

“GREENING” THE HOME.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever has”. Margaret Meade.

TRIM YOUR GIRTH AND YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT (The total amount of greenhouse gasses produced to directly or indirectly support human activities, usually expressed in equivalent tones of carbon dioxide).

Until labels on food and drink supply some measure of carbon footprint (taking into account their manufacture, production and transportation) here are some guidelines to provide you with the greenest choices.

Support local industry – This supports local jobs, agriculture and industry. Buy the local equivalent of meat, cheese, wine, chocolate, fruit and vegetables. Imported goods travel by sea, air and land at a high cost to carbon emissions.

Eat less energy-intensive animal foods – A plant-based, whole-food diet is the healthiest.

Buy fruit and vegetables in season – They are cheaper and fresher. With cold storage, hothouses and imports we have lost track of seasonal products.

Buy certified organic – Organic food should be GM (genetically modified) free as well as pesticide and additive free and are richer in nutrients.

Avoid unprocessed foods – Learn to read labels on foods. Additive free products use less energy to produce and are richer in nutrients and dietary fibre.

Make your own food – Rediscover the pleasures of home cooking and shared family meals. Avoid pre-cooked foods. Left-over foods can be stored and creatively integrated at your next meal.

Grow your own food – This will reduce greenhouse gas emissions especially if we compost our vegetable food waste.

Choose products with no or minimal packaging – Or choose containers that can be recycled. Demonstrate your disapproval by handing back excess packaging.

Say “NO” to plastic shopping bags – Their manufacture produces greenhouse gasses, clog up landfill sites and are a blight to the environment. When shopping take along your own containers and ask for a box if you have forgotten your shopping bag at home. When weighing and buying the fruit and vegetables refuse plastic bags – be creative when it comes to loose items.

Drink water from the tap – Bottled water carries a high environmental cost of bottling and transport. If you are unsure about the water quality you can boil or filter it.

Source: ZIPPLIES, R. 2008. *Bending the Curve*. Africa Geographic (Pty) Ltd. Cape Town.