

# THE GROW METHOD

FEED YOUR FAMILY AND HELP MORE THAN  
870 MILLION PEOPLE FEED THEMSELVES



**GROW**  
FOOD. LIFE. PLANET.



**OXFAM**  
Australia

[OXFAM.ORG.AU/GROW](http://OXFAM.ORG.AU/GROW)

## THE GROW METHOD

### SIX SIMPLE STEPS TO TACKLING HUNGER

One in eight people around the world go to bed hungry every day. That's almost 900 million of us.

How can that be fair? After all, we grow enough to feed everyone.

Politicians and business have a key role in ensuring everyone has enough to eat, but we also have the power to help make the food system fairer for everyone.

We can start doing this today by taking six practical and simple steps when feeding our families, friends and loved ones.

If you put these changes into practice, and share them with people you know and your local community, we could help millions of people to put food on their plates.

These six simple changes are called the GROW Method. It's a better way of thinking about food — how we buy, prepare and eat it.

The way we currently produce, distribute, prepare and eat food is having an increasingly negative impact on others around the world. Our excessive demand for essential resources (like land and water) and our lifestyle choices (which are helping change weather patterns) are putting our entire food system at risk. Choosing the GROW Method will help build more sustainable patterns of food consumption and reduce the number of people going hungry.

The GROW Method starts in your garden or when you go shopping, is used in the kitchen, and continues long after you finish breakfast, lunch or dinner.

It's the future of food, happening today. Collectively we can use the power of what we put on our plates to help right the wrongs in our food system. Use this power to create a fairer food system for all.

Practise it. Share it. Cook it. Eat it. Tweet it. Post it. Blog it. "Like" it.



#### IT'S SIMPLE, THE GROW METHOD IS ABOUT:



SAVE FOOD

reducing food waste so we make the most of the scarce resources that go into growing, transporting and marketing our food.



BUY SEASONAL

buying food that's in season, to cut our greenhouse gas emissions.



SUPPORT FARMERS

buying products and brands that ensure small-scale food producers, both in Australia and overseas, get a fair deal.



COOK SMART

cooking smart by cutting down on wasted water and energy.



LESS

eating less meat and dairy to reduce both greenhouse gas emissions and water use.



EAT SUSTAINABLY

growing and eating sustainably, reducing chemicals and restoring the health of our lands and water systems.

## SAVE FOOD

Between the farm and the fork, around one-third of all food is wasted. Wasted food means wasting water and energy. It also means wasting the resources that were used to grow, harvest, transport, process, package, distribute and market this food. It's hard to believe, but Australians throw away more than \$5 billion worth of food each year. By making a few simple changes and you can help reduce this waste.



**\$5 BILLION  
WORTH OF  
FOOD  
IS WASTED  
EACH YEAR**



### PLAN YOUR MEALS

It may sound simple, but planning your meals and only buying and cooking as much food as you need is the number one thing you can do to limit your food waste.



### "EAT BY" STICKERS

Keep a pen and stickers handy in your kitchen and get into the habit of writing down an "eat by" date for your leftovers and other half-used tins or packets of food.

Also think about how you can get creative with your leftovers and other fruit and veg that's not as fresh as it once was. Leftover curry can be turned into a pie. Limp veggies can make a delicious soup. And don't let your fruit moulder on the bench when it can be stewed or become a delicious fruit crumble.

Love your leftovers and then share your wacky leftover concoctions on our site.



### ASK FOR A DOGGIE BAG

There is no shame in asking for a doggie bag if you don't finish what is on your plate at a restaurant. Better in your tummy tomorrow than in the rubbish today!



### ASK YOUR LOCAL FOOD SUPPLIERS TO JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST WASTE

Next time you're buying groceries or popping in to your favourite café, ask your supplier what they're doing to reduce waste. Commercial composting and better labelling of food use-by dates all helps in the fight against waste. Commercial suppliers also have the option of donating to one of the food rescue charities that are springing up across Australia. These charities rescue excess food which would otherwise be discarded, and redistribute it to people in need. Here are some suggestions you could pass on.

[www.ozharvest.org](http://www.ozharvest.org)  
[www.secondbite.org](http://www.secondbite.org)



### FOOD FOR WORMS

Sometimes waste is unavoidable. And for those occasions, we have worms! Why not set up a home or work compost bin or worm farm? Transform your waste into valuable food for your garden. No matter how small your kitchen, there's room for a compost bucket. And if you don't have anywhere to use the end product, ask your neighbours or think about donating it to your local school, or community garden.

[www.environment.nsw.gov.au/households/EasyCompost.htm](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/households/EasyCompost.htm)  
Other web links to try  
[www.gofor2and5.com.au](http://www.gofor2and5.com.au)  
[www.lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au)  
[www.ozharvest.org/ourimpact.asp?pageID=611](http://www.ozharvest.org/ourimpact.asp?pageID=611)



## EAT SEASONALLY

We waste a lot of energy trying to grow food in the wrong place at the wrong time of year. Discover what's in season near you and you'll find perfectly delicious fruit and vegetables which don't need as much energy to reach your plate.



