

# Killhope Green Newsletter

## INTRODUCTION

*Doesn't it make a difference now that the days are getting longer and it feels like spring is almost here.*

*In honour of this, I've decided to put lots of information and articles in the newsletter about growing your own veg and seasonal food.*

*You can also learn all about what a carbon footprint is, how you can work out what your own is, and even how you can take steps to reducing it.*

*If you have any suggestions for articles for the next newsletters you can let me know either using the feedback form on the website or by completing one of our green suggestion slips in reception.*

*I look forward to hearing your ideas.*

*Thanks Helen*

### **What to do in your garden now - February 2007**

Now that the days are lengthening, try and get out into the garden and complete those pruning and tidying tasks before spring growth takes off. Get on top of the weeding tasks, too.

### **In this Issue**

	Page
Carbon Footprint	2-3
Craft Corner	4
Website	5
Soapnuts	5
Grow your own Veg	6
Seasonal Food	7
Recipe	8

# Carbon Footprint

There have been a lot of articles in the press recently about carbon footprints, but rarely is it explained in detail what a carbon footprint is, how you can work out what yours is and what you can do to reduce it.

## What is a carbon footprint ?

Global warming is linked to the amount of carbon and other greenhouse gases being emitted into the atmosphere. As individuals, almost everything we do leads to the release of carbon into the atmosphere whether that's boiling a kettle, turning your heating up in the winter or taking a Caribbean holiday.

Your carbon footprint gives an indication of your impact on the environment, which is caused by the burning of fossil fuels such as oil and gas. It is measured in tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emitted per year. Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas and as such increases global warming.

A carbon footprint is made up of two parts:

1. The **primary footprint** is a measure of our direct emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> from the burning of fossil fuels including domestic energy consumption and transportation (e.g. car and plane).
2. The **secondary footprint** is a measure of the indirect CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the whole lifecycle of products we use - those associated with their manufacture and eventual breakdown. Examples include the food we buy, how and where it was grown and how far its travelled to get to us. What chemicals were used in its production and where and how those chemicals were made.

The most useful place to start in terms of reducing your carbon footprint is to actually find out what yours is! Then you can see in which areas of your life you are contributing the most CO<sub>2</sub>. Once you know this you can find ways of reducing it.

## **Calculating your Carbon Footprint.**

There are lots of websites available which will calculate your carbon footprint for you.

I've found a good site [www.carboncalculator.co.uk](http://www.carboncalculator.co.uk) which not only works out your carbon footprint from your travel, heating and electricity but also from your shopping as well. It is a very comprehensive site and provides a lot of useful information about carbon footprints.

If you want to calculate your carbon footprint you will need to have an idea of your heating and electricity costs, your mileage and details of your average weekly shopping.

The average person's carbon footprint is about 10 tonnes, which is equivalent to filling 24 million balloons with carbon. This figure includes your proportion of the UK's emissions from industry, so the carbon footprint calculated by Carbon

Calculator will be much lower - it is an indication of the carbon emissions you are directly responsible for.

### **How can I reduce my carbon footprint?**

Once you've calculated your carbon footprint there are lots of ways you can try and reduce it. I've included a few suggestions below.

If you switch your home to a 'green' electricity tariff you will save around 1420 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> over a year and if you hang your washing out to dry rather than using a tumble drier you can save around 900 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>.

In terms of travel, if you car share you can save 730 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>, and even more astonishing is that if you use the channel tunnel instead of flying to France you will save 2000 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>.

Composting and recycling when possible can reduce the carbon emitted due to disposal of your waste by 40%.

On average, every tonne of food comes with quarter of a tonne of packaging, which then has to be disposed of somehow - buy food with less packaging.

# CRAFT CORNER

## Eggshell Plant Pots

Make and decorate tiny eggshell plant pots for Easter. Then watch your plants grow.

What you need

- Eggshells
- Compost
- Grass seeds or bean seeds
- Paint or Felt tip pens
- Glue
- A small square of cardboard or a small piece of a pipe cleaner.

### Method

1. Clean eggshells and dry them gently.
2. To give the tiny plant pot a solid base, glue a small square of cardboard to the bottom of the eggshell (or use a small piece of pipe cleaner twisted into a circle).
3. Using paint or pens, or whatever sparkly bits and bobs you can find, decorate the eggshells. Let the paint dry.
4. Put compost in the eggshells (fill a little over half way). Add lots of grass seeds or two bean seeds.
5. Cover the seeds with a little bit of compost, and sprinkle lightly with water.
6. When the seeds sprout, put the tiny plant pot in a sunny spot and enjoy.

## Killhope Website

I can proudly announce the launch of the new Green Killhope pages on the Killhope website. The webpages contain information on what we're doing at Killhope, the awards we've won, our newsletter and what you can do to help the environment.

