A Quick Guide to Sustainable Purchasing

What is it?

* “Sustainable purchasing is purchasing that builds healthy communities, economies, and environments all along local and global supply chains” (Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council).

What should you look for when purchasing products?

* General
  + Check with the Office of Sustainability Free Shop to see if they have the product you need
  + Buy it used
  + Buy durable and high quality products
  + Find products with reduced amounts of environmentally sensitive materials
  + Think about where the product will go at the end of its life and how to properly dispose of it
  + Buy in bulk to reduce packaging waste
  + Use standard shipping
  + **Look at this site from the EPA that covers even more products:** <https://www.epa.gov/greenerproducts/identify-greener-products-and-services>
* Paper
  + Remember to try to use non-paper items first (take notes on computer etc.)
  + Forest Stewardship Council Certified
  + Recycled content
* Appliances
* Look for Energy Star Rated Appliances
  + a rating approved by the EPA, “since 1992, Energy Star and its partners have helped save American families and businesses more than $450 billion and over 3.5 trillion kilowatt-hours of electricity while also achieving broad emissions reductions”
* Computers
  + Have EPEAT (Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool) rating
    - Organization evaluates a technology’s sustainability regarding its whole lifecycle- design to recycling)
* Food
  + Buy local and organic when possible
  + Eat more raw fruits and vegetables and stay low on the food chain (eliminating meat and other animal products)
  + Purchase Fairtrade, organic, or shade grown coffee or tea
  + Purchase materials to serve and prepare food that can be used again, composted, or recycled
* Furniture
  + GREENGAURD and Cradle-to-Cradle certify furniture with low volatile organic content (VOC)