

Welcome to *The Wave*!

The SEA's monthly newsletter where we share our passions, projects, and pressing environmental issues with YOU!

This month's edition will focus on **giving thanks** to the land we live on, all it provides us with, and those who inhabited it before us!

General Announcements:

- Next meeting: Thursday, December 3rd at 7pm on Zoom (check CampusGroups for a link)!
- Please also reach out to Doug or Samina if you'd like to get involved with 'the Wave' and/or the SEA!

Look out for a vegan pot pie recipe at the end of this newsletter!



the Wave

November 2020

Instagram: @wac.sea
Facebook: **The Student Environmental Alliance at Washington College**

FROM THE STUDENT ENVIRONMENTAL ALLIANCE AT WASHINGTON COLLEGE

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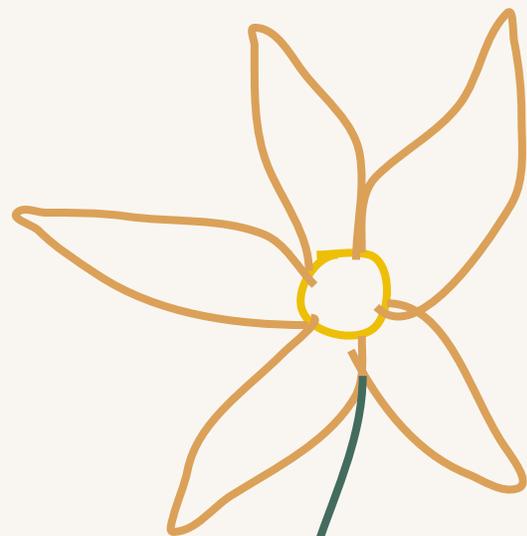
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SUSTAINABLE LIVING

☀ Composting!

This Thanksgiving, think about composting some of your leftover food scraps. Composting is a great way to divert food waste from landfills which not only reduces the fossil fuels needed to transport our waste, but reduces the methane that our rotting leftovers create in landfills.

There are a plethora of ways to compost so be sure to pick the method that suits your lifestyle. Your basic compost pile is a carbon to nitrogen ratio of organic materials and moisture. These organic materials are broken down by decomposers ranging from microscopic bacteria to earthworms.

- **Three-bin system:** You can construct a three bin system out of wood. Using pitchforks and shovels, layer food waste with lawn waste and dead brown leaves or paper. Turn the piles every other day between the bins and harvest your product at the end of 18 days
- **Trashcan:** this mimics the hand crank bins that spin food waste to reincorporate compost. Drill some holes in an old trash can, add your food waste, and roll!
- **Vermicomposting:** You can DIY a worm bin from old plastic bins or purchase a worm bin online. Small worm bins can stay in the house. Just be sure to avoid purchasing invasive worm species for you bins!



Compost Pile

Composting Tips

As you prepare your meal, save onion skins, pepper stems and seeds, apple cores, stems of herbs, paper towels, etc. for your compost pile. After your meal scrape any unfinished plates into your food waste collection bin. If you are using paper plates and napkins, they go in too.

As leftovers sit in your fridge try to use or freeze what you can before it goes bad. Any fruits, veggies, potatoes, or stuffings that are starting to turn can make their way to the compost pile instead of your trash can.

Some general rules of thumb include the following:

- **NO ANIMAL PRODUCTS.** No meats, animal fats, dairy products, etc. These generally stink and attract more unwanted pests to your pile.
- **Hold the plastic:** Any plastic lined paper plates, cups, or cardboard boxes will not break down in your pile.
- **When in doubt, do some research!**

Composting can happen anywhere and everywhere, all day, every day and is achievable by anyone and everyone. Whether you start a pile in your own backyard, collaborate with your neighbors, or walk your food scraps down the street to your local college garden, make an effort to make an impact this Thanksgiving and start transforming you waste into some amazing soil.



Reducing Food Waste!

Thanksgiving as a holiday is about being with friends and family, but if we're being honest it's also about the food. The time period from Thanksgiving to New Year's generates around **25% more trash than any other time of year** (from stanford.edu) - and food waste is a major component of that. In addition to composting food waste (see article above), there are many ways to reduce your family's food waste. One of the ways to reduce waste is to eat leftovers. You can either eat your leftovers as they are or get creative and find new recipes online for those delicious leftover Thanksgiving dishes. Because of Covid-19 and the inability to host large gatherings, an important part of reducing food waste is to adjust typical recipes for the number of people at your Thanksgiving dinner this year. By being proactive about your food plans, you can help reduce the amount of food waste in landfills this year.



**Doing your part
does not have to
be a huge task,
start small!**

Sustainable Black Friday Shopping!

As Thanksgiving approaches, Black Friday is on the minds of many. This Black Friday looks different than most in a number of ways, but one of the big things is to keep in mind Covid-19 safety precautions. Check the stores you want to shop at for online Black Friday deals, or if they have a Black Friday Everyday program that gives customers deals all season to limit the number of people in the store at once. If you choose to go out shopping on Black Friday, consider your impact as you plan your day- how can you make your Black Friday more sustainable?

