

**April**

## Fun Facts

### April 22<sup>nd</sup> is Earth Day: Kitchen Tips for Saving the Planet

Follow these 12 tips to reduce, reuse and recycle, save energy and use less water!

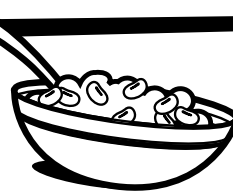
1. Drink milk and other beverages bottled in plastic, and recycle the containers.
2. Purchase products that use recycled packaging, like yogurt in plastic containers.
3. Pack sandwiches in reusable containers instead of sandwich bags or sandwich wrap.
4. Reuse grocery bags. Better yet, bring your own, reusable bags to the market – it's fashionable, too!
5. Cook in one pot. You wash fewer dishes and use less energy.
6. Cook large amounts and freeze the extra. Cooking and only reheating later saves energy.
7. Boil only the amount of water you need and cover the pot when you boil it.
8. Cook once and eat as a family. It saves energy, and kids reap the benefits of family meals, including better nutrition.
9. Turn off the lights when you leave the kitchen.
10. Unplug appliances, like the toaster oven and coffee maker, when not using them.
11. Plan meals ahead of time. It saves last-minute trips to the grocery store or the scramble to get take-out.
12. Wash only full dishwasher loads.

### Did You Know...?

Recycling a ton of plastic milk bottles saves the equivalent of 3.8 barrels of oil. It helps our environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and saving landfill space.

Source: Killinger, Jennifer. "Information Sheet." American Chemistry Council. March 2007  
[http://americanchemistry.com/s\\_plastics/sec\\_content.asp?CID-1102&DID-5007](http://americanchemistry.com/s_plastics/sec_content.asp?CID-1102&DID-5007)

### One-Pot Cheesy Rice & Beans



Follow one of our Tips for Saving the Planet with this easy and nutrient-rich, one-pot dish! Serve it with a crisp, green salad and a glass of cold milk for a complete meal.

- 1 3/4 cups instant brown rice (about 3 1/2 cups cooked)
- 2 cups water
- 1 15-ounce can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 1/2 cups frozen, mixed vegetables
- 1 1/2 cups salsa
- 1 1/2 cups pre-shredded, reduced-fat Cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup reduced-fat sour cream

Place the rice, water, beans, vegetables and salsa in a large saucepan or Dutch oven over high heat and stir until completely combined.

Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat, and simmer, covered, until most of the liquid is absorbed, about 10-12 minutes.

Stir in the cheese until melted. Serve in individual bowls topped with sour cream.

Courtesy: *The Mom's Guide to Meal Makeovers: Improving the Way Your Family Eats, One Meal at a Time!*  
[www.mealmakeovermoms.com](http://www.mealmakeovermoms.com)

### Kids' Corner:



#### Sustainable Farming

Explore with your children what dairy farmers are doing to sustain the environment and make the world a better place. Visit [www.DairyFarmingToday.org](http://www.DairyFarmingToday.org) > **Caring for the Environment.**

#### Environmental Kids Club: You & Your Environment

Do your kids want to make the earth a cleaner place to live? How can they help to protect the air, water, and land? They can find out at [www.epa.gov/kids](http://www.epa.gov/kids).