



Greening SMU Newsletter



July, 2011

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Events

June 30th – July 3rd – **Multicultural Festival**, for more information click [here](#)

July 1st – **Canada day events** all around HRM, for more information click [here](#)

July 4th – **Permaculture Circle**, for more information click [here](#) then click calendar.

July 10th – **See More Green Biodynamic 500 Workshop**, for more information please click [here](#)

July 19th – **It's More Than Buses Public Session**, for more information click [here](#)

Every Tuesday – **Free Gardening Program**, for more information click [here](#)

No Straw Please!

Be straw free is a project that was started by Milo Cress, a 9 year old boy from Burlington Vermont. When he found out how many straws were being used daily he decided to stop using straws and to try to get others to do the same. Not using a straw seems like such a small thing to worry about when we are talking about environmental sustainability but it is the small things that are going to make a difference.



Every day in the United States people use more than 500 million straws. That is enough straws to fill 127, forty foot school buses! That translates into a great deal of waste. Think of when you go to a restaurant you not only have the straw but it is sometimes in a wrapper, and that straw in its wrapper came from a box and that box full of straws had to be transported and manufactured. All of these steps use energy or create waste. This is one small change that could help reduce lots of waste with very limited impact on everyone's day to day lives. Next time you order a drink out just simply ask for "No straw please." For more information on Milo's project visit <http://www.bestrawfree.org>.

Take the Pledge!

Taking the pledge is only the first step to helping our planet. It doesn't 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 to take the pledge and learn more about sustainability.

Everyone's Doing It!



Pledge (re)generation



SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY
Celebrating One World, Many.

ARAMARK's Farm to Table Program: Green Beans

Also known as string beans or snap beans, green beans are long slender fibrous pods, edible from tip to tip. The pod or outer shell can be green, yellow or purple and either round or flat. Wax beans are the pale yellow version of this bean, offered referred to as yellow beans. Green beans are considered a vegetable, but are botanically classified as fruit.

When selecting, choose beans that are bright in color and don't contain rust spots (small brown areas) or wrinkles. Green beans can be stored in the refrigerator tightly wrapped or covered for 5 days; after which they start to lose both flavour and color. Green beans are low in calories, and high in dietary fibre. They contain vitamins A & C as well as some minerals.

Beans can be eaten raw, steamed, stir fried, added to soups, casseroles, etc. You can purchase green beans in all forms, fresh, frozen or canned. Green beans are a common crop for gardeners to plant in the Maritimes.

Sesame Green Beans

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 1/2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 1 pound fresh green beans, washed
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds



Directions

1. Warm a large skillet or wok over medium heat. When the skillet is hot, pour in canola and sesame oils, then place whole green beans into the skillet. Stir the beans to coat with oil. Cook until the beans are bright green and slightly browned in spots, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in soy sauce; cover, and let sit about 5 minutes. Transfer to a serving platter, and sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds.

Recipe Source: <http://allrecipes.com>



Greening Your Wardrobe



With the new summer weather comes the need to shed off those wool socks and thick sweaters. This season instead of going out and buying new clothes why not try new to **you** clothes. Second hand clothing stores often have just as fashionable clothing as other stores. This option is not only easier on your wallet it is also better for the environment. The fact is that less than 2% of all clothing thrown away every year in the U.S. is trashed because it's truly "worn out" -- as in threadbare, falling apart, full of holes. The other 98%, for the most part, is dumped just because we want something new or we've outgrown our duds, and we're too lazy to pass them along to someone else who can use them. If you're not a fan of shopping in second hand clothing stores try having a clothing swap party. Gather all your friends together and have them bring over their clothes that they don't want or are tired of wearing. Then sit down and start swapping. This gives you all a chance and a new wardrobe that is both economically and environmentally friendly!



