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VET SUSTAINABILITY KIT

Smart shopping & food



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Area's name: Smart shopping & food

Questions/statements related to the area

No.	Question/statement	Always	Often	Rarely	Never	N/A
For individuals						
1.	I try to buy locally-produced goods					
2.	I avoid disposable products					
3.	I try to buy fruits and vegetables in bulk (unpackaged)					
4.	I take my own reusable packing bags when shopping					
5.	I pack vegetables and fruits in my own bags for weighing					
6.	I try to refuse the plastic bags offered by sellers					
7.	I try to buy as many products as possible in bulk (without packaging or without additional inner packaging)					
8.	I buy bread in bulk (without packaging)					
9.	I consciously choose products marked with eco-labels					
10.	I go shopping with a list					
11.	I avoid unplanned purchases					
12.	I try not to succumb to promotions					
13.	Whenever possible, I choose products made of recycled materials					



14.	I choose glass containers instead of plastic ones					
15.	I don't waste food (I buy what I really need and eat it all or give it away)					
16.	I try to repair damaged items/equipment before I buy new one					
17.	I try to sell or give away things I don't need to give them a second life					
18.	When I have shopping plans, I verify the possibility of buying a used item					
For organisations						
1.	The organisation does not ignore information on the composition and origin of food when making purchasing decisions for the company					
2.	The organisation takes into account ecological and social criteria when selecting product suppliers					
3.	The organisation takes into account ecological and social criteria when selecting service providers					
4.	The organisation does not purchase products from suppliers who do not adhere to labour, human rights or environmental standards					
5.	We do not use disposable or plastic packaging in the organisation					

Self-assessment instruction for individuals:

For each answer "always" and "often" you get 1 point.

Number of points: *from 18 to 14 - You are doing great and supporting the sustainable development of our planet - keep going.*

Number of points: *from 13 to 9 - It is noticeable that you are working for the sustainable development of our planet - continue like this and think about what else you could do.*

Number of points: *from 8 to 4 - You take some steps for the sustainable development of the planet, but it would be worth expanding your activities. Think about what changes you could make.*

Number of points: *from 3 to 0 - This is rather the beginning of your path for the sustainable development of our planet. Don't be discouraged and think about what you could do. Even the little things make a big difference if a lot of people do them.*

Useful information

Scientific facts

1. The global amount of food wasted is estimated at 1.6 billion tonnes of "primary product equivalent". The total food waste is 1.3 billion tonnes.
2. The carbon footprint of food waste is estimated at 3.3 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent of greenhouse gases released annually into the atmosphere.
3. The total amount of water used for food production each year that is lost or wasted (250 km³) is equivalent to three times the volume of Lake Geneva.
4. Similarly, 1.4 billion hectares of land - 28 percent of the world's agricultural land - is used annually to produce food that is lost or wasted.
5. Agriculture is responsible for most of the threats to endangered plant and animal species tracked by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
6. A small percentage of all food waste is composted: a large proportion of it ends up in landfills and makes up a large proportion of municipal solid waste. Methane emissions from landfills are one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions from the waste sector.
7. Annually, home composting can manage 150 kg of food waste per household.
8. Developing countries suffer greater food losses during agricultural production, while middle- and high-income regions tend to experience greater food waste at the retail and consumer levels.
9. The direct economic consequences of food waste (excluding fish and seafood) reach \$750 billion a year. More than a third of the world's food is lost or wasted each year.



