



Food and Dining at Mason

What to eat, how to eat it, where to go, and how to get rid of it all.

1. **Reusable Dishware:** Try to use reusable cups, dishware, and utensils whenever possible. For occasions when reusable utensils (such as metal or bamboo cutlery and/or ceramic plates, etc) are not available, strive to use dishware made out of recycled paper products or biodegradable materials.
2. **Biodegradable Utensils:** In the case when reusable dishware isn't available, use biodegradable utensils in lieu of ones made of plastic materials. Did you know that if used plastic utensils for everyday of the school year, you'd use over 200 sets, most of which will end up in a landfill for eons.
3. **Ditch Plastic Bottles:** Carry a reusable water bottle with you, but choose ones that will not leach toxic chemicals like bisphenol A, which can cause cancer. You'll save up to \$3.00 each time you refill it on campus instead of purchasing bottled water.
4. **Buy in Bulk:** If you consume certain products more often than others (for example, chewy bars, ketchup, or soda), buy larger containers of it. While bigger isn't always better, buying in bulk gives you the best product-to-package ratio. This not only reduces the waste (from having to throw out the empty containers) but it will also likely save you money. For example, a bottle of ketchup or a jar of sugar will result in less waste than individual (single-serve) packets of ketchup and sugar.
5. **Switch Up Your Meals:** Try to reduce your consumption of animal products. Cheese and meat have a particularly heavy carbon footprint. To learn about the specific impact each product has, many organizations such as Treehugger and the Nature Conservancy offer a carbon footprint calculator and information online.
6. **Buy Local Food:** If possible, try to buy local food. Simply put, local food is food that is grown in a local area, supporting a local economy. It takes less energy to transport food from a local farm to your dinner table than it does to import food from overseas.
7. **Eat in Season:** Try to eat in season. Eating in season requires knowing what season various fruits and vegetables are grown in. By eating in season, you can reduce the number of miles your food travels to your dinner table (just make sure it's local), and can offer you the chance to test out new dishes.
8. **Want to know more?** Check the Green Living Resources Appendix for extra resources.