

From Waste to Wonder: Innovative Projects Shaping a Circular Economy

As we close out 2024, we bring together stories of hope, innovation, and action. From solar-powered agriculture in Nepal to groundbreaking waste-to-oil technology in India, these initiatives exemplify how communities worldwide are driving change. This month's theme focuses on celebrating sustainably—offering eco-friendly holiday tips, inspiring circular economy projects, and updates from ESRAG's global efforts to combat climate change. Dive into engaging articles, join our project seminars, and learn how to double your impact with our Giving Tuesday campaign. Let's end the year by making a difference together!

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Hope and Sustainability: Solar-Powered Agriculture for a Safer Future in Nepal

By: Robin Singer, Rotary Club of Falmouth, Cape Cod



A chicken and egg facility supporting sustainable agriculture within a human trafficking prevention program will be breaking ground this year in a Himalayan village. The facility will be built and operated by Anjali Tamang, an activist, trafficking survivor, and founder of the Freedom and Hope Foundation, a Nepali organization that helps at-risk girls in Nuwakot, Nepal.

Funded by the Falmouth Rotary Club of Cape Cod and the Madison Rotary Club of Wisconsin, in conjunction with Her Future Coalition and UCLA Engineers Without Borders, this facility will also include solar charging stations for remote villagers. This feature aims to extend outreach to the community in these isolated areas. Solar electricity will also power lights and other essential needs within the chicken facility.

The trafficking of young girls and child marriage are cultural issues in these remote villages. The Freedom and Hope Foundation is working to break cycles of poverty, the low status of girls and women, and inadequate access to education—factors that contribute to these oppressive

practices.

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Beginner's Guide to Sustainable Festive Season

By: Martina Lastikova



As we reflect on 2024 and the backdrop of COP29, it's clear that the call for urgent climate action has never been louder. With rising global temperatures, over 100,000 people have joined Extinction Rebellion protests, and figures like Greta Thunberg continue to inspire hope for a sustainable future. Encouragingly, 75% of Brits are now embracing more conscious consumer habits—proof that change is possible. This festive season should be no exception. Let's celebrate without compromising the environment. From thoughtful gifts to eco-friendly traditions, there are countless ways to enjoy your favorite holiday essentials sustainably. Here's my eco-friendly holiday to-do list to help you get started:

This festive season should be no exception. Let's celebrate without compromising the environment. From thoughtful gifts to eco-friendly traditions, there are countless ways to enjoy your favorite holiday essentials sustainably.

Here are a few eco-friendly holiday to-do lists to help you get started:

1. Wrapping presents

Fabric

The Oxfam website introduces a wonderful technique for wrapping gifts in fabric. *Furoshiki*, a traditional Japanese method, involves knotting fabric—whether it's scraps or scarves—to wrap presents. It's a brilliant way to celebrate zero-waste festivities!???????

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Innovative Waste Solutions: A Village's Journey Towards Sustainability

By: Dr. Bindu Shirsath, ESRAG SA Correspondent

What can be done when people resort to dumping or burning waste material close to where they live, practices that harm public health, local economies, and the environment?

In the small village of Jahaj, Gujarat, India, a revolutionary initiative emerged to tackle the pressing issue of waste pollution. Led by Monali Prajapati, the Jahaj Village Waste Management project was sponsored by Nisol Manufacturing Company and managed by the Kachre Se Azadi Foundation under the guidance of Director Dr. Suneet Dabke. The Rotary Club of Baroda Greens joined as an awareness partner.

The project aimed to reduce waste pollution and promote a cleaner environment through efficient dry and wet waste collection. Dry waste was collected every 15 days and taken to the Dumad shed for micro-segregation, where plastic waste was transformed into benches. Wet waste was collected daily and processed in a rocket composter, producing liquid fertilizer that enriched the soil.

This innovative approach promoted a circular economy, reducing landfill waste and supporting local livelihoods. The project's long-term sustainability provided both environmental benefits and economic growth for residents.

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Celebrate the Holidays with Hope: Your Guide to Delicious, Planet-Friendly Feasts



The holidays are a cherished time for family, friends, festivities, and plenty of delightful food! While tradition and comfort are close to our hearts, as Rotarians, how do we weave our commitment to service for humanity and the planet into these special gatherings? How can we inspire hope and positive peace in our lives and in the world around us?

Consider celebrating the planet and Rotary service while enhancing your health and honoring traditions. Our easy, actionable tips and delicious recipe ideas will help you get there!

Back by popular demand, here's a fun snack recipe called Merry Munch that's perfect for involving the little ones. Created by our Canadian task force member and professional plant-based cook, this delicious seed bark makes a fabulous hostess gift. It's quick to prepare and will keep your energy levels high and your mood steady as you tackle the bustling holiday season. Just a few minutes of prep is all it takes—and it makes an entire cookie sheet of yumminess, plenty for sharing.