10. Every week, a Polish household throws away on average almost 4 kilograms of food, of which over 2 kilograms are edible products.
11. 15% of products are wasted at the stage of agricultural production, the same in processing. Less than 1% is wasted during transport and storage, in trade it is about 7%, and in gastronomy a little over 1%. The most - up to 60% of food, i.e. almost 3 million tonnes, is food thrown away in households.
12. According to estimates, 153.5 million tonnes of food are wasted in the EU every year.
13. Meanwhile, a quarter of the food wasted in Europe would be enough to feed almost a billion people suffering from hunger today.
14. Exceeding the best-before date or the date of minimum durability is the main cause of food waste in Poland, according to the Report of the Federation of Polish Food Banks „Nie Marnuj Jedzenia 2020” (Eng. "Do Not Waste Food 2020"), https://bankizywnosci.pl/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Raport_NieMarnujJedzenia_2020.pdf. For this reason, products such as packaged meat (42.5%), fresh products, e.g. milk or cold cuts (58.6%), frozen products (33.3%), but also packaged bread (46%) or dry products – such as flour, groats or pasta (51.7%) were discarded.
15. 63 percent of consumers across Europe have started to choose shops offering organic products, and consumers are more likely to pay attention to the origin of the products they buy, their value and quality certificates.
16. Although 84 percent of buyers are willing to make decisions based on the price of the goods, even more - 89 percent – takes into account their quality.
17. 45% of Poles declare that instead of buying something new, they try to repair something they already have. Every third person uses the rental, a similar percentage exchanges things.
18. 38% of Poles admit that they buy more than they really need. They explain it mainly with attractive promotions (52%) and bad habits (39%).
19. 71% of consumers in the last six months chose a product based on its proven sustainability.
20. 80% of consumers said that they would be interested in purchasing products in reusable packaging to reduce the negative impact on the environment.
21. 55% of consumers are willing to pay more for organic brands.
22. 84% of customers say that poor environmental practices scare them away from a given brand or company.
23. 35% of consumers said that they choose sustainable products to help protect the environment, 37% look for products with environmentally friendly packaging, and 41% avoid using plastic whenever possible





INDIVIDUALS:

- Reduce food waste by planning your shopping wisely, i.e. limiting unnecessary buying, even by using what we may have had in our pantry for a long time. (<https://www.malopolska.pl/aktualnosci/srodowisko/przemyslne-zakupy-spozywcze-i-niemarnowanie-jedzenia>)
- Make wise consumer choices, i.e. buy ecologically. Give up plastic in favour of glass or paper. (<https://hempking.eu/pl/7-porad-na-ekologiczne-zakupy/>)
- Make a shopping list - before going to the store, prepare a shopping list and try to follow it strictly. (<https://wlaczoszczedzanie.pl/zakupy/>)
- Don't buy on impulse - for example, it's not worth going to the store hungry, because it ends up buying too much or unnecessary food. Also, don't be fooled by ads, promotions, sales and special offers. Before you buy a piece of clothing on the spur of the moment, think about whether something similar is not already lying in the bottom of your wardrobe. (<https://wlaczoszczedzanie.pl/zakupy/>)

- Use reusable bags when shopping. (<https://hempking.eu/pl/7-porad-na-ekologiczne-zakupy/>)
- Choose products marked with the "eco" or "organic" symbol and check whether they really are so (this is primarily evidenced by the appropriate certificates). (<https://hempking.eu/pl/7-porad-na-ekologiczne-zakupy/>)
- Buy second-hand things - books, toys, board games, shoes, furniture. (<https://wlaczoszczedzanie.pl/zakupy/>)
- Apply the 6R Principle, i.e. Rethink, Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recover. The 6R principle promotes an environmentally sound lifestyle, consumption of goods and waste treatment. The order of these words is not accidental. The greatest benefits for the environment are brought by limiting excessive consumption, multiple use - i.e. recognizing the product as waste as late as possible, as well as repairing and conscious approach to consumption. Finally, their recovery helps to reduce the environmental burden associated with obtaining a product from virgin raw materials and the aforementioned accumulation of waste. (https://ekonsument.pl/s33_zasada_6r.html)



ORGANISATIONS:

- Choose company equipment with an energy-saving mode. (<https://www.mbank.pl/mbank-news/strefa-przedsiębiorcy/biznesowe-podpowiedzi/jak-byc-eko-w-biznesie.html>)
- Think about recycled furniture. (<https://www.mbank.pl/mbank-news/strefa-przedsiębiorcy/biznesowe-podpowiedzi/jak-byc-eko-w-biznesie.html>)
- Familiarize yourself with the policy of the company you want to source from. If you care about being eco-friendly, it is worth that your supplier not only offers ecological packaging, but also cares about the natural environment during its production. (<https://firma.rp.pl/biznes/art18930291-ekologiczne-opakowania-dla-firm-gdzie-kupic-dlaczego-to-takie-wazne>)
- Shop for eco-friendly office supplies. Most offices rely on a regular supply of paper. If you can't completely give up paper, switch to recycled paper. In addition to paper, companies can switch to greener versions of many office supplies. Instead of disposable plastic cutlery in the kitchen, consider using reusable cutlery and dishes. You can also switch to cutlery and plates made of ecological bamboo. Your company can also eliminate disposable paper cups at the water dispenser and encourage employees to use a reusable bottle. (<https://www.vlises.com/2022/08/08/fostering-more-sustainable-business/>)



