

JULIA LEONARD

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Dear Project Green Team:

This entire challenge has been a learning process, discovering ways to get involved in the community starting with myself. Each piece of the five chosen depicts the Project Green rollercoaster, variety of creative directions, and uniqueness of my experience. Added together, the thirty days presented initial nervousness and doubt, overwhelming growth, and the discovery of ways to channel my passions into sustainable and environmentally impactful practices.

The Four Dollar Dining video challenged my ability to create a meal plan that was not only organic, but under four dollars per person. It combined video skills and analytical planning to execute. It also provided an opportunity to showcase how this challenge breaks down stigmas around eating healthy, which also existed to a degree in my own life.

Before the Regenerative Agriculture Day, farming didn't seem like a demanding and soil destroying (among other things) industry. The task was to teach others about farming. It forced me to create an engaging, easy to grasp, interactive lesson. A short and suitable lesson designed for a social media platform. I created a farming flow chart that allows the user to make educated choices and build a sustainable farm. This was sent to my Instagram Story, making it accessible to many people who weren't well versed in regenerative agriculture.

This day also inspired a phone call to my dad, whom I always knew had a garden, but never really talked to about it. I discovered he had been implementing regenerative agriculture practices my whole life. His focus was cultivating healthy, chemical free food for our family. As he says, "there's nothing like a freshly picked tomato straight from the garden." This proved how Project Green Challenge opens doors, builds connections, and fosters relationships in ways that have never been present before. This day impacted me more than I realized it would.

Social Justice has never been something I was good at, or even desired to attempt. In general I'm not outspoken about charged issues. Making a sign promoting the devastating effects of fast fashion scared me, but pushed me to grow. It was a huge milestone in the Project Green Challenge and thinking back, is one of the days that made me the most proud of myself.

The last piece is the Meal Prep Guidelines to limit food waste. It is the epitome of combining a love of calligraphy with something more meaningful. It also spurred my passion and motivation for the rest of the challenges and provided a more creative and personal outlet for each.

This challenge has changed my way of life, encouraged my creative side, and helped me build meaningful connections with others. Thank you for your time and considering my application for the Project Green Challenge Finals.

Sincerely,



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PGC Day 5: Extra Credit

For this challenge I decided to make tostadas. I've been making homemade tortillas for a little bit and I realized (aka my mom told me) if you bake a tortilla in the oven it turns into a tostada! What better way to change up a meal a little bit. Along with this

Three of my friends and I shopped at a local store called City Market. It's a co-op so they always have fresh ingredients straight from farms all around Vermont. All around it's a great store. It can be a little pricey depending on what you're buying, but most of the time the quality you get is worth the price increase. However, with this challenge I think we proved that eating following the FLOSN rules can still be relatively cheap (and give you delicious leftovers)!

Our shopping list included:

Organic Butter (½ a stick) \$1
Extra Sharp Cheddar (½ a block) \$1.50
2 Avocados \$1.79
Lemon \$0.69
Orange Pepper \$2.10
Yellow Pepper \$2.50
2 Tomatoes \$2.66
Lime \$0.45

Total: \$12.69

Ingredients already at home:

Organic Refried Beans \$1
Flour (2 cups) \$0.10
Baking Powder (½ teaspoon) \$0.01
Sea Salt \$0.10
Basil \$0.01
Olive Oil \$0.80
Arugula (½ bag) \$1.25

Total \$2.02

GRAND TOTAL: \$15.96

We brought our own bag to the grocery store in addition to our mesh bags for the produce we purchased. The only waste we had was the wrapping to the cheddar cheese, all the other waste was food scraps.

Step 1: Make the Tostadas

Tostada Recipe
(from the book Zero Waste Home)

2 cups flour

$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup cold butter

1 cup warm water

1. Combine dry ingredients in bowl
2. Incorporate butter into mixture and mix with fingers until it's a coarse crumble
3. Add water and combine into soft dough
4. Separate into about 6 small balls
5. Roll out each ball as thinly as possible and cook in a pan over medium heat for 20 seconds on each side

After cooking these, we baked them in the oven at 400 degrees for about 6 minutes, then flipped them and cooked until they were toasted and crunchy.

Next was the tostada toppings. We chopped up two tomatoes, two peppers, arugula, two avocados, lime, and then shredded cheese. After putting all these in bowls we heated up refried beans on the stove and cooked the peppers on the stove top as well.

