



10 Minutes For The Planet
Green-up with some DIY – part 1
Beeswax Wrap ©
by Valentine Rinner

Hello everyone and welcome to this week's episode of 10 minutes for the Planet. This is the first episode of a series of DIY everyday-solutions to green-up your lifestyle. Our topic today is about plastic and food.

A huge proportion of the food we buy, store and carry with us is covered in plastic. This creates a lot of waste and on top of that the vast majority of food-related plastics - including cling film and BPA-free containers - can in fact be quite toxic as they are full of the now familiar endocrine disruptors. These chemicals can be found everywhere in industrial processes despite their known negative effect on health. They are mostly estrogen-type disruptors meaning that our body recognises these chemicals as being the estrogen hormone. Disruptions in our estrogen levels can lead to fatigue and mood swings and also depression, infertility, cancers and auto-immune diseases.

When our food or drink touches those toxic plastics, the chemicals gets released into our food. The home-made organic sandwich now becomes contaminated... fortunately some great alternatives are already out there. A few examples are: leak proof glass containers, silicone lids, stainless steel containers and reusable beeswax wraps.

Beeswax wrap is a simple reusable alternative to plastic wraps and sandwich bags. It's perfect for wrapping sandwiches, snacks, fruits and vegetables, bread and left-over bowls of any type of food. After using it just clean it with soap and cold water.

You can easily find ready-made beeswax wraps online - however they can be pricy. The DIY version is much more affordable and you can choose your own size and prints. All you need is some cotton fabric, natural beeswax, parchment paper and an iron. Beeswax can easily be found online or in bee-product stores. So last weekend after looking up a bunch of different techniques, I bought a few hundred grams of wax for a few euros and made my own. Here's how I did it.

I started off with some colorful thin but tight cotton fabric. I arbitrarily decided to cut 3 different square sizes: 18, 25 and 30 cm. It's better to use pinking shears if you have them (those that cut in small zigzags) to prevent fraying but it's not obligatory.

My beeswax was a solid block so I grated it. Next time I think I'll buy beads because grating the block was long and messy. I protected my ironing board with a large piece of fabric. I laid a piece of parchment paper and my first piece of cut fabric on top of it. I

sprinkled my beeswax shavings across the surface of the fabric. I covered the whole thing with another piece of parchment paper and ironed all over it. The wax melts immediately and you can clearly see the darker parts where the wax has soaked into the fabric and where it hasn't so I added more wax on the parts that hadn't absorbed enough. Once the fabric was full of wax I quickly took it out of my layers of parchment and hung it up with 2 clothes pegs to let it set and cool off while I repeated the process with the next piece of fabric.

The beeswax smells quite strong so I aired it for a few days before wrapping my food with it this morning. I really enjoy how you can pretty much give it any shape you want, from wrapping up a bar of chocolate to covering a bowl of salad in the fridge. I also really like how colorful my lunch looks in its new wrapping!

Bye everyone and see you next week for a new episode of 10 minutes for the Planet.