



June 2016

**Greetings!** hope you enjoy the summer and our seasonal info.

### A thought for the birds...



Consider our feathered friends by providing them with a birdbath in your garden. One plunked in the middle of a lawn won't do. Birds first need to go to a perch nearby to check out their surroundings, so set the bath beside a tree, fence or tall shrub. The shade will help keep water fresher, but do change it a couple of times a week and give the container a good scrubbing. This will eliminate bacteria and suppress mosquito breeding.

Then sit back in a chair nearby with your camera and capture a moment.

### Sustainable Choices

We can't always get the answers we need when trying to make more sustainable lifestyle choices. Staying conscious of the interconnection between all things can help us think of our options in terms of their impact on the environmental and our natural resources. Questions we could ask ourselves include:

- \* Where is my food grown? Is it grown locally, using sustainable agriculture? Is it organic?
- \* What materials are my clothes made of? Were these clothes made by workers earning fair wages?
- \* Can I pool my errands to make fewer trips, carpool or use the bus or a bike more often?
- \* Have I taken measures to retrofit my home so it is more energy efficient?
- \* Am I conserving home energy use - including water, electricity & gas as much as I can?
- \* Am I correctly utilizing composting and recycling systems?
- \* What other things can I do to lead a more sustainable lifestyle?



We might pick up a package of toilet paper saying it is 100% recycled and think we are making a good selection. But recycled content could just be the cuttings from paper making. We need to look for the percentage of POST CONSUMER content. This means that some of the paper has come from municipal blue boxes.

YREA is happy to report that Loblaws PC offers 100% post consumer recycled toilet paper! Metro & Food Basics offer garbage bags made from a minimum of 20% recycled plastic. It is in a roll without additional packaging. If any of our readers would like to share their eco shopping finds, please post on YREA's [Facebook](#) page.

Check out [Powerstream](#) for home energy saving tips, YREA's [ECO SHOPPER](#) for greener consumer ideas & our [CLEAN WATER](#) brochure for water quality conservation.



## Biochar for Animal Welfare

During YREA's continuing research of biochar, we discovered that a large part of the biochar produced in Europe is used in farming to improve the health of livestock.

Biochar can suppress intestinal pathogens, deactivating toxins already in digestive systems when used in feed formulas for cattle, poultry and other farm animals.

Biochar's high adsorbent quality, when added to litter, locks in moisture and nitrogen compounds, reducing odours and emissions of ammonia as well as footpad diseases.

YREA is particularly interested in further study and development of this use of biochar for the improvement of animal health and welfare and the reduction of agricultural GHGE. What a valuable tool for farmers seeking to implement more sustainable practices!



Check out your nearest [pick your own](#) or [farmers markets](#) or others further afield when you are on the road this summer.

Local radishes are available now. Don't throw away the tops. They are delicious and full of vitamins and minerals. Use raw in a salad mix or chop and add to a stir fry or pot of pasta one minute before it is cooked.

**Stay informed.** Visit YREA's [website](#) & [Facebook](#) for info & eco news.

### **Support us! YORK REGION ENVIRONMENTAL ALLIANCE**

is your local charity committed to seeking and advocating for ecological solutions to mitigate climate change. Please help us achieve our goals with a generous donation today.

**DONATE  
NOW**