For the drink we made lemon basil water just by cutting up the lemon, squeezing into our water and adding some basil. Simple, but a little more dressed up than your average water.

After everything was cut and cooked and ready, we put it all on the table with our silverware (and reusable napkins) and built our own tostadas! I put the tostada on my plate and coated it with the refried beans. Next was a base of arugula followed by tomatoes, peppers and avocado. Last I tossed a bit of cheese and squeezed some lime. It was a delicious meal. Truly better than I expected.

There were leftover tomatoes, avocado, and peppers. I stored these in glass containers. Later I will make lunch out of it to bring with me to work! All food scraps went into the compost bin and no food was wasted. We easily could have fed another person or maybe two with the amount of food that we had.

Facebook Post:

<https://www.facebook.com/julia.leonard.161>



Julia Leonard

4 mins · 🌐



As another part of #pgc2019 I had to make a meal (using as much fresh and organic produce as possible) to share with a few friends, all for under \$4 each! The total came out to \$15.96. Thanks [Nathan Drew](#) and [Adam](#) for hopping on board and making tostadas with me! 😊

[Turninggreen](#)

Music by [@cultsmusic](#)



Drew Colón Such a good dinner!

Like · Reply · 6h



Write a reply...



Julia Leonard Tostada Recipe
(from the book Zero Waste Home)

2 cups flour
¾ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon baking powder
¼ cup cold butter
1 cup warm water

Combine dry ingredients in bowl
Incorporate butter into mixture and mix with fingers until it's a course crumble

Add water and combine into soft dough
Separate into about 6 small balls

Roll out each ball as thinly as possible and cook in a pan over medium heat for 20 seconds on each side

After cooking these, we baked them in the oven at 400 degrees for about 6 minutes, then flipped them and cooked until they were toasted and crunchy. 😊

Like · Reply · 1m

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PGC Day 8: Greener

NOTES:

Regenerative agriculture

<https://rodaleinstitute.org/why-organic/organic-basics/regenerative-organic-agriculture/>

- Soil health is #1
 - Soil is linked to everything, it affects everything
 - Sustainable v regenerative (regenerative is actually going somewhere, getting better. Not just “sustained”)
- Regenerative Organic Certification (ROC)
 - Built off of usda certified organic
 - soil health (builds organic matter, conservation tillage, crop rotations, biodiversity)
 - animal welfare (five freedoms: from discomfort, fear & distress, hunger, pain, injury/disease, expressing normal behavior)
 - social fairness (living wages, good conditions, no forced labor)
 - It's not just about the crops, it's about the whole system

Ag and Climate Change

<https://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/blog/4932/connecting-the-dots-on-ag-and-climate-change>

- Energy and fossil fuel usage, water and other critical resources
- Agriculture systems contribute at least 30% of greenhouse gas emissions
- Synthetic nitrogen fertilizers about 60% of global nitrous oxide emissions (300x more potent than co2)
 - Basically supports inefficiencies, inequities & conflict, crops yields plateau, threaten marine life, strange/strong weather patterns
 - At least 2 billion people are chronically undernourished
- Sustainable farming improves security and safety, rural livelihoods & enviro health
 - Bring back crop diversity, reintegrate livestock (take them out of animal factories), soil soil soil soil

Heal Soil, Heal Planet!

