

Grocery Store Bans Plastic Bags



Many people are asked “Paper or plastic?” when their groceries are being bagged in the supermarket. Soon one grocery store won’t be asking shoppers that question. The store is eliminating plastic bags to cut down on the amount of trash in the environment.

The owners of Whole Foods Market said in January that they will no longer use disposable plastic bags after Earth Day 2008, which is April 22. They hope shoppers will bring their own reusable bags. If shoppers don’t bring their own bags, the store will offer paper bags made from recycled paper.

The store’s plan to end use of plastic bags is its gift to the planet this Earth Day, said A.C. Gallo, Whole Foods’ president. “We estimate we will keep 100 million new plastic grocery bags out of our environment between Earth Day and the end of this year,” he said.

Scientists say that plastic bags are bad for the environment because they clog drains, harm wildlife, and take up too much space in landfills.

NEWS WORD BOX

grocery eliminate
recycle reusable
disposable landfill

Some countries have banned plastic bags and others tax people who use them. Last year, San Francisco, California, became the first U.S. city to ban disposable plastic bags from stores.

Some people say we should stop “trashing” plastic bags. Plastic bags are cheaper and take less energy to produce than paper bags, they say. Plus, they can be used over and over.

MORE FACTS ABOUT PLASTIC BAGS

- A plastic bag can take as long as 1,000 years to break down in a landfill.
- Americans use 100 billion plastic shopping bags a year -- that’s more than 330 a year for every person in the country.

THINK ABOUT THE NEWS

For one week, keep track of how many plastic bags your family brings into your home. How might you cut down on that number?