



PRESS RELEASE

A 'low-carbon' Christmas Carol

Cut out the carbon without cutting down the festive fun this Christmas

December 8th 2009 – Our personal carbon footprints will go up by at least 6% over Christmas, thanks to all that extra shopping, eating and drinking, say the experts at the Carbon Trust. But worry not, they have also given us six easy ways to cut our carbon impact with small, simple changes that we can make at home to be kind to the climate as well each other over the festive season, including choosing everyday products that carry the Carbon Reduction Label.

Six top tips to help consumers enjoy a lower-carbon Christmas:



Care for your Christmas tree: Real trees have much lower carbon footprints than artificial Christmas trees. If you have an artificial tree at home you need to re-use it for at least 10 Christmases to keep its environmental impact lower than that of a real tree. How you get rid of your tree is also really important. Planting your Christmas tree, having it chipped to spread on the garden or even burning it, reduces its carbon footprint by up to 80% compared to putting it in the dustbin.



Put the lid on your spuds at Christmas: Covering your potatoes and vegetables during cooking cuts the carbon footprint by almost half. Choosing Tesco's King Edward potatoes with the Carbon Reduction Label will shrink your Christmas dinner's footprint even more, as Tesco has committed do their bit to reduce their impact too.



Recycle your cans and bottles: Recycling the empties from your Christmas drinks parties can reduce the carbon footprint of your Bulmers, Fosters, Carling, or Coca Cola (for the designated driver) by up to 40%



Plan what you need and buy just enough: Our shopping habits mean we often buy too much, for example we waste 7% of the milk that we buy. Instead of buying two pints today, buy one now and one at the weekend. Not only will the regular walk to the corner shop do you good but you'll waste less too. This minimises the greenhouse gas emissions required to produce milk in the first place.



Watch your waste: – Most left over food ends up as waste in landfill where it decomposes and produces Methane gas that is 25 times more powerful as a greenhouse gas than Carbon Dioxide. So make use of your leftovers, and enjoy turkey sandwiches on Boxing Day made with Kingsmill's bread, which also carries the Carbon Reduction Label showing its commitment to reduce.



Keep your Christmas jumper cool: Approximately a quarter of the carbon footprint of your clothes comes from washing, drying and ironing them at home. Turning the temperature from 40 to 30 degrees will make a 160g CO₂e per wash difference to the impact of your winter woollies. Tesco found that concentrated liquid detergent, at just 600g CO₂ per load, has a lower footprint than big box powder.

Euan Murray, general manager of carbon footprinting at the Carbon Trust, explains: "Everything we do or buy has a carbon footprint. Christmas is typically the season of over-indulgence so it's a good time to find simple ways to reduce our impact on the environment. What we buy makes up two-thirds of our overall carbon footprint, so reducing this will make a big difference.

"For us as consumers, changing our behaviour is the key to taking action on climate change. Choosing products that carry the Carbon Reduction Label means that you are choosing brands that are committed to carbon reductions. There are already many household brands that are committed to cutting their carbon footprint. These brands display the Carbon Trust's Carbon Reduction Label."



For more information on how best to reduce your carbon footprint over Christmas without cutting out the festive fun, visit: www.carbon-label.com.

Happy holidays from the Carbon Trust!

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Consumers can contact their local authority to check if it has a scheme for chipping and composting trees to produce mulch/soil improver.

The Carbon Reduction Label

- Since 2007, the Carbon Trust has worked with more than 65 brands and 4,000 individual product lines to measure and reduce the carbon footprint of many everyday household items. Many of these brands now carry the Carbon Reduction Label on their packaging to show consumers they are committed to reducing their impact on the environment.
- The Carbon Trust designed the Carbon Reduction Label to help companies communicate the impact of their product carbon footprinting work to consumers. Companies that display the Carbon Trust's Carbon Reduction Label (on pack, online or elsewhere) are making a commitment to reduce the carbon footprint of their product or service.
- Two years ago the Carbon Trust laid the foundations for a product footprinting methodology. Published in October 2008, the PAS 2050 is the first international standard for companies to measure the carbon footprint of their products and services. The carbon footprint of a product or service is the total carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases emitted during its life, from production to final disposal.
- The development of PAS 2050 was been overseen by an independent Steering Group, made up of NGOs, academics, business and government representatives, supported by a number of Working Groups to discuss technical issues. The Carbon Trust is now working with the World Resources Institute and ISO to support the global harmonisation of product carbon footprinting standards.

The Carbon Trust

- The Carbon Trust is an independent company set up in 2001 by Government in response to the threat of climate change, to accelerate the move to a low carbon economy by working with organisations to reduce carbon emissions and develop commercial low carbon technologies.