



News Release

January 5, 2016

For Immediate Release

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## **Feiro Marine Life Center Executive Director Makes “Plastic-Free Diet” Resolution**

The more we learn about the impact of plastic on our ocean and wildlife, the more concerning it gets. It isn't just the obvious ocean trash that is a problem, for example sea turtles often mistake plastic bags floating in the water for their favorite food, jellyfish, or sea birds consume pieces of plastic that they cannot digest, leading to their death. Recent studies have shown that all plastic breaks down into microscopic particles, which are now being consumed by creatures as small as zooplankton. See link for video.

Plankton are the base of the food chain, and when they are consuming plastic, so is everything else that eats plankton, including juvenile salmon, oysters, and baleen whales, like humpbacks. Fish containing plastic in their digestive tracts have been documented in fish markets in the US and Indonesia. This means the plastic is taking up space from real food items, depriving the fish or shellfish from nutrition, and could also be potentially influencing humans through our diets.

To raise awareness of the marine debris issue and encourage consumers to use plastic responsibly, Feiro has partnered with Country Aire Natural Foods Market. Melissa Williams, Feiro's executive director, is going plastic-free for the month of January, purchasing her groceries exclusively at Country Aire, by shopping in the bulk, deli, fresh meat and produce sections and bringing her own reusable containers. Country Aire has stopped the use of their plastic grocery bags for the month, and are offering a donation to Feiro for folks who bring their own reusable bags or choose to purchase a paper bag for \$.05. In the first four days of the promotion (1-1-16 to 1-4-16), over 800 transactions involving reusable or paper bags have been recorded. The program has garnered positive attention from many people who are looking at their shopping carts for the first time and wondering if they can choose a different packaging material.

Melissa is keeping a blog with background information and resources on going plastic-free at <http://feiromarinelifecenter.org/plasticfreediet>