SAVE OUR FUTURE

Beloved Earth Community of Riverside Church

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Plastics to Avoid; Actions on Plastic; Nutritious Guacamole

AND, IF YOU REALLY WANT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT PLASTICS, JOIN THE EFFORTS OF BEYOND PLASTICS .

You can do learn more by signing up for Beyond Plastics' newsletter, and register to attend their free programs, classes and grassroots activism training sessions on Zoom at www.beyondplastics.org. Beyond Plastics "pairs the wisdom and experience of environmental policy experts with the energy and creativity of grassroots advocates to build a vibrant and effective movement to end plastic pollution. We use our deep policy and advocacy expertise to build a well-informed, effective movement seeking to achieve the institutional, economic, and societal changes needed to save our planet, and ourselves, from the negative health, climate, and environmental impacts of the production, usage, and disposal of plastics.

Goals

It will take changes at every level of our economy and civil life to stem the tide of plastic pollution. Individuals need to be moved to act in their personal lives and take action as part of a growing movement; corporations need to feel the pressure to initiate changes in their purchasing and packaging habits; governments need to impose bans and adopt laws that require extended producer responsibility...Beyond Plastics seeks to educate the media, policymakers, and the public on the plastic pollution crisis; encourage businesses to eliminate single-use plastics; train students to become leaders in the anti-plastics movement; and help block new plastic manufacturing and plastic burning facilities."

LOOK FOR RECYCLING PLACES AT RIVERSIDE:
Outside the Multipurpose Room and in MLK.
Ideally it will be good to have this recycling station in more than one place; especially the dining area.

PLASTICS IN OUR LIVES: IS THERE A SOLUTION?

It's hard to imagine a world without single-use disposable plastic, but there was a time! Plastic water bottles only became widespread in the 1970s. We began to recycle them in the 1990s.

Every day we rely on plastic bottles, jars, to-go containers and utensils. Sadly, most plastics are not recycled. They end up in landfills and oceans.

Black plastic is particularly unlikely to be recycled, since it can't be detected by infrared readers in the sorting process at automated recycling facilities, and sorting by hand is too slow and too expensive.

https://scjohnson.com/en/news-stories/blog/black-plastic-probably-not-being-recycled

We can choose a different color - and ask companies to do the same. We can choose reusable utensils, plates and cups rather than disposable ones.

What Can We Do at Riverside?

We use a surprising quantity of water bottles, plastic utensils, and single-use cups and plates at Riverside. We could bring our own refillable water bottles, or drink from water fountains. We could ask caterers at Riverside, and at work, not to provide black plastic utensils and plates, or - better yet - choose disposables that can be composted, as the Weekday School has done. We could set up compost containers. We could be sure that recycling bins and trash bins are clearly marked and placed next to one another wherever food is served.

Worried about Cooking with Plastic?

Last year, news reports warned about using black plastic spatulas and cooking spoons, because some were made from recycled electronics which contained flame retardants.

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Plastics in Our Lives. (continue from p.1)

Follow-up stories noted that those lab tests were done by submerging utensils in hot cooking oil for 15 minutes, as few people ever do. Then a math error further exaggerated the risk tenfold. https://www.nytimes.com/2024/12/10/well/black-plastic-health.html , https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2024/12/18/black-plastic-kitchen-utensils-study-risk/77049209007/ , (Science of The Total Environment Volumes 610–611, 1 January 2018, Pages 1138-1146).

The potential risks of microplastic particles still aren't fully understood, though, so minimizing exposure makes sense. Avoid plastic containers whenever possible, particularly black plastics, and avoid reheating food in them. Transfer food to a ceramic plate instead before microwaving. https://toxicfreefuture.org/update-study-correction-does-not-impact-conclusion/

Healthy and Easy November Recipe

Heart smart + fiber rich: Creamy avocado gives mainly monounsaturated fats and fiber that support healthy cholesterol when they replace saturated fats. Avocado has Omega3 option available: Get a chia / walnut / flax adding for a plant-based omega3 boost (ALA). Naturally nutritious avocado brings potassium, folate, vitamin E—and lutein for eye health.

Fresh Guacamole

Ingredients

- 2 tsp fresh lime juice (10 ml)
- 2 tbsp very finely minced white onion (about 20 g)
- 1 Tbsp chopped cilantro leaves (about 5 g)
- 1–2 tsp minced jalapeño (seeded for mild)
- Salt: 1/8 tsp Morton kosher (or 1/4 tsp Diamond Crystal), to start but measure salt to taste.

Optional: 1 Tbsp seeded, diced tomato; pinch ground cumin

1. **Method:**Quickmellow the onions: In a large bowl, combine onion, lime juice, and salt. Let sit 5 minutes. (This lightly cures the onion and infuses the lime with flavor.)
2. Prep avocados: Halve, pit, and scoop. Add to the bowl.
3. Mash smart: Mash half the avocado fairly smooth; leave the rest chunky for great texture.
4. Fold and finish: Stir in jalapeño, cilantro, and (if using) tomato and cumin. Taste with a chip. Adjust salt and lime so it tastes bright on a chip, not just a spoon.

Serve: Transfer to a wide bowl, garnish with a little extra cilantro and a few onion bits.

Beloved Earth Community

We call on Riversiders to protest the climate crisis and care for the Earth through educational programs, greening the church, changing our lifestyles, and courageous political actions. For more information or to join, contact: Claudia Canasto <canastoclachi@gmail.com>, Tom Goodhue <twgoodhue@gmail.com> or Dana Minaya <danaminaya@gmail.com>

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- The next Beloved Earth Meeting: December 6, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. on Zoom. Watch for details.
- To view this S.O.F. online, visit www.trcnyc.org/belovedearthnewsletter

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