

## consumption habits

Reduce the environmental impact of what you consume – from the item's production to its disposal.

### 3 SOURCE FOR SUSTAINABLE BUILDING MATERIALS

Building or renovating your home? Choose green building materials like recycled wood – like reclaimed timber from Sin Siong Lim Saw Mill at 2 Sungei Kadut Street 5 (David tel: 9731-0779). Look for green certification on building or decor materials like carpets, wall coverings and laminates. Formica laminates are GreenGuard certified for their low emissions of volatile organic content (VOC), while the latest Jotun Jotashield Extreme exterior paint was given the Green Label Singapore for its heat-reflective technology and low VOC content.

### 4 USE RECYCLED PRODUCTS

Eat your rice in a bowl made of rice husks. This by-product of rice harvesting is now turned into tough tableware by Malaysian firm Melsom Biodegradable using an eco-friendly process. Microwaveable and dishwasher-safe, they even come with an all-natural shine due to the husk's inherent properties. The affordable range of cutlery, tableware and cutting boards (priced between \$2.50 and \$33.00) are soon to be available locally, and can currently be bought from the company's showroom in Puchong, Kuala Lumpur. Check out [www.melsombiodegradable.com](http://www.melsombiodegradable.com)

### 5 CHOOSE BIOPLASTICS

Pick Cornware over plastic disposable tableware for your gatherings. Made from corn and yam, they are 100 per cent biodegradable and thus disintegrate 90 days after disposal instead of the 300 years taken by regular plastics. The beige hue it comes in is natural as the material is unbleached. Check out [www.olivegreen.com.sg](http://www.olivegreen.com.sg) to find out more. Competitively priced, plates, bowls and cutlery are sold in packs of 20, from \$0.85 per packet of Chinese spoons to \$4.50 for nine-inch plates, at selected Cold Storage and Fairprice outlets, Carrefour and other locations.



*Buying eco-friendly products is not only good for the environment but for your health too!*

### 6 CHOOSE BIODEGRADABLE FOOD PACKAGING

If it's not convenient to bring your own takeaway food containers, look for greener alternatives to styrofoam or plastic packaging. For example, biodegradable paper takeaway containers by local company Microwave Packaging. It's made from certified sustainable sources of wood and won the Green Innovation Award 2008. Visit [www.microwave-packaging.com](http://www.microwave-packaging.com) for details.

### 7 READ YOUR LABELS

Soon product labels will tell you information on the environmental and social impact of the item as well, if the world's largest retailer, Wal-Mart, has its way. In a recent report by The New York Times, Wal-Mart is developing a universal eco-rating system together with their suppliers around the world. The hope is that this system will be adopted by other retailers as well, so as to cater to the increasing demand for eco-friendly products. >