



The CONSCIOUS Cook



PLEASE CHOP/TEAR
WET/GREEN ADD TO THIS HEAT
ADDING SCRUNG
SHEETS OF NEWS
(ON TANKSTAND
SOGGY-NETS/ANY
REPLACE AG-BAG
+ WIRE COVER



Sustainable Cooking and Living



Giselle Wilkinson

About the author

Giselle Wilkinson has been a social and environmental activist for over thirty years. Influenced by early experiences of communal living and travel and her studies toward a Masters degree in Education, Giselle realised earlier than most that choosing to live consciously is a powerful force for positive change. This understanding is reflected in the Sustainable Living Foundation, which she was instrumental in establishing, and in the way in which she lives her life.

Giselle's passion for life is visible in a home that reflects sustainability in action. The house vibrates with the energy of young people and two friendly dogs while the yard is home to a productive garden and a collection of ducks and chooks.



About the book

A RECIPE FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Containing 50 delicious recipes covering an eclectic mix of ethnicities, ingredients and dishes, *The Conscious Cook* is completely different from other cook-books. It looks at food, not only from the point of health and taste, but also through the lens of the global sustainability movement working to reduce our impact on our very stressed planet. *The Conscious Cook* raises awareness of the interconnections that link human health and wellbeing with that of the health of the planet.

- Do you wonder what you can do in your busy life that will be meaningful and make a difference?

- Are you surprised to find plastic bags and fertilisers are made of oil? Confused about what rice to buy?

- Do the distances our food travels and the water content in their production amaze you?

- What impact do your food purchases and cooking practices have on the planet and what can you do about it?

Bravely tackling this complex issue, this avante-garde cookbook offers a way forward and equips us with some 'sustainable living' thinking to help us grapple with the issues and steer towards a sustainable future. You'll be surprised at how tantalising it is and how easy it is to make a difference.

INDEX

1	foreword
4	introduction
10	my journey
15	the conscious cook icons
20	recipes
	part one:
	HOW WHAT YOU EAT AFFECTS YOU
	chapter one – wellbeing
121	Diet versus nutrition
123	Current and future health issues
131	Menu planning skill development
133	Retailer’s marketing strategies
	chapter two – food negatives
137	Introduction
138	The precautionary principle
138	Food additives
138	Additives to avoid
141	Food irradiation
141	Pesticides in food
142	Genetically modified food
146	Organotins
146	Teflon
	chapter three – changing the status quo
148	Meat and human health – the body burden
	chapter four – food positives
150	Organic foods
153	Organic shopping
154	Soybeans
155	Biodynamic foods
156	Biodynamics and wholefoods
156	Salt
	part two:
	HOW WHAT YOU EAT AFFECTS THE WORLD
	chapter one – communicating sustainability through food
159	Our values shape our choices
160	Where are we now?
164	Antropocentrism
166	Greenhouse urgency
170	Peak oil + food versus fuel
171	Water

chapter two – changing the status quo

173	Feeding the world
175	Meat and the land
176	Meat and greenhouse gas emissions
177	Meat and water
179	More ‘sustainable’ meat
182	Meat and animal rights and factory farming
183	Eggs
185	Fish
188	Fair trade

chapter three – locality and community

194	Food miles
195	Local and in season
197	Hundred Mile Diet
197	Australian grown rice

chapter four – globality, the world community

201	Distance versus poverty
203	Food waste
206	Animal production waste
207	Preserve diversity
208	Genetic engineering
211	Canola oil
239	Cleaning up
241	A final note about cleaning up sustainably
247	Earth Charter
250	World Future Council
251	The Cultural Creatives
251	Wellbeing Manifesto

part three:

WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

easy things that will help you and the whole biosphere!

214	Sustainability is about the way we live
214	Befriend the living Earth
219	Energy and Cooking
220	Local food
222	Sustainable Living Directory
236	Involvement
236	The Sustainable Living Foundation
237	Other organisations worthy of your support

266 organisations and links

281 index

284 glossary

The Conscious Cook icons:

The icons used in the recipes are to guide the reader to consider the issues. How well the recipe shapes up to be sustainable depends on the choices and actions of those preparing the food and this in turn depends on the values and priorities that are implemented.

