



A Few Tips for a Simple Life

by Michael Guilfoil, *The Spokesman-Review*

Organic farmer MaryJane Butters long ago embraced Thoreau's dictum to "simplify, simplify." As a Forest Service ranger in the 1970s, she spent two summers roaming Utah's Uinta Mountains with her home on her back. Later, she maintained the most remote wilderness ranger station in the Lower 48. Today, Butters and her family live eight miles outside Moscow, Idaho, on their farm, headquarters of her mail-order dry-foods business. But even e-commerce hasn't tempered Butters' enthusiasm for simplicity.

MaryJane's

2. Clean Without Chemicals

Commercial cleaners of all kinds have been linked to allergies, skin irritation, breathing problems, and even nerve damage—and children are more at risk than adults. Not to mention all of those plastic bottles that get pitched into landfills. Your house can sparkle and shine every bit as brightly—and much more safely—with simple household staples like vinegar, baking soda, and borax. Learn how to clean every corner of your home with natural products at eartheasy.com/live_nontoxic_solutions.htm.

3. Swap Shower Curtains

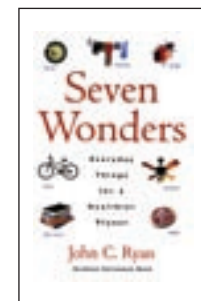
Plastic shower curtains are often made of polyvinyl chloride (PVC), a hard-to-recycle plastic that contains chemicals linked to cancer, kidney damage, and reproductive disorders. Yikes! The good news is that there are all sorts of organic fabric options that are not only safer, but beautiful and machine-washable too. Your best bets are organic cotton and hemp, a durable material that resists mildew naturally. TerraLunaSol, an Oregon-based family business, offers both at www.terralunasol.net.

4. Pamper Your Pet

As we become more conscious of our own lifestyle choices, we're also interested in providing our pets with the healthiest care possible. Natura, www.naturapet.com, offers a variety of organic diet options. Newman's Own Organics, www.newmansownorganics.com, also has a line of natural pet foods. For a whole host of organic dog and cat supplies, from toys to natural treatments, shop www.botanicaldog.com. Bird and horse owners, consult www.thewholisticpet.com for high quality food and supplements.

SimpleSolutions

for everyday ORGANIC™



In December 1999, a newspaper reporter from Washington called. He was writing a review of the book *Seven Wonders: Everyday Things for a Healthier Planet* by John C. Ryan. Michael Guilfoil of *The Spokesman-Review* newspaper asked me if I had my own "seven wonders." The story that ensued was headlined "Simple Solutions." Here, then, is the continuation of that story. Each issue of *MaryJanesFarm* will feature in detail new solutions, and will give you all the information you need to make them your own.

Solutions from previous issues are available in the magazine section of my website:

www.maryjanesfarm.org

Seven Ways to Switch to an Organic Lifestyle

Organic living encompasses so much more than just food choices. With all of the chemicals creeping into our homes daily, it's important to find natural alternatives. Why? Because organic is clean, vibrant, and healthy—it keeps us young! And it all begins with agricultural practices that are gentler on the environment. So, here are seven simple ways to make a full-spectrum switch.

1. Start with Your Skin

Instead of saturating your body's biggest organ with impurities, opt for lotions, creams, and cosmetics that come with the organic guarantee.

seven wonders

5. Shop Locally

The best organic food is what's grown closest to you. It's fresher and it hasn't guzzled gallons of gasoline to get to you. Plus, buying locally helps support the organic effort in your neck of the woods. Search the LocalHarvest website (www.localharvest.org) to find farmers' markets, family farms, and other sources of sustainably grown food in your area. If you can't find a nearby resource, the LocalHarvest Store can connect you with products from family farms via mail order.

6. Find Your Fragrance

Whether you love a single, signature fragrance or a variety of sweet scents, your senses will rejoice when you quit the chemicals. Organic perfumes are also perfect for people who have allergies or sensitive skin. Try Aubrey Organics (www.aubrey-organics.com), Jo Wood Organics (www.jowoodorganics.com), and handy solid fragrances in recycled tins by LUSH (www.lushusa.com).

7. Express Your Eco-pinions

Cotton is the most pesticide-dependent crop in the world, accounting for 25 percent of all pesticide use. Get into the swing of summertime by treating yourself to a new organic cotton t-shirt. I'm Organic Inc. (The Organic Messaging Company) offers cute slogans on their organic fitted tees—a fun way to express your eco-pinions! www.imorganic.com