

## **Random Ideas for Smaller Groups, Meetings, Schools, Events**

### **Stuff:**

Give the gift of compostables! A crate stocked with compostable products that an organization can easily pull out for meetings or small events is a great gift for your favorite non-profit organization or place of worship (nice to check first to be sure they want it) or for an individual you know that often host meetings, ceremonies, or circles with potlucks and such.

Reusable is always best! Really nice stainless utensils can often be picked up for very cheap at thrift stores so that you have a good collection for the workplace kitchen, events and programs. This is the same for mugs and cloth napkins.

Water! Instead of providing bottled water, either pick up some pitchers from thrift stores or a simple dispenser that can be filled with tap water or filtered tap water. Add a few slices of lemon and they'll never go back to individual bottles! If you do use paper cups, provide a marking pen so that people can add their names. For consistent groups or an event such as a march or walk, consider providing or selling at cost re-usable bottles that can become a souvenir. At our youth gardening program, each youth gets a water bottle (of recycled materials and that we pre-order in bulk) and decorates with their name in permanent marker. They pick this up upon arrival and leave it in a crate for their next visit. For weekend events/retreats or in the workplace, each person has a cloth napkin for the weekend. They write their name on a wooden clothespin and hang it up after a meal.

### **Schools:**

Getting youth involved in researching, budgeting, setting up meetings, creating forums, and advocating can be a fabulous part of developing or advancing school based 'deep green' initiatives. One inspiring local example is the RC Mahar High School (Orange) student 'Waste Warriors' who, after the success of working with their food service director to skip the polystyrene and purchase washable, compartment trays, initiated a Franklin County wide competition among four other schools to innovate then measure their waste reduction successes!

### **Sorting:**

Just as with large events, a sorting system thought through well in advance makes everything smoother and easier to repeat time again. Consider what will make for a clear and even attractive containers and fun 'what to put where' signs with a way to simply affix them (not quick pieces of paper, but re-usable, wipe-able signs (laminated or painted). Repurpose political lawn signs! (paint then write on).

What will happen with your compostables? Is there someone who would be interested in taking home a compost bucket each week? Creating an urban worm bin? A local pig farmer who would take it?

At an event when everyone will suddenly descends on the sorting station at once (e.g. after lunch at a conference) it is really helpful to be announce the process in advance of the meal, and/or have a volunteer at the sorting station to help ensure things do go in the right place.

(a non-exhaustive list by Deb Habib, Seeds of Solidarity)