



## 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.

### 2. Eat Organic

**"I will replace one non-organic food on my weekly grocery list with an organic alternative."** The trick is to focus on non-organic foods that can have the biggest negative impact on your health. Meat, eggs, and dairy products are a good place to start because there's a double-whammy that takes place in their production. Not only are cows injected with growth hormones and fed antibiotics, they also ingest hay and feed that contain pesticide residues.

### 3. Ditch Paper Towels

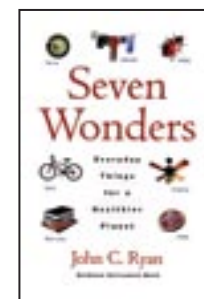
**"I will stop buying paper towels, period."** Americans go through about 2.5 million tons of paper towels annually, and even the ones made from recycled materials usually end up in landfills. So ditch the paper altogether and start using microfiber towels instead. They don't scratch, they attract dirt and dust like a magnet, they're super absorbent, and they're washable. Waste not, want not, right? Try the Norwex Enviro Cloth ([www.norwexonline.com](http://www.norwexonline.com)).

### 4. Get a Water Bottle

**"I will refill a water bottle each day instead of buying new ones."** Not only are billions of plastic water bottles landfill-bound in the U.S. each year, but the water they contain is generally no better for you than the stuff that comes from your own kitchen sink (especially if you use a filter), and it costs up to 10,000 times the price of tap water! Opt for a glass or stainless steel bottle, and refill it as needed, for free. Check out the variety of stainless steel bottles available from Klean Kanteen ([www.kleankanteen.com](http://www.kleankanteen.com)).

# Simple Solutions

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/Recipes-Patterns-Instructions](http://www.maryjanesfarm.org/Recipes-Patterns-Instructions)

### 7 Resolutions for a Green New Year

There's something about a new year that emboldens us to reinvent our lives. So with 2010 fast approaching, it's the perfect time to muster good intentions and gear up for the opportunity to "go green."

#### 1. Use a Reusable Bag

**"I will store one reusable tote bag in my vehicle and bring it into the store the next time I go shopping."**

Those plastic bags that stores dole out by the zillions are made from petroleum, and only about 1 percent of them are recycled throughout the world each year. Most end up in landfills or in the oceans, where they wreak havoc on sea life.

# seven wonders

### 5. Grow Green

**"Starting this month, I will grow one green thing that I can eat."** The quickest and easiest way to start growing your own food is sprouting. Sprouts are super easy and they offer superb nutrition that costs less than any other fresh grocery store food. Sprouting doesn't require soil, sunshine, or even a green thumb. Ready to eat in three to five days, sprouts equal oranges and tomatoes in Vitamin C and a hamburger patty in protein! Check out my simple sprouting how-to at [www.maryjanesfarm.org/column](http://www.maryjanesfarm.org/column).

### 6. Cut Catalog Clutter

**"I will stop collecting catalogs (especially those I don't even want)."** Each year, 19 billion catalogs are mailed to consumers across America, gobbling more than 53 million trees and creating 56 billion gallons of wastewater in the process. Visit [CatalogChoice.org](http://CatalogChoice.org) and opt out of unwanted catalogs. Within 10 weeks, your mailbox will be taking a lighter toll on the environment. Less waste, less pollution—it's just that easy!

### 7. Buy Less

**"Every time I enter a store, I will make conscious choices to buy less stuff."** Consider each item carefully. Do you really need it, or will it just end up at the bottom of a drawer? Packaging, waste, and pollution are the hidden costs behind nearly everything we purchase. Just think of how long all of those impulse items will linger in a landfill. Get inspired to make a difference by watching *The Story of Stuff* at [www.storyofstuff.com](http://www.storyofstuff.com).