

## **Halifax Shambhala Centre: Green Purchasing Tips**

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Although we can't purchase our way to a greener future, we can push the market for more environmentally conscientious goods with our purchasing choices AND begin to lighten our hefty ecological footprints. Here are some helpful hints to "going green" when shopping for the Centre and creating momentum towards **systemic** changes. While some of these choices may come at a slightly higher cost, please consider the support for long-term societal benefits

**ASK FIRST:** Do I really *need* this item? Can I borrow, rent, or purchase it second-hand? Does the centre already have one of these tucked away somewhere?

***The most sustainable product is the one you never bought in the first place.***

**GO FOR LOW:** environmental impact, that is. Is the product made of recycled material? Is it high quality for longer use, easily to fix or maintain? Were toxic materials used to make it or will it be toxic when I use or dispose of it?

(Suggestions: FSC-certified paper products, paper with high post-consumer recycled content, "Down East"/"Nature Clean" cleaning supplies)

**WHERE WILL IT GO:** when I'm done with it? Will it sit in a landfill for years?

Biodegradable, compostable, or reusable items are priorities when choosing a product.

(Suggestions: reusable cups, compostable foodware (goodbye styrofoam!))

***The Halifax Shambhala Centre sustainability policy does not allow the use of disposable cups or flatwear. Events of up to 60 people should use Halifax Centre foodware; for larger events additional foodware can be rented as required.***

**CHOOSE LOCAL :** Does the product support local businesses or artisans? And, as an added bonus, you'll save fuel and carbon emissions by not needing to transport it long distances. Try to buy Canadian food whenever possible. This produce most likely comes from Ontario or closer (PEI, NB), whereas most of the USA produce comes from the southern states or California and has a very large carbon footprint.

(Suggested suppliers: The Farmer's Market, Atlantic produce at supermarkets, Windhorse Farm for lumber)

**WELL BEING FOR ALL:** Was the product grown or made under safe and humane working conditions? Labels like "fair trade" supports that the people who made the product were treated and compensated fairly. Organic or natural products often contribute to healthy environments for workers and all species.

If you have suggestions or comments, please write Kyle Schaffhauser of the Shambhala Sustainability Initiative [kyleschaff@canada.co](mailto:kyleschaff@canada.co)