An icon represents a set of issues and is an invitation to think about their relevance to that recipe and then to think about how to get the best outcome that is possible in the circumstances you're operating in. You will prioritise on the basis of a wide range of criteria and on what matters most to you.

The Conscious Cook encourages a thoughtful, informed and considerate approach to food choices and cooking.

Food Miles



This covers issues about the scale and consequences of transporting food over large distances and of the efforts of people trying to find ways to minimise their footprint by eating very local produce.

Justice



Justice means it has to be healthy and fair not just for the end consumer but also for the growers and the land and biodiversity in which it grows.

Seasonality



This covers the benefits, to local farmers, economy, biodiversity and to the environment in general of eating seasonal food.

Health



Some recipes are bursting with goodness, freshness, vitality and nutrition. Others are still good, in moderation, and too delicious to ignore. Some health considerations are universal – clean, fresh, nutritious – and others are individual and more personal.

Community



This covers the area of smart consumerism, directing our money in considered and worthwhile directions (your dollar is your vote), as well as learning about and supporting community solutions.

Energy



Not just about electricity or gas, coal and oil (polluting fossil fuels) it's also about how many stove burners the recipe needs, if the oven is used too, as well as appliances such as the fridge or freezer.

Purity



The value of organics, of food free of additives and of non-polluting cleaning. This icon also represents the terrible cost to the earth of greenhouse and chemical pollution and the sheer waste to landfill of leftover food.

Biodiversity



This icon represents the fine and intricate balance of nature, the ecosystems and the millions of species, many of which are at risk if we allow climate change to become catastrophic.

Water



How much water is used in producing the food – the growing, irrigation, processing and any packaging, etc.

1 cup chickpeas – soaked overnight
1 or 2 big onions – sliced down the vein into 6 big pieces
1 capsicum – cut long-ways into 8 chunky pieces
1 eggplant – cut square chunks (½ first, then cut each into 3, then each into 4)
(Optional carrots, cauliflower – cut into similar sized chunks)
2 large fresh tomatoes with ½ cup of water over the top or 1 can of chopped tomatoes
¼ cup water

500 grams green beans – topped and tailed
1 jiggle tamari (a couple of teaspoons or to taste)
1 teaspoon of good salt
¼ cup oil over the top
1 bunch fresh coriander – ½ roughly chopped, retain some for garnish
2 teaspoons cumin
2 teaspoons coriander
2 teaspoons turmeric
250 grams tofu (optional)
2 tablespoons roast slivered almonds
2 cups couscous – or more if required

Moroccan tagine

Soak chickpeas overnight and then boil chickpeas until soft.

Layer each vegetable in the following order into a tagine or large pot as you go: onions, capsicum, eggplant, (carrots, cauliflower – if using), tomatoes and chickpeas.

Put the green beans in a heap on the top, add water, tamari, salt and drizzle the oil over them.

Cook slowly on stove leaving undisturbed with the lid tightly on for the first 15 minutes.

Stir in half the coriander, the spices (and tofu if using) and cook a further 15 minutes until some of the vegies start to collapse and the spices and juices form a rich sauce.

Garnish with the rest of the coriander and the slivered roasted almonds and serve with couscous.

Serves 4–6

The Conscious Cook:

* The question is – is it better to buy a locally produced tomato, conventionally grown with pesticides and fertilisers and perhaps out of season in a heated greenhouse, than to buy an organic tomato, produced far away and freighted all the way to the shop?