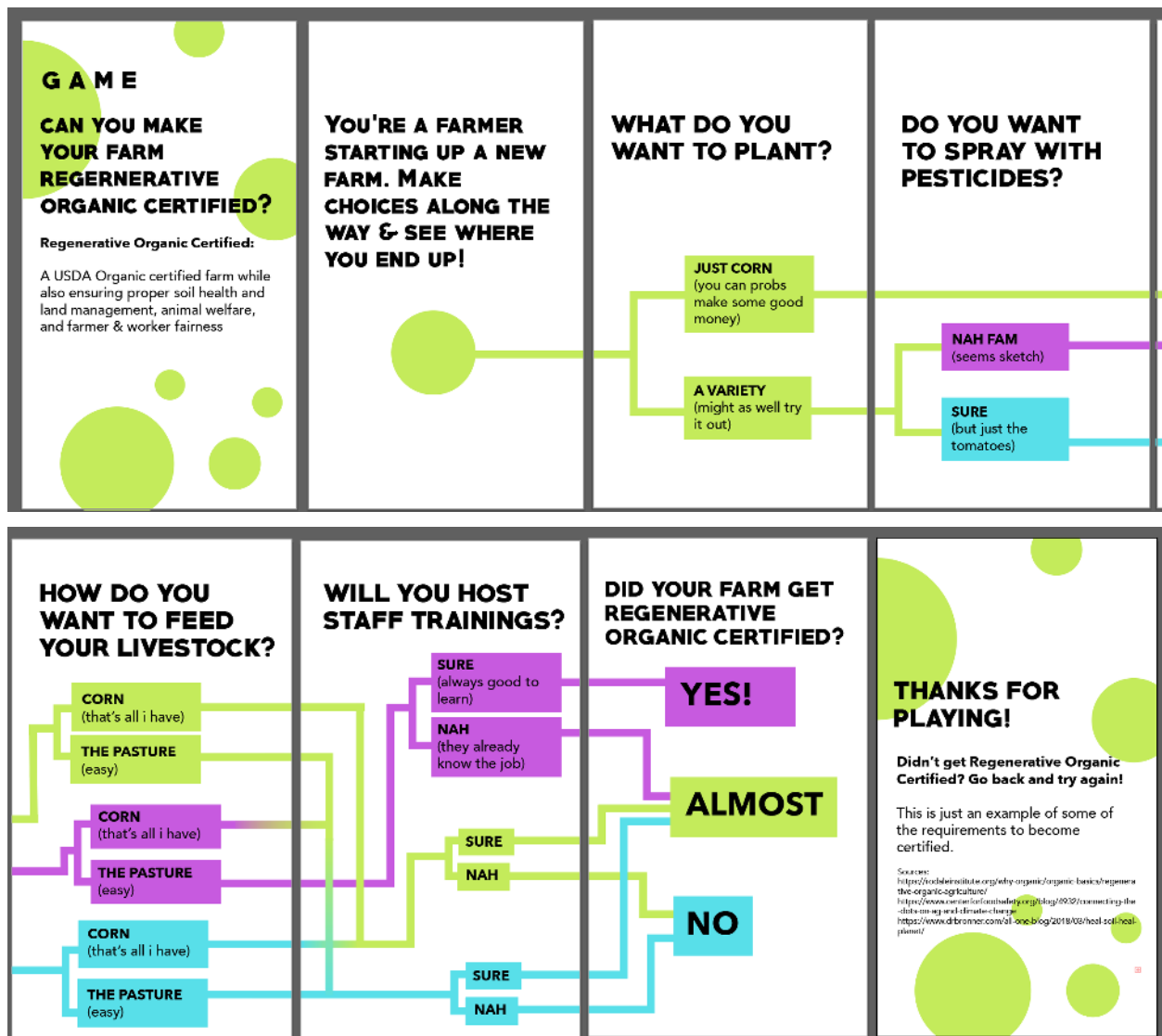
<https://www.drbronner.com/all-one-blog/2018/03/heal-soil-heal-planet/>

- Regenerative organic agriculture
- Everything is connected

- Soil health: No chemical poisons, diverse & smart rotation of crops to minimize pest and weed pressure, conservation tillage, using fertility-building cover crops to protect and nurture soil life
- Animal welfare
- Human welfare

INTERACTIVE LESSON:

My goal with this educational lesson was also to make it accessible and fun for people my age on Instagram. It's an easy way to learn a bit about regenerative organic certified farming while also having a bit of fun.



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PGC Day 8: Greenest

When thinking about implementing regenerative organic agricultural practices in my own community I thought about Burlington first. The challenge was to research a garden in the community, to meet with them, and discuss their practices. I researched plenty of gardens and farms (Intervale Center being the most prevalent) and many of them used a lot of the practices we learned about on day eight. They had mission statements and factual evidence to back up what they stood for.

I reached out to a few of them, but then it dawned on me: My first community was my family. And growing up we always had a garden in the backyard. Throughout this challenge I've realized how many sustainable practices my parents used my whole life and I never questioned. We brought our own bags into the grocery store, but I just thought it was because my mom liked the bags. I never considered it was to save plastic. Every summer we would go to different farms and pick strawberries and blueberries then freeze some for the rest of the semester. Every week my grandmother, mom, and I took a trip to the town's farmers market for fresh produce.