You can also find a green competition in the Kids Newsletter where you can win a whole host of green goodies.

Our website also has a feedback button where you can let us know your green ideas, suggestions and comments.

I look forward to hearing from you all.

## SOAPNUTS

The newest member of the Killhope green team, Janet, has been wowing us all recently with her excitement about soap nuts!

Soapnuts grow on the *Sapindus Mukorosse* tree in India and Nepal and are a 100% natural product. The nuts are used in the pharmaceutical industry and the shells are now being used as a natural detergent for the home.

Janet tells me that she has been using soapnuts to replace a variety of cleaning and beauty products at home. Their main use is to replace washing powder and softener in the washing machine. They're great for cleaning clothes and as they contain no added chemicals are not only good for the environment but also for people who suffer from skin complaints or sensitive skin. They can be used in the dishwasher, and if boiled up, the liquid can be used to replace regular washing up liquid. The liquid can also be used as a shampoo and I'm told that when you've finished boiling them up if you wrap them in a cloth they are a marvel for making your chrome taps shine!!

That's not all! Once they've lost their ability to be 'soapy' you can just toss them onto the compost heap. You'll have a beautiful clean house and a clean conscience to boot!

# GROW YOUR OWN VEG

Wherever you live and whatever you earn, food is essential for life. What we eat and how it is produced is a big issue at the moment. Over 75% of our food is bought from supermarkets and the average distance that food has travelled to get to our table has doubled in the last 20 years.

Why not have a go at growing your own fruit and veg, and even better go organic.

Now is the time to order a seed catalogue and start planning what herbs or vegetables you want to grow in your garden, window box or kitchen windowsill.

Organic gardening is **low maintenance**, because by choosing the right plants for the location, planting them in beneficial combinations and mulching, you are setting the garden up to manage itself.

To save money, **plant crops that are expensive to buy in the supermarket**, rather than the cheaper, readily available crops. Go for crops that are easy to grow, like rocket and asparagus.

**Save on the cost of a greenhouse** by growing plants that are sown directly into the ground. If your neighbour is planting French beans, you could plant runner beans and swap the surplus - and watch your **gardening community** flourish!

## 5 top tips to get you started on the road to organic gardening

Use compost to improve the soil and help plants grow.

Try controlling pests like slugs with water or beer-filled traps (cups sunk into the ground).

Try smothering weeds with porous plastic sheeting or cardboard which blocks out the light.

Attract wildlife that feeds on pests. You can do this by avoiding pesticides and making sure your garden is not too tidy. This will encourage wildlife to set up home.

Experiment with companion planting. Marigolds put off pests and attract useful insects. Organic gardening books list other useful plant combinations.

# Seasonal Food

There are a number of good reasons to eat more local, seasonal food:

- to reduce the energy (and associated CO2 emissions) needed to grow and transport the food we eat.
- to avoid paying a premium for food that is scarcer or has travelled a long way.
- to support the local economy.
- to reconnect with nature's cycles and the passing of time.
- seasonal food is fresher and so tends to be tastier and more nutritious.

## What's in Season Now?

**VEGETABLES** - cauliflower, celeriac, chicory, Jerusalem artichoke, kale, leeks, parsnips, potatoes, purple sprouting broccoli, rhubarb, swede.

**FRUIT & NUTS** - bananas, blood oranges, kiwi fruit, lemons, oranges, passion fruit, pineapple, pomegranate

**MEAT** - guinea fowl, hare

**FISH & SEAFOOD** - brill, cockles, cod, haddock, halibut, hake, john dory, lemon sole, mussels, oysters, salmon

# Fettuccine with purple sprouting broccoli

Try this tasty recipe for seasonal purple sprouting broccoli.

## Ingredients

1 onion, finely diced  
1 organic garlic clove, finely chopped  
4 anchovy fillets, finely chopped  
2 tsp capers, rinsed and chopped  
1 tsp rosemary leaves  
1 tsp chopped flat leaf parsley  
4 tsp extra virgin olive oil  
285g/10oz purple sprouting broccoli  
450g/1lb fresh fettuccine  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  lemon, juice only  
salt and freshly ground black pepper  
parmesan shavings, to serve

## Method

1. Cook first six ingredients in the olive oil, until the onions have softened without colouring.
2. Meanwhile, boil the broccoli in plenty of boiling salted water for 2 minutes, add the fettuccine and stir for 3 minutes - remove and drain when the pasta is cooked (the broccoli will have broken up slightly).
3. Place the pasta and broccoli in a bowl and combine with the hot dressing; add lemon juice and season to taste. Serve with shavings of parmesan.