This plant-powered seed bark isn't just tasty; it also passes the Rotary 4-Way Test with flying colors! Get ready to make the holidays both joyful and nourishing!

Tips for Adding Planet-Friendly Foods to Your Holiday Meals:

- **Variety of Veggies:** Everyone loves a good side dish! Incorporate a range of vegetable dishes seasoned with comforting and familiar spices and herbs. Try adding international dishes from around the world into a single meal—have fun with it!
 - **Vegan Desserts:** Surprise yourself with the deliciousness of vegan desserts! Try this easy Vegan Blueberry Slump by renowned chef Fran Costigan.
- **Surprise Your Guests!:** An inclusive holiday meal with friends and family showcases your openness and care for them—and for our planet. Are you thinking of students returning from university and craving comfort food? Try this crowd-pleaser: a fun Warm Nacho Dip that's perfect for gatherings.
 - **Rearrange Your Plate:** Make plant-based options the main attraction, with meat dishes as sides. The key is incorporating more plants!
 - **Enjoy the Process:** Be gentle with yourself and your family as you explore new ideas. Get the kids involved—they love to cook, and I nearly guarantee they'll try something they've made themselves. Enjoy each other's company and strengthen your bonds through these shared experiences. It's not about "perfection." When I was growing up, the best holidays were always the ones with a good story or two!

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Celebrate Sustainably: A Guide to Plant-Based Holidays and Circular Economy Fun

How a Plant-Rich Lifestyle Fits Into a Circular Economy (And How to Teach It to Your Kids and Celebrate the Holidays with It!)

A plant-rich lifestyle and a circular economy are like peanut butter and jelly—except in this case, think more hummus and pita. A circular economy is about reducing waste, reusing resources, and living in a way that respects our planet's limits. So, how does eating more plants help? Let's break it down, and yes, I promise to make this fun (or at least fun-ish).

1. Fewer Resources, More Greens

When you focus on plants, you use less water, less land, and far fewer resources overall than when raising livestock. Basically, cows are a bit high-maintenance, but carrots? They're low-key, eco-friendly, and always happy to join your stir-fry.

2. Waste Not, Compost More

Plants come with a built-in circular economy feature: they're mostly compostable! All those peels, stems, and leaves can become rich soil for more plants. It's the circle of life.

3. Planting the Future

Sustainable farming is like plants giving back to the Earth! Think of it as the plant kingdom's "thank you" note—growing food while regenerating soil and soaking up carbon. That's a win-win for both your dinner plate and the planet.

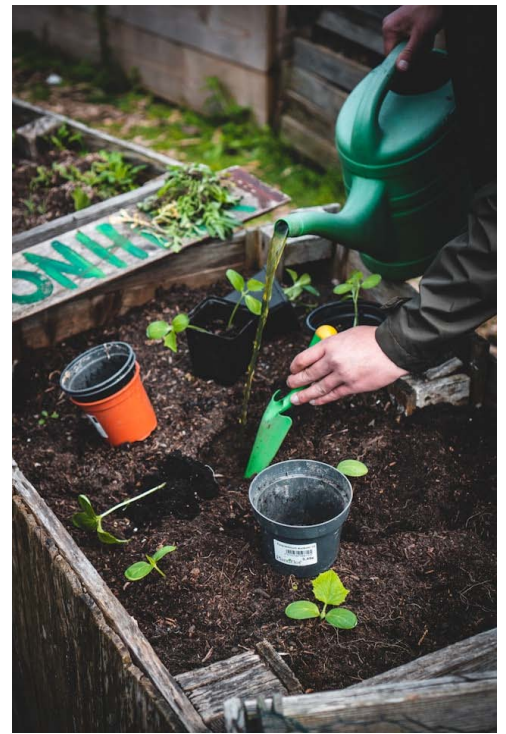
4. Cut the (Plastic) Wrap

Buying plant-rich foods means you can skip plastic packaging, leading to less waste and fewer trips to the trash can. Everyone wins!

How to Teach Kids About Plant-Rich Eating and a Circular Economy (Without Making Their Eyes Glaze Over)

Kids love hands-on learning, and what's more hands-on than food? Here's how to get them excited about a plant-rich, low-waste lifestyle—without feeling like you're giving a TED Talk at the dinner table.

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Revolutionizing Waste: The New Technology Turning Plastic into Oil

By: Dr. Bindu Shirsath, ESRAG SA Correspondent



In a groundbreaking move, Riarn Earthtech India Pvt. Ltd., a 100% women-owned factory led by visionary entrepreneurs Mrs. Trupti Ghugare and Mrs. Deepti Korde, is transforming the waste management landscape. With valuable input from ESRAG member Rtn. Amit Korde of Rotary Club Aurangabad in RID 3132, Maharashtra, India, Riarn Earthtech is pioneering a cutting-edge solution to combat the daunting challenge of plastic waste.