**WHAT'S IN SEASON NEAR YOU?**



### GROW YOUR OWN

Nothing beats fresh food straight from the garden. You don't need to have much space, or even a green thumb, to grow simple herbs and veggies at home. Make it a social by joining or starting a local community vegetable garden.

[www.cultivatingcommunity.org.au](http://www.cultivatingcommunity.org.au)  
[www.growitlocal.com.au](http://www.growitlocal.com.au)  
[www.lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au/buy-it/grow-it.aspx](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au/buy-it/grow-it.aspx)



### BUYING LOCAL VS BUYING FROM SMALL-SCALE PRODUCERS FARMERS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The question of buying local instead of imported food is not black and white. As a general rule, foods that rot quickly are best bought locally. But we can't forget that food grown in developing countries provides vital income for millions of people. What about the "food miles"? Pollution from transport accounts for only a small portion of the greenhouse gas emissions (often known as "food miles") used to produce consumables. The distance food travels is a poor measure of its total impact, because it doesn't take into account things like the type of transport used, such as air, sea or road freight. Measuring distance also doesn't take into account other commercial inputs such as the amount of energy used to heat greenhouses.

What we need to do is understand the methods and conditions our food is produced under, as well as how it's travelled. Only then can we make informed and ethical choices based on our own priorities.



### BUY SEASONALLY

Many of us are used to buying most fruit and veggies all year round, even when they're out of season. But buying seasonal produce will generally be tastier and cheaper and will have less of an environmental impact. Get seasonal by learning what grows when.

[www.seasonalfoodguide.com](http://www.seasonalfoodguide.com)



## SUPPORT SMALL FARMERS

When you buy from small-scale food producers, you're supporting the 1.5 billion people that rely on small farms to earn a living. You'll also be getting behind farming practices that are more sustainable.



**SUPPORT THE 1.5 BILLION PEOPLE  
WORLD WIDE WHO RELY ON  
SMALL FARMS TO EARN A LIVING**

FAIR.

### SHOP FAIR TRADE

Fair trade is about a fair price and incomes for farmers. It's also about environmentally-friendly farming practices and the return of a "Fair Trade Premium" that creates community development in poor countries. So look out for fair trade products when you shop.

A wide range of fair trade foods are available in Australia, from tea and coffee to rice and chocolate. You'll recognise them by the distinctive fair trade logo. There are also a range of other logos to look out for when making ethical and sustainable choices.

[www.fta.org.au](http://www.fta.org.au)

[www.oxfamshop.org.au](http://www.oxfamshop.org.au)



### SHOP AT YOUR FARMERS' MARKET

Shop at your local market to find fresh fruit and vegetables grown by small-scale producers close to you. Not only will the fruit taste, smell and look better, but you'll often get to meet the farmer behind the products. If shopping at a farmers' market doesn't work for you, get your fruit and veggie boxes home-delivered direct from local producers or community organisations.

[www.farmersmarkets.org.au](http://www.farmersmarkets.org.au)

[www.foodconnect.com.au](http://www.foodconnect.com.au)



### GROW YOUR VOICE

Use your voice to tell food brands and politicians that they should give small-scale farmers and workers a better deal. Stay in touch with us and we'll give you opportunities to do this with other GROW supporters.

EXPO

### ATTEND (OR HOLD YOUR OWN) LAND IS LIFE EXHIBITION

Putting good food on the table can be a challenge for all of us. But for millions of people in the developing world it's a constant struggle to feed themselves, their family and their community.

Find out how some of Australia's closest neighbours are dealing with hunger through this powerful photo exhibition. Told by those who are experiencing hunger first-hand, the *Land is Life* exhibition captures the tremendous spirit and innovation of small-scale farmers as they battle climate change, rising food prices, problems accessing land and the inequitable allocation of resources.

[www.oxfam.org.au/landislife](http://www.oxfam.org.au/landislife)



## COOK SMART

Many of us still rely on precious fossil fuels to cook and heat our food. Cooking leads to big greenhouse gas emissions for the planet and big energy bills for you.



**CO2 EMISSIONS  
+  
HIGH ENERGY COSTS**



### USE LESS ENERGY

Cook with as little water as possible, using a flat bottomed pan, covering it with a lid and reducing the heat as soon as the water starts to boil. All will save energy, water and money.



### GIVE KIDS A SMILE

Have fun with raw vegetables. Experiment with the range of natural colours to create pictures and faces on plates at meal time for the kids. They taste great and because you're eating them raw, you'll preserve all their natural goodness.



