



Barwon South West Waste & Resource Recovery Group



6 Ways to Purchase Unpackaged Food

Avoiding food packaging is a good way of reducing the amount of unwanted materials we bring into our homes.

It can be challenging, especially in rural and remote areas to purchase food free of packaging, so if you can't find the product you want unpackaged, don't despair. Buy what you need and keep looking.

We recommend trying one new shopping change and allowing that to become a habit before adding the next to avoid overwhelm.

Here's a few hints and tips to help you find unpackaged food.

1. Find your local Farmers Market and Community garden.

Farmers Markets are a great way to connect with locally grown, fresh produce. Check out Victorian Farmers' Markets Association www.vfma.org.au or [South-West Victoria Markets](#) to search for a market near you.

Community Gardens can also be a great way to connect with growers of fresh food. There's a searchable map at [Australian City Farms & Community Gardens Network](#) website: www.communitygarden.org.au/acfcgn-directory and at [Local Harvest](#) www.localharvest.org.au or contact your local council for help finding your local community garden - not all of them are on the maps.

2. Support local fruit and veggie shops, delicatessens and butchers.

Many now sell food loose or in your own containers. There's an increasing number of specialty 'unpacked' stores in our region such as [Valerie's Pantry](#), [Spice Cart Portland](#), [Your Natural Pantry](#), [Future Cafe](#), [Jo's Pantry](#), and [The Source Bulk Foods](#).

3. Buy from your local unpackaged food co-op or start your own.

These not-for-profit organisations are all about reducing waste, providing access to quality food and building community. Check out [Hamilton Unpackaged](#), [Unpackaged Food Cooperative Warrnambool](#), [Southern Otway Food Coop](#), [Grovedale Food Coop](#), [Organic Food Co-Op Portland Vic](#), [Casterton SC Food Co-op](#). Talk to us about how you can start one in your neighbourhood. Email info@bswwrrg.vic.gov.au

4. Support your local produce cart, food swap or Food is Free Project.

'Take what you need, leave what you can', is the slogan many use. These are the ones we know about and we'd love you to let us know about others:

[Merino Produce Swap](#), [Nareen Produce Swap](#), [Food Swapping Geelong](#), [Portarlington Produce Tree & Food Swap](#), [Colac and District Home Grown Produce Swap](#), [Cloverdale Community Centre](#), [Corio Bay Food Swap](#), [Otways' Local Produce Swap](#), [Forrest & District Neighbourhood House](#), [Dunkeld Old Bakery](#), [Gen Health Hamilton](#), [Hamilton Community House Inc](#), [HIRL](#), [The Narrawong Food Collective](#), [South Barwon Food Swaps](#), [Portarlington Food Is Free](#)

5. Keep an eye out for local projects and opportunities such as [Hamilton Swtafe VCAL 2019](#) where you can support learning buy purchasing fresh or dried herbs.

6. Shop the outside aisles of the supermarket.

This is where you'll find the fresh, unpackaged food - good for you, good for the environment! If you only want half a watermelon or cabbage etc., ask friends to share a whole one with you to avoid purchasing cut and wrapped produce, it's generally cheaper per kilogram to purchase whole ones, too!

reduce.
recycle.

