



Coffee Could Be Recycled to Replace Palm Oil



What are coffee grounds?

- Coffee is made from ground up coffee beans. Hot water is forced through the beans to produce coffee.
- The left over coffee grounds are often thrown away but they can be used as compost in the garden.

The secret to protecting our environment might just be hidden in your teacher's coffee cup! Two Scottish businessmen say they've found a way to replace palm oil with used coffee grounds.

Whether it's a morning cup or an afternoon in a coffee shop, at times it seems that the adult world runs on coffee!

This creates a lot of waste. After they've been used to make the coffee, the grounds often get thrown away.

The UK produces half a million tonnes of waste coffee grounds each year, most of which ends up in tips and landfills. As it rots, it releases methane, a **greenhouse gas**.

Scott Kennedy and Fergus Moore think they have a solution. Their company is developing a way to recycle this waste into an oil which could replace palm oil.

Palm oil is used in many different foods and products. It's made from the fruit of palm trees and is thought to be an efficient crop. This means that it's quite easy to make a lot of palm oil quickly.

However, many people believe it is responsible for the **deforestation** of the rainforest, as large areas are being burnt to create room for these palm trees.

This is destroying the habitat of many **endangered** animals, such as the orangutan and some breeds of tigers.

The two businessmen hope they will

Photo: Coffee grounds being used to make a coffee.

eventually be able to collect waste coffee grounds from cafés and restaurants and extract the oil from them to use instead of palm oil.

The business could even win a prize! It's been put forward as part of a competition for business ideas to improve the world.

Other ideas competing for the prize include a plan to make laminating plastic **biodegradable** and new technology to help care for bees.

Across the world, engineers and scientists are creating new ways to look after our world.

Glossary

greenhouse gas	A gas which contributes to climate change.
deforestation	The clearing of a wide area of trees.
endangered	An animal species which is in danger of being wiped out.
biodegradable	A material which can be easily decomposed by bacteria.

Questions

1. Find a phrase the author uses to show that coffee is popular.

2. Find two ways replacing palm oil with recycled coffee grounds could protect the environment.

1. _____

2. _____

3. 'The two businessmen hope they will eventually be able to collect waste coffee grounds from cafés and restaurants and extract the oil from them to use instead of palm oil.'
Tick the word which comes closest in meaning to 'extract' in this sentence.

- ☐ add
- ☐ destroy
- ☐ change
- ☐ take out

4. Summarise the news story in 20 words or fewer.

5. Do you think this business will be successful? Explain your answer.

6. How do you think teachers will feel about the ideas competing for the prize?

7. Find a reason for the use of palm oil and a reason against.

For: _____

Against: _____

Answers

1. Find a phrase the author uses to show that coffee is popular.
at times it seems that the adult world runs on coffee.
2. Find two ways replacing palm oil with recycled coffee grounds could protect the environment.
Accept any two answers from: palm oil is responsible for the deforestation of the rainforest, palm oil farming is destroying the habitat of endangered animals or coffee waste release methane, a greenhouse gas.
3. The two businessmen hope they will eventually be able to collect waste coffee grounds from cafés and restaurants and extract the oil from them to use instead of palm oil.
Tick the word which comes closest in meaning to 'extract' in this sentence.
 - ☐ add
 - ☐ destroy
 - ☐ change
 - ☒ take out
4. Summarise the news story in 20 words or fewer.
Accept any reasonable summary which is 20 words or fewer, e.g. A company is developing a way to turn waste coffee ground into a replacement for palm oil, protecting the environment.
5. Do you think this business will be successful? Explain your answer.
Accept any reasonable answer which refers to the news story, e.g. I think they will be successful because people will be looking for ways to avoid using palm oil. This is because many people believe palm oil is responsible for deforestation.
6. How do you think teachers will feel about the ideas competing for the prize?
Accept any reasonable answer which refers to the news story, e.g. I think they will be pleased because the ideas will allow them to drink coffee and laminate work in a way which is better for the environment.
7. Find a reason for the use of palm oil and a reason against.
Accept any reasonable answers which are mentioned in the news story, e.g.
For: You can grow and make palm oil very quickly.
Against: Many people believe it is responsible for deforestation.