Every year, millions of tons of plastic waste end up in landfills and oceans, contributing to pollution, climate change, and harm to marine life. However, Riarn Earthtech's innovative Plastic Waste Oil Technology offers a game-changing solution. This patented process converts non-recyclable plastic waste into high-quality oil, reducing waste sent to landfills and generating a valuable resource.

By harnessing this technology, Riarn Earthtech helps protect the planet, minimizing pollution and reducing harm to marine life. The benefits are numerous: environmental sustainability, energy security, economic growth, and scalability. This technology generates high-quality oil, reducing dependence on fossil fuels and promoting energy self-sufficiency. It also creates new revenue streams and employment opportunities, seamlessly integrating into existing

waste management infrastructure.

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From Waste to Wonder: How Students Are Transforming Discarded Materials into Community Resources

By: Dr. Bindu Shirsath, ESRAG SA Correspondent



In the small town of Abu Road, Rajasthan, a group of dedicated students from St. John's School's Interact Club embarked on an extraordinary journey to protect the environment and uplift their community. With unwavering support from school authorities, Rotarians Uma Shyam and Shyam Kumar, and mentor Dr. Vinod Mehta, these young change-makers launched a groundbreaking project. Their mission was to breathe new life into discarded notebook pages, promoting education and sustainability. The Interactors collected unused pages from students across the school, sorted them carefully, and sent them for binding. The renewed notebooks were then gifted to schools attended by less privileged children, accompanied by recycled toys and bags. This selfless act not only reduced waste but also spread joy and knowledge.

The Interactors didn't stop there. In a thrilling 24-hour marathon of sustainability, they transformed old newspapers into sturdy paper bags using eco-friendly wheat flour paste. These upcycled bags featured Rotary and Interact logos, highlighting key messages from Rotary International's areas of focus: "Save Girl Child, Education, Health and Hygiene, Environment, and Peace." The project also included a survey to raise awareness about paper waste and minimize it.

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Save the Date

COME TO RICON **1** DAY EARLY FOR Building a Better World

Pre-RICON Summit
Fri 20 June, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm MDT,
Knox United Church, Calgary, Canada
Hosted by RAG CED and ESRAG

Why attend?

Because economic development and environmental sustainability go hand in hand. Gain expert insights, tools, and inspiration to design projects that create thriving communities and a healthier planet. Save the date—it starts with you!

Weekly Project Seminars

???????Dec 4: Say NO to Plastics! Innovative Alternatives for a Greener World, 2pm
UTC

Dr. Jeni Padua

Join us for an inspiring and solution-oriented discussion on breaking free from plastic dependency. Discover how chitosan biofilm coatings and sustainable biopolymers made from

ESRAG SERIES

Weekly Project Seminar

waste shells are leading the way in reducing plastic use and pollution. [Register](#)

Dec 11: Circular Economy FUN for the Holidays! 2pm UTC

Amelie Catheline, Tami Mulcahy, and Dawn Byford

Three short presentations from our ESRAG Task Force leaders with holiday tips for reducing plastic, sharing resources for parties with a reusable dinnerware kit, and learning 2 simple plant-rich holiday treats during our mini LIVE cooking demo. [Register](#)

Dec 18: Get your Club and District involved with Rotary International partnerships, 2pm UTC

Carrie Golden

Tips on how Rotary and Rotaract clubs and Rotary districts can partner and develop networks within and outside of Rotary in their communities, including Rotary International partnership opportunities at the local level. [Register](#)

Dec 21 and 28: No project seminar these weeks.

ESRAG Podcast: Climate conversations



From Freon to Lithium: Clari Nolet's Mission to Revolutionize Rotary's Environmental Impact
Clari shares her journey in driving environmental change through Rotary. From Freon disposal to lithium-ion battery recycling, Clari's initiatives are setting new standards for sustainable waste management and pollution reduction. [Listen now.](#)

From the Arctic to ESRAG: Deniz Vural on Protecting Polar Ecosystems
Discover how Deniz's work on permafrost and glacier conservation is contributing to global climate action. Deniz explores insights on the urgent need for sustainable solutions. [Listen now.](#)

Giving Tuesday

Double Your Impact: Support ESRAG with a Matching Gift!

We're thrilled to announce a unique opportunity to amplify your contribution to ESRAG! A generous donor has pledged to match all donations up to \$10,000 for the remainder of 2024, doubling the power of every dollar you give.

Help us reach our \$10,000 goal and make twice the impact in building a sustainable future. Together, we can turn small donations into big change! Donate today and be part of the solution.

[DONATE TODAY](#)

**GIVING
TUESDAY**

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The Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group (ESRAG) operates in accordance with Rotary International policy, but is not an agency of, or controlled by, Rotary International.