* Either way there are problems. Pesticide or fertilizer residues, CO₂ emissions from energy used in the greenhouse, emissions and pollution from transport – the food miles

The sustainable answers are:

- Choose sustainably produced and organic products
 - Choose fruits and vegetables of the season
- Choose products produced as locally as possible





1 quantity short crust pastry
1 egg
1 tablespoon butter
¾ cup sugar
1 egg
1 large lemon – juice and rind

Shortcrust pastry
1 cup plain flour
½ teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon sugar
65 grams margarine or butter
2 tablespoons water

lemon tart

Line an 18 x 3 centimetre tart plate with pastry. Cream butter and sugar. Add egg, lemon rind and juice; beat well. Pour into uncooked pastry shell. Bake in a moderate oven, 180–200°C for 20–30 minutes.

Shortcrust pastry:

Sift the flour, baking powder, salt and sugar. Rub in the butter with the tips of the fingers until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs, lifting it well out of the basin to admit the air. Add water gradually, making it into a very dry dough. Do not add all the water unless necessary. Turn onto a slightly floured board. Roll to shape and size required.

Serves 4

'Green' claims

Beware of unregulated 'green-wash' claims on labels! Terms such as 'natural' and 'eco-friendly' shouldn't be equated with safety unless they're backed up with specific ingredient information, such as 'solvent-free,' 'no petroleum-based ingredients,' 'no phosphates,' etc. 'Non-toxic' has no official definition, so unless a third party has verified this claim, it is not considered meaningful. And don't believe 'organic' ingredients in cleaning and other chemical products are any safer than other substances. Although 'organic' in the grocery store refers to foods grown without synthetic pesticides, in chemistry it refers to chemicals that are carbon-based, including some VOCs (volatile organic compounds) that release harmful fumes and may cause brain damage or cancer.³⁰

The Conscious Cook:

* Look after your lemon tree as you would any other valued fruit tree and it will provide you with lovely lemons for decades





12 things you can do when cooking...

Cooking accounts for around 12% of the total energy used in a typical household. Good cooking practices, together with careful selection of appliances, can cut your energy bills significantly, as well as reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

To save energy when cooking:

- * Thaw food before cooking
- * Use small appliances where possible – the grill on your stove uses up to three times more energy than your pop-up toaster
- * Use energy efficient cooking practices, such as using minimum water in pots, keeping lids on pots and simmering instead of boiling
- * Use steamers and pot dividers to cook all your vegetables at once
- * Use the right size hotplate/burner matched to the right pot size
- * Keep the oven door shut – each time it's opened more energy is needed to replace lost heat
- * Use the oven fully where possible and plan on cooking several dishes at once
- * Preheating is unnecessary in a gas oven and should be minimised in an electric oven (especially fan-forced ovens)
- * Turn the oven off 10 minutes before cooking is finished and use residual heat
- * If using aluminium foil apply the dull side up
- * Keep surfaces of appliances clean to promote maximum heat reflection
- * Have appliances serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions – do not attempt repairs yourself

More about the book...

The Conscious Cook highlights many issues connecting social and environmental sustainability and food. It helps the reader understand the consequences of their choices on their health and that of the planet. Set in the context of the global sustainability emergency, the book guides the reader to sustainable living solutions and changed behaviour to reduce their environmental footprint on the planet. It seeks to help make complex issues simple to tackle.

The book stimulates a different approach to tackling climate change and other aspects of sustainability, providing useful knowledge and information and helping the reader know what questions to ask. It draws on a large pool of expertise from the sustainability movement where passionate people are continually learning, teaching and working to raise the bar.

The Conscious Cook reinforces the practical application of sustainable living through recipes – for cooks not chefs – each accompanied by tips for cooking for sustainability and health.

The emphasis is on whole foods, sustainably produced, that enhance our well-being and have a minimal impact on the Earth and on our willingness to act with care and take responsibility for our planet, our future and ourselves.

Special order offer

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giselle@consciouscook.org

The Conscious Cook
by Giselle Wilkinson
RRP \$34.95

Release: May 2008

ISBN 9781921221385

296pp full colour

Portrait 190mm x 250mm

For book trade orders and distribution:

Brolga Publishing

www.brolgapublishing.com.au

markzocchi@brolgapublishing.com.au

0414 608 494

Pan Macmillan

www.panmacmillan.com.au

elizabeth.allmand@macmillan.com.au



