

# Choose to Reuse: Bags

## 4 Reasons to reuse your shopping and produce bags, and to stop using new plastic bags:

1. **Save Marine and Wildlife**: Birds, animals, and marine life such as sea turtles and fish often mistake the plastic bag and other plastic materials for food and consume them, causing illness and death. Animals might also get entangled in the plastic.
2. **Help Human Health**: Some chemicals from the plastic bags are toxic and can disrupt the normal functioning of hormones in the body. Most plastic fragments in the oceans have hormone-disrupting pollutants. Once marine animals consume them, they move through the food web then later into the humans who consume fish.
3. **Reduce Climate Change**: Most plastic is made of polypropylene, which made from petroleum and natural gas. These are non-renewable fossil fuel-based materials, and greenhouse gases are created when they are extracted and produced.
4. **Conserve Energy**: The total amount of energy required to drive a car for 0.5 miles is the equivalent energy required to produce nine plastic bags.

### Did you know....

- Americans use 100 billion plastic bags a year, which require 12 million barrels of oil to manufacture.
- Americans use an average of 365 plastic bags per person per year. People in Denmark use an average of four plastic bags per year.
- It takes 1,000 years for a plastic bag to degrade in a landfill. Unfortunately, the bags don't break down completely but instead photo-degrade, becoming microplastics that absorb toxins and continue to pollute the environment.
- The plastic typically used in bottles, bags and food containers contains chemical additives such as endocrine disruptors, which are associated with negative health effects including cancers, birth defects and immune system suppression in humans and wildlife.

