



Eco-Tips for Going Greener

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Some of you may know one of my other passions besides being a naturopathic physician is my involvement in the Sierra Club. Although my real interest in this organization is outings, and helping people get outdoors, I also have an interest in sustainability and “going greener.” There’s so much information available in the media and on the internet, it is often difficult to sort out what’s important. So, I thought I would begin a simple series of “Tips for Going Greener” to give you my opinions on how to make greener choices. Going greener is not only good for your business but for you, personally. Saving money, and saving the planet go hand in hand.

How Green is Your Cuisine?

Are you the chef in the household, or do you prefer to have someone else do the cooking? Do you realize some cooking choices are “greener” than others –e.g. more eco-friendly, sustainable, and easier on the planet. Check out the following to find out about your green cooking choices. (If you hate quizzes, simply skip to the answers)

- 1. At your get-togethers, your fresh peach cobbler is the hit of the party. When is the best time to prepare your fabulous dish?**
 - a. Easter
 - b. Fourth of July
 - c. Thanksgiving
 - d. Hanukkah
- 2. When you bake your fabulous pie, you’ll use:**
 - a. an oven-safe glass pie plate, greased with butter
 - b. a non-stick metal pie pan
 - c. a colorful new silicone bakeware pie pan
- 3. Which of the following dishes contributes most to deforestation?**
 - a. caesar salad with grilled chicken
 - b. filet mignon
 - c. vegetable soup with barley
- 4. Your (partner, spouse, guest, etc.) is a pescatarian (fish eating vegetarian), so you are choosing a fresh catch for dinner. Which choice is best for the environment?**
 - a. farmed salmon
 - b. U.S. farmed tilapia
 - c. orange roughy
- 5. When cutting up veggies from your local farmer’s market, CSA or your own garden, you should cut them on:**
 - a. a plastic cutting board
 - b. a wooden cutting board
 - c. the Columbian or Oregonian food section
 - d. the Wall Street Journal
- 6. You are following your naturopathic doctor’s advice and drinking green tea instead of coffee. If you are heating only one mug of water for your tea, which of these is the most energy efficient?**
 - a. microwave
 - b. electric stove
 - c. gas stove

7. **Guests at your cocktail party want their martinis shaken, not stirred. You'll fill the shaker with ice cubes:**
 - a. you made using a tray placed in your freezer
 - b. served from your freezer's icemaker, using the door dispenser, so you don't have to open the door of the freezer.
 - c. purchased in a bag at the local convenience store

8. **The best ecological way to get rid of your food scraps is to:**
 - a. toss them in the trash or garbage disposal
 - b. give them to your dog (s)
 - c. contact the food bank or food rescue program that accepts leftovers
 - d. put them in the compost or worm bin

9. **When you shop for things like cereal, nuts, grains, rice and dried fruits, you:**
 - a. buy in bulk from Freddeys, Safeway, New Seasons, Whole Foods, etc.
 - b. buy in bulk from big-box stores like Costco, Walmart and Winco
 - c. buy smaller portions so you don't waste food

10. **With the help of one of your realtor friends you managed to buy a fixer-upper and want to go greener on your kitchen remodel. What type of kitchen countertop should you choose?**
 - a. 100% recycled glass or paper, or Terrazzo with greater than 80% recycled content
 - b. cement, either a product that exists today or one of the emerging eco-cements coming out in the next couple of years.
 - c. stainless steel
 - d. granite, marble, or other stone
 - e. laminate, Corian, Formica or other synthetic plastic-based product

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- Answers: 1 b. Fourth of July –consume fruits and vegetables when they are in season locally**
- 2 a. Glass is cheap, easiest to recycle and heats evenly**
- 3 b. Raising cattle and their feed is a leading cause of deforestation**
- 4 c. U.S. farmed tilapia minimizes pollution and escapes**
- 5 b. Lignins in wood are somewhat antibacterial-use sustainable or sustainably harvested wood for your cutting board.**
- 6 a. The microwave is more efficient for one mug of tea (but not necessarily healthier)**
- 7 a. Make it yourself saves 10% of the refrigerator's energy**
- 8 c/d Put them in the compost or worm bin. Contact local food rescue program or Food Bank.**
- 9a. Buy from store bins, re-use your bags, save packaging and select your own quantity.**
- 10a. Choose a recycled countertop. Terazzo is 70-90% recycled glass and cement. Cement can also be made from fly ash—a recycled material.**

Certainly, there is more than one criteria for making better decisions. For example, if your primary goal is to support your business associates, then you may choose different bakeware or countertops. If you have pets and have a small quantity, you may feed them leftovers rather than taking time to contact local food rescue programs. If you don't believe microwaves are healthy, then you'll choose other cooking options. Over time, more informed consumers will result in more ecological choices.

If you have questions or suggestions for future topics, please feel free to send me an e-mail drbenton@comcast.net.