Black Friday as a holiday contributes to consumerism in American with large savings that lead to overconsumption and a large amount of wasted products. Make a plan before you shop to reduce your risk of overconsumption: Who are you shopping for? What items are you going to get? Think also about where you are going to shop. Fast fashion stores generate large amounts of textile waste, as well as using lots of resources to create an article of clothing that was not designed to last long in your closet- shop instead at small and/or local businesses to directly support people in your community and cut down on energy and waste created by goods.

This Black Friday think before you shop - the earth, and your bank account, will thank you.

ACTIVISM

What We're Thankful for This Year

As Thanksgiving approaches, we want to appreciate and give thanks to all of the organizations, legislators, and members of our communities who work to protect the environment and everything in it. Here are a few things that we're especially thankful for this year!

1. National Parks and Protected Land

As we have all gone through quarantine and social distancing due to COVID-19, many have found solace in nature and being outside. This year we're thankful for national and state parks. Not only for the joy they've given us, but also for the important job they play in protecting natural ecosystems.

2. The Endangered Species Act

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 is the primary U.S. legislation directed towards protecting animals from extinction. The ESA aims to prevent extinctions, to help threatened species thrive in the wild, and to protect the ecosystems that threatened animals depend upon. This year we're thankful for this act and its many successes, including helping species such as the bald eagle, brown pelican, humpback whale, and the island night lizard.

3. The Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act is the U.S. federal law concerning water pollution. This act focuses on restoring the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of water in the U.S., maintaining wetlands, stopping water pollution, and improving wastewater treatment. This year we're thankful for the prevalence of potable and clean water in the U.S. because of this act.

4. The Clean Air Act

The U.S. Clean Air Act regulates air pollution at a national level, controlling emissions from stationary and mobile sources. Because this act was approved in 1963, it is often considered as one of the United States' first comprehensive environmental laws. It is still one of the most extensive laws regarding air quality in the world. This year we're thankful for clean air, and for environmental policy that comes ahead of its time.

5. Environmental Literature and Documentaries

Literature and documentaries regarding nature, conservation, and sustainability are some of the most accessible ways to educate oneself on the environment and current climate-related problems. Classic books like *Silent Spring*, *Walden*, *Desert Solitaire*, and *The Everglades: River of Glass* are beloved for their radical opinions on our relationship with the environment. More recent documentaries like *Virunga*, *Before the Flood*, *Our Planet*, and *Sustainable* are both educational and entertaining. This year we're thankful for accessible education and increased environmental awareness.



**Artwork by
Samina Soin-Voshell**

**Happy
Thanksgiving
from our SEA
family to you &
yours!**

Meat Free Thanksgiving Recipe

Vegan Pot Pie from *Minimalist Baker*

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup chopped yellow onion
- 1 large clove garlic (minced)
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- 2 cups frozen mixed vegetables (corn, green beans, carrots // or sub fresh)
- 1/4 cup unsweetened plain almond milk
- ~1/4 cup unbleached all-purpose flour
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 pinch each sea salt and black pepper
- 1 batch Best Damn Vegan Biscuits (recipe found on Minimalist Baker website) or sub store-bought biscuits, pie crust, or puff pastry)

If making ahead of time, simply spoon the cooked veggie mixture into your ramekins or dish, top with uncooked biscuits, and freeze. When ready to prepare, preheat oven to 425 degrees (218 C) and cook until the biscuits are golden brown and the mixture is bubbly – roughly 20-30 minutes.

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F (218 C).
2. Add 2 Tbsp olive oil to a large saucepan over medium heat (amount as original recipe is written // adjust if altering batch size). Then add onion and garlic and a pinch of salt – stir. Cook until soft – about 7 minutes.
3. Add the flour and stir with a whisk, then slowly whisk in the broth.
4. Add almond milk and bay leaves and stir. Simmer until the mixture is thickened (about 10 minutes). If it still appears too thin, scoop out 1/2 cup of the broth and add 1-2 Tbsp more flour and whisk (amounts as original recipe is written // adjust if altering batch size). Add back into the pot to thicken. Wait a few minutes. Then repeat if necessary.
5. While the sauce is thickening, prepare biscuits (if using). Cut out, leave unbaked, and set aside.
6. Once the sauce is thickened, add the frozen vegetables, and cook for 4-5 more minutes. Taste and adjust seasonings, adding more salt and pepper if needed.
7. Discard the bay leaves and divide the mixture evenly between 5-6 lightly greased ramekins or a 8×8 baking dish (as original recipe is written // adjust if altering batch size). Top with vegan biscuits and brush the tops of the biscuits with melted vegan butter. Set your 8×8 dish or ramekins on a baking sheet to catch overflow and bake until the biscuits are golden brown and the filling is bubbly (about 14-17 minutes). Let cool for 5 minutes before serving.