These things were second nature, and I never asked my parents about it until high school. Even then, not too much. All this is to say, I decided instead to give my dad a call.

I asked him the questions I never thought to ask before. When asked, he loves to explain processes, particularly relating to food and other household things (sounds funky but he's pretty cool).



When we were little we had a bigger garden because we had a bigger backyard. My dad started it himself when we moved in. There were carrots, green beans, tomatoes (both cherry and regular), rhubarb, blueberries, concord grapes and blackberries. The hardest to grow was tomatoes because they require the most attention. If you let them grow too big, too much energy will be put

into the leaves as opposed to into the tomato itself.

He learned about gardening from my Uncle Rick and Uncle Kevin. Uncle Rick always had a really large garden he tended to every year and Uncle Kevin is very knowledgeable about basically anything outdoors (and also indoors now that I think about it). Whenever he had a question they'd be the first people he'd reach out to. Although now, my dad said it's very quick to get questions answered through a Google search or YouTube.

One thing he has never used is chemicals in his garden. The reason for starting it in the first place was to get fresh produce untouched by chemicals. Plus, nothing beats a fresh tomato. Knowing where our food comes from has always been important to my parents.

As far as the ground itself, he takes very good care of it. My dad described how each season he'd plant the tomatoes on a different plot than he did the previous year. During the growing season cut grass and leaves and sometimes manure would be put in the garden to enrich the soil. He explained how the cut grass over the soil kept it moist and increased the nitrogen in it. Not to mention it kept the weeds away.

At the end of each season he would till everything into the ground to mix in all the nutrients and be able to start again for the next season.

After asking him questions about the garden and learning everything he did, I asked him if he knew what regenerative organic agriculture was. He did not, but I explained that it was basically what he was doing. By planting different crops each year he was promoting biodiversity. If he had the same ones he'd move them to a different location, that was crop rotation. He wouldn't over till the soil, he didn't use any chemicals, and he promoted a healthy environment for himself to work, for my sister and I to play near and for our whole family to eat.



He's a fantastic dad and I appreciate everything he has done so much more. He was instilling these practices without knowing, or needing to know the fancy terms for it. He just knew it was right by the earth and right by our family.

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PGC Day 10: Greener

This challenge scared me the most so far, but was also the most rewarding. To ease my nerves, one of my good friends held her sign up with me. A great support and listener and also passionate about the environment. This was the first time I had ever publicly stood up for something I believed in!

One social justice I feel strongly about is the fast fashion industry. Clothing is mass produced in factories overseas. The people who work there often can't find other jobs and are just trying to stay afloat. The conditions are terrible there, but when you walk into an H&M all you see is that mustard colored sweater and a sign that says "\$3." Wow, what a steal. I made a motion graphics piece about it about a year ago (<https://vimeo.com/302988006>) and decided since I was comfortable with the subject matter, it would be a great social injustice to start with. Not to mention, an "easy solution" for people at my school is to shop second hand. This makes it easy to grasp and also attainable to start changing.

My Sign Reads-

Fast Fashion: Drop Dead "Gorgeous"
Stop Supporting Fast Fashion



This statement has a few different meanings depending on how you read or clump together certain parts. "Fast Fashion: Drop Dead" references how this industry has many environmental and human issues. "Drop Dead Gorgeous" is just a fashion industry reference and popular compliment, but also saying the behind-the-scenes is not at all gorgeous. Then the clothing at

the bottom highlights a few brands that are notorious for having factories in developing countries and claim to be doing good things or say they will, but then they don't.

Surprisingly (or not) when I was holding the sign on campus a lot of people came up to me asking about it. One of my good friends asked for suggestions where they thought I should shop instead. I recommended a bunch of places in the Burlington area that were great.

My opener was usually something along the lines of "considering shopping secondhand!" or "buy second hand items more!" I was trying to offer alternatives as opposed to just yelling at them that companies they may have been buying from weren't great. I realized this after I spoke to one student head-to-toe in Adidas and Nike. He asked me what "fast fashion" was and I explained about the industry and factories and worker conditions. This made him look down at his clothes and feel ashamed. That wasn't my intention, and I immediately told him I wasn't trying to make him feel bad about the purchases he already made, just to be more conscious about the purchases he makes in the future. I think this helped.