Source : <http://www.thedailygreen.com/living-green/blogs/save-money/save-money-green-clothes-460608#ixzz1QjW0lgXm>



8 Ways Beat the Heat

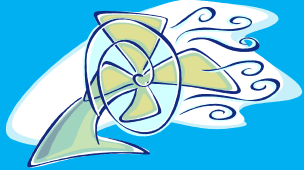
With summer finally looking like it has decided to stay we came up with a few tips to keep you cool this summer.

Keep your neck cool with a wet cloth or ice cubes - if your neck is cool it will cool down the rest of you.

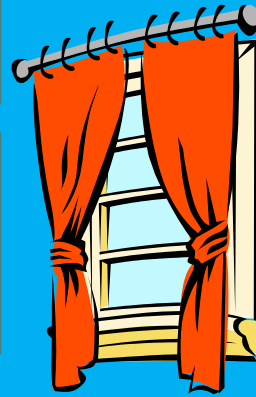
Drink lots of water - This will help you stay hydrated and less likely to feel the effects of the heat.

Eat cold food for snacks - Try freezing fruit like grapes, melon and berries to snack on, this will refresh you.

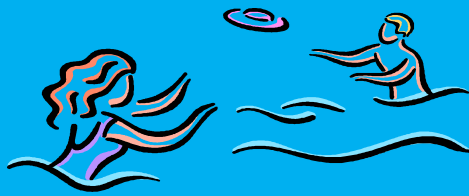
At night get a shower and go to bed on a towel without drying off - The water will evaporate leaving you feeling cool. Or just simply leave your hair wet.



Eat spicy food - This may sounds like it would do the opposite but when spicy food causes you to sweat, sweating will also cool you down.



Enjoy the outdoors - When the temperature is lower in the day (early morning and in the evening) get out and enjoy the summer. Go to a park to enjoy the breeze or stop by a beach or lake to take a dip and cool off.



Eat a picnic meal - While you're outside enjoying the summer find a big shady tree to sit with a packed lunch. Picnic food usually means no oven required so this will save you from turning on the oven.

Keep your house cool - there are many ways to cool down your house without an air conditioner. Try closing blinds and curtains during the day to keep the heat out and open windows at night to let in the cool night air. Use a fan in place of an air conditioner whenever possible



Do you have a tip that we have not mentioned here? If so e-mails us at sustainability@smu.ca and we will share your tip with our facebook and twitter friends!

Sources: <http://www.healwithhope.com/natural-health-news/july-2008-ecofriendly-ways-to-stay-cool-this-summer/>,
<http://galvestondailynews.com/story/161130>, <http://blog.ecobox.com/keep-cool-this-summer-in-an-eco-friendly-way.html>

Fresh from the Garden

The newly established garden in the Oaks at Saint Mary's campus is alive and thriving. Over the last month the garden has been built and all 32 plots have either been planted in or are reserved. The garden members include Saint Mary's students and staff, as well as neighbors in the area. Some plots have been rented to members for personal use. Others are communal plots where collective gardening allows for a collaborative effort in maintaining and caring for the plants growing there. It's not too late to get involved with the gardens at SMU if you would like to get your hands dirty this summer. Send us an email at smugarden@gmail.com to learn more about how you can participate! (Continued on following page...)

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One of the collective gardening plots volunteers and members of the SMU Community Garden have created is an Herb Spiral as the garden's center piece. An Herb Spiral is a permaculture method and is built to accommodate different herbs requiring varying soil depth, moisture, drainage, and exposure to sunlight. The SMU herb spiral already has an impressive collection of culinary herbs:

German Chamomile: is an erect annual herb with small white and yellow (daisy-like) flowers, it is used to make chamomile tea and has a number of medicinal properties.

Sage: the leaves are used to season dressings for meat and cheese. Diameter of the plant can exceed 3 feet. The leaves should be harvested before the flowers bloom and left to dry out of direct sunlight and in a room with good ventilation. The foliage attracts bees, birds and butterflies.

Chives: is a perennial herb whose small, slender, hollow leaves are chopped fine and used in stews, soups, or salads. It produces small round heads of purple flowers which can also be chopped in salads and eaten. It prefers humus-rich, well drained soil.

