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Eco-friendly Prep for the Coming Growing Season

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It?s that time of year again ?the middle of winter, when I usually begin doing some planning for the upcoming growing season. January is a good month to start since it?s after the holidays and as life returns to normal there?s a lot of new opportunity.

I?m not sure if I?ll be able to have the traditional garden I used to have or if I?ll have to make due with one on the balcony like last year. Nevertheless, I?m focused on planning for the former so I?ll be ready if a plot becomes available.

That being the case as part of my New Years resolutions I promised myself I would be a little more sensitive when it comes to being eco-friendly in the garden this spring. No, I don?t use toxic pesticides, weed killers, or anything like that but I could be a bit more conscious in other areas.

For instance, instead of buying certain supplies I?m already starting to save some household items for seed starting, growing, and transplanting.

Egg cartons are a good place to start. I try to only buy eggs that come in cardboard containers because they are great for seedlings. Each unit that an egg sits in is the perfect size for filling with soil and burying in it a few seeds. When the sprouts are big enough the units from the egg carton can be separated very easily and placed into a bigger pot or directly in the ground without worry to the environment because they?ll simply biodegrade.

Next are plastic containers. Although I try not to purchase products with plastic containers sometimes there?s no way around it so whatever I can do to reuse them is beneficial to the environment including finding uses in the garden.

Pots are the first thing that comes to mind, though they wouldn?t be for large plants. They are also good for decorative purposes as a Santa Ana garage door [1] contractor once told me. He described how one of his clients hung plastic yogurt containers as pots across the front of their garage with a type of ivy hanging down. He said it really enhanced the look of the garage door and increased the curb side appeal of the property.

Then there?s DIY Junk. I periodically do projects around the house and like every DIYer knows there?s usually some leftover waste that can be put to good use. One time I had a few scraps of wood I took over to a neighbor who shredded it up for me so I could use it as mulch. Another time I placed some leftover tiles underneath potted plants to prevent water damage to the patio.

Finally, even though it?s cold outside I have to start composting more so when the time comes I?ll have hearty soil for my veggies and herbs. Because of where I live now making compost has been a little challenging but I have a few new options I?m willing to explore, as the benefits will out way the extra effort.

Even if I have to use the balcony again as my only outlet for planting this spring and summer, composting will still come in handy.

Meanwhile, egg cartons, plastic containers, DIY junk, and composting each represent just a small direction I can take my green thumb.

With some luck and inspiration I should be able to make it work and realize my goal of being more eco-friendly in the garden this year.

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