Going forward when people walked by or stopped and asked, I explained how shopping second hand is better for the environment and also cooler in general, with the main goal of letting them know big companies are doing social injustices and trying to just make people aware, not ashamed.

I feel good. I never thought I would ever do that.

Thanks Project Green =)



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PGC Day 13: Greener

For this challenge, I made an infographic about becoming a meal prep master! This was based off of personal experience, but also on a lot of reading and things I've learned from my nutrition and fitness science class this semester.

The full graphic is to the side >

I posted this on my Instagram story in three parts and also onto my Facebook as the full page.

I've been getting good feedback about the hand drawn format! It makes them more engaging and people are actually taking the time to read them =>

become a ...

MEAL PREP MASTER

with **Julia's** *decently accurate, mostly relateable, definitely amateur (but well researched)*

GUIDE

TO: **Good Gains** *REDUCING FOOD WASTE & saving money*

STEP ONE: build your meals

THIS STEP IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE YOU'RE PLANNING WHAT TO EAT FOR THE ENTIRE REST OF THE WEEK. MY ADVICE - K.I.S.S. (Keep it Simple, Stupid). ONLY PLAN WHAT YOU ACTUALLY WANT TO BE EATING.

HAVE A SOLID BREAKFAST PLANNED THEN PICK 2-4 OTHER MEALS TO SWITCH AROUND THROUGHOUT THE WEEK. IT KEEPS YOUR COST DOWN, YOU USE ALL YOUR INGREDIENTS AND YOU HAVE ENOUGH VARIETY.

BASIC FORMULA:

- BASE** lettuce, quinoa, rice, spaghetti, lentils, zoodles, etc
- VEGGIES** any variety/combo carrots, zucchini, tomato, kale, peppers
- PROTEIN** eggs, beans (all varieties), meat (any kind) or alternative like tofu and soy
- FUN!** aka toppings like cheese, sauce, dressings, seasonings, basil or cilantro

less food waste! = other resources =
 - save the food.com
 - collegenutritionist.com/meal-prep
 - workweeklunch.com/
 - college-meal-prep
 - budgetbytes.com/top-10-recipes-for-college-students

great food & meal ideas

this formula works super well for me. It keeps my meals balanced & keeps me full! Plus - YUM

plus with a list like this you can just mix and match every week

there are hundreds more combos you can make based on season, price, taste & ability. Also consider soups or things like chili!

sample meals

- quinoa, tomatoes + cucumber, grilled chicken, feta, dressing
- pasta, sweet potato + broccoli, black beans, parmesan
- fajitas - tortilla, pepper + onion, refried beans, avocado
- rice, spinach + tomato, egg, avocado, dressing
- bread, lettuce, tuna salad w/ celery, cheese
- arugula, strawberries, walnuts, feta, dressing, quinoa
- lettuce, cauliflower "steak" beans, feta
- stir fry - cabbage, carrots + onion, ground beef, ginger

STEP TWO: make your list

SO YOU'VE PICKED THE MEALS YOU WANT TO MAKE. NOW IT'S TIME TO DECODE ALL OF IT AND PUT IT ON A COMPREHENSIVE SHOPPING LIST...

- * making a list before you shop keeps you organized
- * you are proven less likely to make impulsive purchases because you know exactly what you need
- * you spend less time in the store
- * feel your confidence growwwwww!

STEP THREE: shop 'til you drop

... or just until you've gotten everything on your list ☺

GROCERY STORE TIPS:

- * keep track of prices week to week to see how they change & when the best deals are for certain items
- * spice to the outer walls - that's where all the fresh produce is, make processed items are in the center
- * follow your list!
- * know the difference:
 - USE-BY > Consumers should eat it by then, quality will decrease after that date
 - SELL-BY > retailers, for when it should be off its shelf does not mean it's unsafe after that date
 - best-by > consumer, should be consumed before to ensure highest quality

not the electronic store! → some items, like eggs, can actually last a week or two past their date - unlike other items like leafy greens cannot → learn more at ift.org

STEP FOUR: prep, prep, prep!

WASH, CHOP, TOSS & COOK ALL THE FOOD YOU NEED FOR THE WEEK AT ONE TIME. THIS SAVES YOU TIME DURING THE WEEK. STORE YOUR MEALS IN EASY TO GRAB CONTAINERS FOR WHENEVER YOU NEED THEM.

DONT FORGET TO BRING UTENSILS!