

# Glass, plastic or paper?

Consider how you can reduce the nearly 250 metric tons of waste we generate each year.

| Material                        | Landfill Lifespan | Eco-friendly choices  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Glass Containers                | 1 million years   | Recycle glass bottles, unless you want your great-great-great-great grand-kids to find one you tossed.                                |
| Plastic containers (#1, #2, #5) | 450 years         | User fewer throwaway items and try to buy #1 and #2 only.   |
| Plastic bags and film           | 500-1,000 years   | Use canvas grocery bags; carry durable stainless-steel lunch-boxes.   |
| Polystyrene foam peanuts        | 500 years         | Cushion fragile shipments with crumpled newspapers or magazines. Drop off excess foam packaging peanuts at your local shipping store. |
| Paper bags                      | 1 month           | Switch to reusable canvas bags and always recycle paper bags.   |
| Gift wrap or other coated paper | 2-5 months        | Wrap gifts in newspaper comic pages or fabric wraps.  |
| Corrugated cardboard            | 1-2 months        | Buy packaging-free products, reuse cardboard boxes and compost shredded cardboard.  |
| Steel and aluminum containers   | 200-400 years     | Buy in bulk and recycle steel or aluminum containers.   |

Reference: *Sprouts Magazine* March/April 2010