- Compost - The workplace is the perfect place to start a composting program. All lunch leftovers can be turned into soil instead of methane. A banana peel thrown into compost decomposes quickly and turns into soil in our gardens and parks. (<https://www.greenbiz.com/article/prioritizing-planet-11-ways-small-businesses-can-become-more-eco-friendly>)
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EDUCATIONAL TOOLS

Eco-expert: ways to avoid food waste (duration: 5-6 mins)

Description:

This dynamic game-like exercise is aimed at a group of participants to raise their awareness about avoiding food waste by coming up with a variety of ways. The aim of the exercise is to stimulate creativity and interaction between the participants, as well as to promote ecological practices related to the purchase and use of food. The exercise lasts about 5 minutes and can be used as an effective ice-breaker during ecology classes.

Instructions:

- 1. The participants form a circle.*
- 2. The chosen facilitator explains the rules of the game.*
- 3. The leader appoints the first "Eco-expert" - the person who starts the game.*
- 4. The "eco-expert" has 10 seconds to come up with and name one way to avoid food waste.*
- 5. The next person in the circle has 10 seconds to add their way to the previous one.*
- 6. The game continues and each person in the circle has 10 seconds to add another way.*
- 7. The game continues until everyone has a chance to share their way.*

The exercise does not require any additional materials. It can be performed without the use of any objects. It's important to keep a fast pace and limit the time for thinking up ways to 10 seconds per person. This will allow for the active involvement of all the participants and make the exercise last about 5 minutes.

Shopping List (duration: 10-15 mins)

Materials needed: Sheets of paper, pens.

Description:

This group exercise focuses on creating a green shopping list and developing green buying strategies.

The participants work in pairs or small groups, so that they will have the opportunity to discuss and think together about ecological and sustainable products that can be included in the ecological shopping list.

During the exercise, the participants will be introduced to the subject of green shopping by providing relevant information and explanations regarding the conscious choice of products and green shopping strategies. They will be encouraged to share different green shopping strategies and practices, such as preferring local and seasonal products, minimizing plastic use by using reusable bags, opting for recycled packaging, and avoiding single-use products.

Each pair/group will be provided with appropriate writing tools, such as sheets of paper and pens, so that they can make a green shopping list, taking into account the listed products and strategies. At the end of the exercise, several pairs/groups will be selected to present their shopping lists and share their strategies with the rest of the participants. During the presentation, the participants will be able to justify their choice of products and discuss the benefits of the green shopping strategies used.

The aim of this activity is to develop the participants' awareness of different approaches to green shopping and to create a space for the exchange of practical tips and inspiration. Thanks to active involvement in the process of creating an ecological shopping list, the participants will have the opportunity to improve their skills and implement ecological approach to everyday shopping.





External Digital Tools

Open Food Facts:

Website: <https://world.openfoodfacts.org/>

Description: Open Food Facts is a collaborative database of food products from around the world. Provides information on ingredients, nutrition and sustainability labels. It enables users to make informed purchasing decisions.

FoodKeeper App:

Website: <https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/foodkeeperapp/index.html>

Description: The FoodKeeper App, developed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), helps users get the most out of their food's shelf life and reduce food waste. Provides storage tips, cooking tips, and food safety information.

Good On You:

Website: <https://goodonyou.eco/>

Description: Good On You is a platform that rates fashion brands on ethics and sustainability. It provides open information on a variety of brands, helping consumers make informed decisions about their clothing purchases.





Ethical Consumer:

Website: <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/>

Description: Ethical Consumer is a platform that provides information and resources to help consumers make ethical and sustainable choices when shopping. It offers product guides, company profiles and ratings based on social and environmental criteria, enabling users to support responsible brands.

The Good Shopping Guide:

Website: <https://thegoodshoppingguide.com/>

Description: The Good Shopping Guide provides rankings and ratings for brands and companies based on their ethical and environmental practices. It covers a wide range of products and services, helping consumers make sustainable choices in all sectors.

JouleBug:

Website: <https://www.joulebug.com/>

Description: JouleBug is a mobile app that encourages and rewards users for adopting green habits and making sustainable choices. It offers challenges, tips, and resources to help users reduce their environmental impact through green shopping, energy conservation, waste reduction, and more.

Games for Sustainability:

Website: <https://raog.ca/10-environmental-games-for-adults-to-engage-in-sustainability/>

Description: A portal with suggestions for games on ecology and sustainable development.





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