Basil: is a sweet herb of the mint family. It is an annual plant that can grow to 18 inches. It produces small white or purple flowers but its leaves are cut over the growing season to be used fresh or dried. Its aromatic foliage attracts bees, birds, and butterflies.

Spearmint: is a hardy perennial herb grown for its leaves to make tea, or to flavor jellies or vinegar to be served with meat. It readily spreads and enjoys rich, moist, well drained soil.

Dill: is an annual or biennial herb of the Parsley Family grown for its bitter seeds to flavor the popular dill (cucumber) pickle. Dill can be planted either in the spring or fall, if planted in the spring it will produce seeds the same season. The leaves can also be chopped and used soups, salads, and many other dishes. It prefers full sun and loose, well drained soil.

Parsley: is a biennial herb, grown as an annual. There are many different horticultural varieties. The leaves are used to flavor meat, soups, salads, or popularly used as garish in America. Parsley leaves can be used fresh throughout the season or dried to be used over the winter. Parsley has a long taproot so brings up minerals and nutrients for other plants that have shorter root systems. It does well in nitrogen rich soil and requires at least 5 hours of full sun per day.

Lemon Balm: is a perennial sweet herb of the Mint Family. The leaves are used as a seasoning and traditionally used as medicine. Lemon balm requires constantly moist soil and can tolerate partial shade, but prefers full sun. It can be invasive. Remove the flowers late summer to prevent volunteer seedlings the next season.





DriveWiser.ca Summer Driving Tips



Let us be bold and say that summer is finally here! It may be a little wet and cool, but for the most part things are heating up across the province. With the warmer weather comes more opportunities to see this great province by vehicle. Here are some tips on how to save fuel, reduce your greenhouse gas emissions and impact on air quality.

#1 – Slow your roll – Aerodynamic drag forces an engine to work harder and use more fuel. By decreasing your highway speeds to 100km/h is not only safer, but it will increase your fuel economy by as much as 20 percent. Remember, 120km/h burns 30% more fuel than 90.

#2 – Maintain a steady speed – Using cruise control on the highway helps maintain more consistent fuel delivery, and when combined with slowing down, can improve fuel economy. This feature is best on flat surfaces as your engine will use more fuel to maintain that speed going uphill.

#3 – Reduce the Revs – I'm not talking about the beverage available at dance clubs. Driving in gears which rev the engine wastes fuel. With automatic transmissions, let the computer determine the proper gear. In manuals, choose the gear with the lowest rpm which doesn't risk stalling.

#4 – Maximize momentum – "Jackrabbit" driving might get you off the line faster, but it will get you empty faster too; lowering mileage by as much as 33 percent. Engines require the most fuel when accelerating from a full stop, so apply the gas moderately and coast as much as possible.

#5 – Proper Tire Pressure – Not only are under-inflated tires dangerous, but they can reduce your fuel economy by up to 4 percent. So keep your tires inflated to the recommended pressure. Refer to your car door jam or owners' manual and use a pressure gauge on cold tires.

#6 – Leave behind the junk in trunk – All that extra weight requires extra power and extra fuel from your engine. For every 100 pounds, fuel economy is reduced by 2 percent, especially if you drive a smaller, lighter car.

#7 – Have regular dates with your service station - Not only will this help your car last longer, but you'll also see better fuel economy. Dirty oil, air filters and waste more fuel and harm your engine.

#8 – Idling gets you nowhere – Unnecessary idling is one of the most common ways of wasting fuel. What about "warming up" the engine? In most every climate, modern fuel injected vehicles don't require warming up, you need to drive them to get them at their most efficient. If you're not moving or about to move, turn off the engine.

#9 – Make WiserTrips – If you're going out for an errand run, plan all of your stops ahead of time to avoid unnecessary driving. And try not to drive during rush hour; the constant starting, stopping and idling hurts fuel economy.

#10 – Park the Car – Walk, bicycle, car pool and take public transportation whenever you can. It not only saves fuel, but you can also get a great workout in the process!

