

Nova Scotia: The greenest region in North America

BY SARAH McNEILL AND PETER SIMPSON

In Canada we have a national identity which has always been synonymous with our landscape. Ours is the land of canoes, wilderness, pristine streams, beavers and moose. We see ourselves as people who live as one with our environment, appreciating its diversity on some divine level.

Being rustic Canadians ourselves, we've always thought of the country in this light. Needless to say our sense of nationalism took a blow when we heard a recent statistic from Environment Canada, in which Canada had been declared the most wasteful country on earth. Apparently the land famous for nature is one of its biggest enemies. Recent statistics show that we create more household waste than Americans, although just barely.

The average Canadian produces 1.8 kilograms of garbage each day, while the average American produces 1.6 kilograms daily. Although these stats are for a minute staggering, recent announcements have solidified the faith in our nation's commitment to the environment.

The Nova Scotia Department of the Environment has announced that it will be the first province (or state) in North America to divert 50 percent of its solid waste in the year 2000.

At a time when many regions are facing a critical shortage of landfill space, Nova Scotia is currently diverting 44 percent of its waste through mandatory composting programs, and disposal bans on recyclable materials. Other regional governments must realize what the people of Nova Scotia already have: that most of the items that we throw out are actually valu-

able resources that can be reused.

Despite our province's great head-way there is one problem with conservation programs in Halifax. There is a failure to inform students on how these programs work. There have been complaints at the municipal government level that students are not utilizing Metro's recycling and composting programs.

But this is more due to a lack of effort on part of the Municipality when it comes to informing students, rather than any lack of integrity on the part of these students. Many students who are from out of province are not familiar with composting programs. If your house is anything like my house, then you and your roommates probably have limited knowledge about what goes into that green-bin in the backyard, what exactly can be recycled, and what to do with all your useless junk when its time to move back home for the summer. So we did a little investigating and compiled an easy little chart to help all you rustic Canadians out there save our wild, untamed, pristine country.

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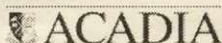
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