



Chapter 18

The Organic Decision

Plastic sticks are there in the environment since decades, threatening wildlife and spreading toxins. There's a lot of microplastic dumped in our oceans. No one even really knows how long it's going to take to decompose - estimates range from at least hundreds of years to possibly a lot longer.

It also contributes to global warming (almost all plastics are made from chemicals that come from the production of planet-warming fuels like gas, oil and even coal). But we operate in a broken system that's clogged with plastic. Thankfully now there is a global movement gaining steam to reduce plastic pollution - more and more people are cutting down on the amount of plastic they use - to ensure that we can have cleaner streets, oceans, and beautiful communities. Plus, not only will these steps help save our planet but also improves our quality of life.

Moving away from plastic products can be a daunting task, but it is not impossible. All it takes is some thought and some serious will to want to make a difference. So, start small - soon all those small plastic-free changes will add up really big.

Simple steps you can take

- 1 Refuse to use all single use plastics.
- 2 Carry reusable shopping bags.
- 3 Give up bottled water.
- 4 Use glass, metal or bamboo drinking straws or say no to straw.
- 5 Cut out sodas, juices, and other plastic-bottled beverages.
- 6 Buy breads that comes in paper bags.
- 7 Choose milk in returnable glass bottles Or unpackaged but pasteurized loose /token milk.
- 8 Carry lunches in reusable stainless steel or glass containers.
- 9 Kitchens are a plastic magnet. The most environment friendly way to green your kitchen is to use the plastic items you have, and then when they reach the end of their life, replace them with plastic-free alternatives. Use ceramic, glass or metal bowls instead of plastic ones. Wooden or metal utensils instead of plastic ones.

10 Hotels can use paper-sealed glass bottles for captive use in place of plastic bottles.

11 Keep a zero-waste food kit in your car at all times - a container, a reusable straw, a coffee cup, a water bottle, a napkin, and similar stuff that can help you avoid using plastic wherever you are.

The Good Work!

The Food Authority has started a consumer awareness campaign **“Eat Right India for Sustainable Living”** as a call to action for plastic waste management and reduction of plastic footprint in the F&B industry. Accordingly, FSSAI has a Scientific Panel on Packaging to deal with the challenges in the area and to address them accordingly in the regulations.

As mentioned earlier FSSAI has also constituted a Network for Scientific Co-operation for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (NetSCoFAN), which is the network of research and academic institutions working in the area of food and nutrition to work for safer and sustainable packaging options.

FSSAI is further asking State/UT Food Safety departments to create awareness and to educate the public on use of alternatives to plastics, proper plastic disposal and litter management. It has started work on the process of allowing the use of other food grade packaging materials for packaging of drinking water and has allowed serving drinking water in paper sealed reusable glass bottles for captive use within the hotel premises subject to certain conditions.

FSSAI has also issued guidelines for use of bamboo as food contact material. The guidelines also permit use of liquid nitrogen dosing in PET bottles during the packaging of drinking water. This would help in strengthening the bottle thereby facilitating the manufacture and use of bottles with lower wall thickness.

The process of removing the restriction on the use of returnable bottles for packaging of artificially sweetened beverages has been initiated. The key features of FSSAI’s plastic free program include: preparation for collection and disposal of plastic waste in F&B sector, awareness campaign and mobilization of employees massive plastic waste collection drives by all, across rural and urban areas and recycling of collected plastic waste.

In addition, corporations and food companies using plastic for packaging have been nudged FSSAI to find newer ways to get their products to us in a plastic free manner.

NO MORE
PLASTIC



It is time to learn to believe in a world where the land, sky, oceans, and water are home to an abundance of life, not an abundance of plastic and make an effort to reduce our own plastic footprint and recycle as much as possible.

