



Autumn Edition
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It's green time

By Amber De Nardi

CAN you hear our planet's time ticking away? Well, both hands are on the green hour, which means that it's virtually now or never.

We either stop the abuse of Mother Earth or we can kiss her goodbye.

The Nursery and Garden Industry of Australia has issued a wake-up call in honour of World Environment Day today – Tuesday, June 5 – telling people there's lots we can do to help the environment, starting in our own backyards.

To help us get started garden centres are offering a wealth of information on how to

Below are the posters displayed in garden centres throughout Australia with the aim of motivating Aussies into action. The solution starts in the backyard.

create a sustainable future, including how to grow our own produce, how to create a worm farm and develop a fauna-friendly garden.

Plants are a key part of the solution to global warming and it's easy to make a positive impact on the environment because most of us have a backyard or a garden – even a courtyard or balcony can be a starting point.

The "Our Environment, Your Backyard" initiative was launched by the Nursery and Garden Industry to encourage communities to use water efficiently and to use fewer chemicals and also to grow their own produce and support local wildlife.

Meredith Kirtan from the ABC's Gardening Australia program, who's written the top-selling books *DIG, PLOT* and *An Hour in the Garden*, said that people were becoming very concerned about the world's environment.

"Global warming, managing our water and soil erosion are three issues crucial to the

environment and close to any gardener's heart," she said. "Anyone who grows plants will tell you the difference good soil makes to plants. "Water restrictions have really brought home how precious every last drop is.

"The good news is that plants, trees and shrubs have a crucial role in the solution to global warming by synthesising carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere.

"The more we plant and care for our gardens, the greater the impact we're having on the environment from home."

So if you really want to become a green mean machine here's what to do:

- Grow your own produce. Not only will you know exactly where your food is coming from, but you will also be able to monitor the use of chemicals as well as build a food source for the family's future. Local garden centres can offer a variety of fruits, vegetables and herbs to suit your garden.

- Create your own worm farm or compost bin. This will enable you to recycle food scraps, reduce the amount of rubbish going to landfill and add valuable nutrients to the garden. Local garden centres will help source the right worm farm set-up and tell you how to get started.

- Develop a natural habitat in your own backyard. Native animals now share our cities and urban neighbourhoods. It's easy to develop a fauna-friendly natural haven in the backyard, providing shelter and food for birds, butterflies, frogs and other wildlife. Local garden centres will tell you how to create a natural haven in the backyard with a range of native trees and exotic plants, fruits and vegetable varieties that will add colour and life to the garden.

Details: For more information on How to Create a Sustainable Future in Your Backyard, visit www.lifeisagarden.com.au