### SANDWICHES, SALADS AND COLD SOUPS

If you cook without the stovetop, the oven, the grill, or the microwave you'll use less energy. It's also a safer way to involve children in food preparation and there'll be fewer dishes to clean afterwards!



### POWER DOWN

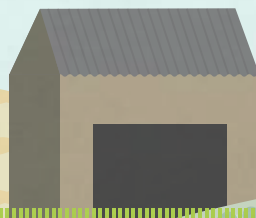
Turn off appliances when you're not using them ... except for the fridge! Consider this: up to half of the power used by your microwave may be spent powering its clock rather than heating your food.



### SUPPORT ORGANIC FARMERS

Certified organic food producers are restoring their land and water sources, and pioneering the use of organic fertilisers and pesticides. While it's not possible for everyone, and not available everywhere, try to buy organically grown and environmentally — friendly food when you can.

[www.organicfooddirectory.com.au](http://www.organicfooddirectory.com.au)

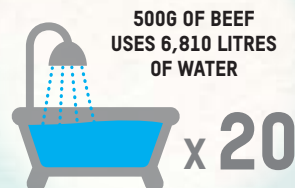






## LESS MEAT AND DAIRY

If you eat a little less meat and less dairy you'll drastically reduce the impact of your diet on the environment. Just think, 500g of ground beef uses over 28,000 cups (or 6,810 litres) of water to produce — that's enough to fill 20 bathtubs to the brim and then some!



### MEAT FREE DAYS

Add variety to your plate by replacing meat with vegetables at least one day a week. Think about all the great meat alternatives like tofu, mushrooms, beans and lentils, and then experiment with dishes like veggie paella, split pea soup or veggie burgers made with lentils and black beans.

[www.meatlessmondays-australia.com](http://www.meatlessmondays-australia.com)



### TRY THESE RECIPES

Need a bit more help with vegetarian recipes? Then log on to [www.oxfam.org.au/grow/](http://www.oxfam.org.au/grow/) recipes and download our latest offering. There are recipes for:

- harissa baked eggplant
- zucchini, mint and fetta fritters
- Moroccan style chick peas with Ras-El-Hanout
- jewelled biryani.



### DAIRY SWAPS

Try non-dairy alternatives in your favourite dishes. This might be swapping cheese with avocado in your salad, replacing ice-cream with coconut ice-cream for dessert, and using olive oil instead of butter when you cook.



## EAT SUSTAINABLY

The building blocks of the current global food system — arable land, water, fuels and chemical fertilisers — are close to reaching their limits. We must build an alternative future which produces enough food, while also easing the demand on scarce resources. Luckily, there is a way. We can all focus on eating sustainably, restoring our land and water systems to health, reducing reliance on chemicals and trying out long-forgotten seeds and breeds.



NEW IDEAS FOR  
A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



### EAT SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD

Three-quarters of the world's oceans are already officially over-exploited or fished up to their limit. The good news is that you can lessen your impact by choosing seafood wisely, and there are plenty of tools that can help you out.

[www.sustainableseafood.org.au/Sustainable-Seafood-Guide-Australia.asp?active\\_page\\_id=695](http://www.sustainableseafood.org.au/Sustainable-Seafood-Guide-Australia.asp?active_page_id=695)

[www.greenpeace.org/australia/en/what-we-do/oceans/Take-action/canned-tuna-guide/](http://www.greenpeace.org/australia/en/what-we-do/oceans/Take-action/canned-tuna-guide/)



### LOOK FOR PRODUCTS WITH LESS PACKAGING

Packaging uses up huge amounts of resources, not just in its production, but also its disposal. Buying in bulk will reduce the amount of packaging thrown away, as well as saving you money. Eat more fresh food and less processed products, and make sure any packaging you do use is recyclable. That way, you'll lessen both landfill and the environmental impact.



### GROW SUSTAINABLY AT HOME

If you're growing fruit and vegetables at home, use as few pesticides as possible. Alternatively, use organic fertilisers, animal manures and compost, keep your own seeds, or swap seeds with friends. You can also preserve your excess produce as jam, chutneys or in the freezer.



### EAT ON THE WILD SIDE

Did you know carrots used to be purple? The world has seen a global loss of biodiversity in what we eat — a mere 30 crops now dominate global production and 90% of our animal food comes from 14 mammals and birds. This makes the world's food supply more vulnerable to shocks, and our diets have become much less diverse. A growing number of sustainable farmers are preserving agricultural variety and protecting biodiversity by raising "heritage" and "heirloom" animal breeds, fruits and vegetables. Be adventurous and look out for these varieties at your local food supplier. You can even grow it yourself — surprise your loved ones by pulling a purple carrot out of the garden bed!

[www.greenharvest.com.au](http://www.greenharvest.com.au)

[www.diggers.com.au](http://www.diggers.com.au)

[www.edenseeds.com.au](http://www.edenseeds.com.au)

[www.thelostseed.com.au](http://www.thelostseed.com.au)