cups of carrots, sliced.
- 2 tablespoons of butter.
- 2 tablespoons of brown sugar.
- 1 teaspoon of orange peel, grated.
- ½ teaspoon of salt.

Directions:

Cook the carrots in hot water until they are tender. Drain. Melt the butter in a suitably sized skillet. Add the cooked carrots, sugar, and grated orange peel, salt. Cook over a medium heat, stirring constantly, until carrots are glazed.

Serve as desired.

Source: <http://www.carrotrecipes.net/>



Green Tip of the Month

Use reusable and recyclable! Resist disposable!

Is using reusable instead of disposable items more sustainable? Since disposables contribute to the vast tonnage of waste sent to landfill every year, reducing one-time use products can be said to be essential to living a sustainably oriented lifestyle. While we know sustainability is a “journey -not a destination” and “no one action is the solution”, the popularizing of reusable materials is certainly believed to have had a detrimental effect on the level of compassion people have for the earth’s ability to house waste.

What can you do?

- Do not throw away items which have reusable life - donate - someone else can probably find ways to use them.
- Consider some of these common reusable items for your everyday general life needs.



What is Saint Mary’s University doing?

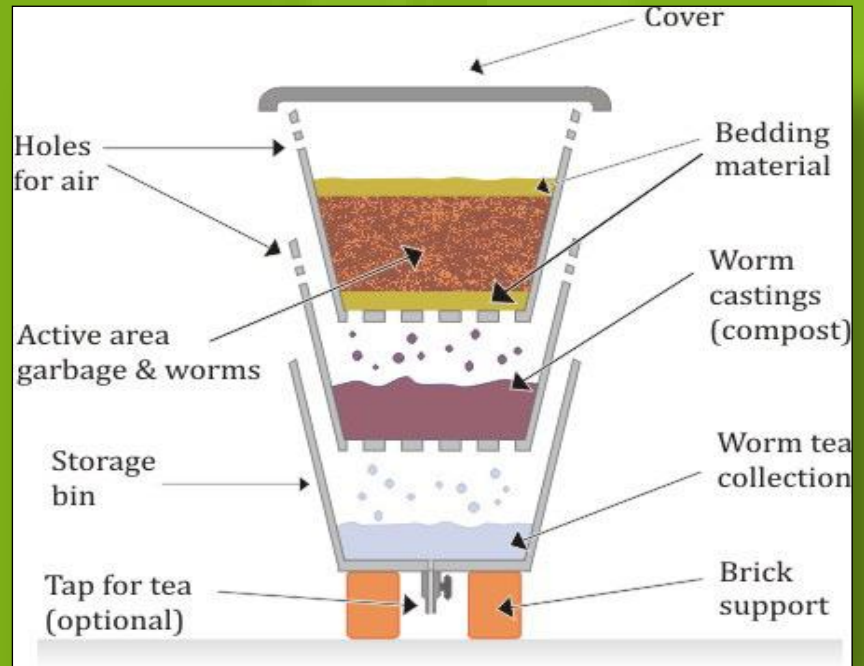
- All paper towels in washrooms on campus are made of 100% recyclable materials.
- The bookstore and ARAMARK sell reusable mugs
- The Dockside and Faculty Lounge provide reusable dinnerware.
- The waste bins on campus are separated in four streams

The list goes on and on – for more information, please contact sustainability@smu.ca or visit www.smu.ca/sustainability.

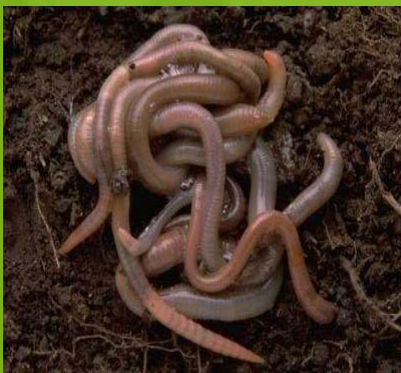
Worm Farming Project



Worm Farming is an ecological project that can directly or indirectly generate a great many environmental benefits. To start a Worm Farming Project, firstly, you need three foam boxes with holes for air in both sides and for liquid to drain through to the bottom. Then put the boxes one over the other. Secondly, you need to make the bedding material in the upper box for worms; the materials may include soil, water, leaves and so on. Thirdly, add the worms in the top box with the bedding material. Usually two handfuls of worms are enough to start because worms can breed and multiply very quickly. Finally, adding organic waste to worms into the upper box is the most important stage, so the worms eat the food waste and generate the compost and worm tea. The whole process and appliance of worm farm looks like the above "Cross Sectional diagram of the Three Bin Composters". Please notice, when you feed your worms, do not put too much food at once. As the worms multiply over time, you can gradually give them more and more food. Further, some food or food wastes should NEVER be fed to worms, for example, worms do NOT eat meat, bones, lemons or oranges. Some food must be cooked before it is put into the box, because worms will not eat them raw, like potatoes, onions, and garlic.



With worms' help, many food wastes are re-processed into fertilizer. The worm tea collected in the bottom box is good irrigation for planting and cultivation.



Worm Farms are simple to build. Quite often, initiatives are being managed on school campuses, as classroom projects, research projects, as a Residence project, at urban farms/community gardens and Residential homes. Each Worm Farm can be treated as an eco-system. However, unfortunately, such a simple and beneficial project is not widely well known by people.