REDUCE

Food Waste

Presented by: Alma Hopkins, RDN, LD
FOOD WASTE: A significant concern

- 30% - 40% of food in America is wasted, data source: USDA and NRDC
- Each person tosses nearly 300 lbs of food every year
FOOD WASTE: A significant concern

WHO’S WASTING THE MOST FOOD?

Anywhere food is grown, sold, or eaten, food is wasted. However, consumers are definitely the biggest source of food waste.

- Residential: 44%
- Restaurants: 33%
- Grocery Stores: 11%
- Institutional: 10%
- Industrial: 2%
FOOD WASTE: Our Landfills

- Food is the single largest component
- Rotting food generates methane
- Landfills are the 3rd largest source of methane in the US.
FOOD WASTE: Facts & Figures

40% of U.S. food is wasted each year while 1 in 6 Americans don't know where their next meal will come from.
The Extraordinary Life and Times of Strawberry
Save The Food | Ad Council

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WREXBUZBrS8
FOOD WASTE: Facts & Figures

- Resources that went into producing that wasted food include:
  - Land
  - Labor
  - Water
  - Pesticides & fertilizers

3 out of 4 of us believe we can do something about it &

Tracking food waste can save 2-6% in food costs
FOOD WASTE: Unique Challenges in Schools

Poll Question #1

What makes it hard to predict how much food will be needed each day?
FOOD WASTE: Unique Challenges in Schools

What makes it hard to predict how much food will be needed each day?

- Unannounced field trips
- Unannounced Classroom Parties
- Weather
- Widespread Illness
- Lack of data showing participation #s by menu and day
Poll Question #2

What factors lead to food waste from the kitchen?
FOOD WASTE: Unique Challenges in Schools

What factors lead to food waste from the kitchen?

- Untrained staff
- Not following recipe
- Not using production records
- Refrigeration/freezers not holding temp
- Hot, muggy storeroom
FOOD WASTE: Unique Challenges in Schools

Poll Question #3

What are the reasons kids dump food in the trash?
FOOD WASTE: Unique Challenges in Schools

What are the reasons kids dump food in the trash?

- Not enough time to eat
- Class dismissed late
- Class parties before meals
- Kids unfamiliar with food
- Too few meal periods
FOOD WASTE: Food Recovery Hierarchy

**Reduce** by mindful ordering, prepping and storage

**Recover** wholesome, uneaten food to share tables (example)

**Recycle** – composting, animal feed

www.epa.gov/foodrecoverychallenge
FOOD WASTE: Reduce – Menu Planning

- Cycle menus
- Allow “chefs choice” days
- Create recipes that use same basic ingredients
  
  *How many ways can you menu diced chicken?*

- Plan for items to be served at next meals such as fruit
FOOD WASTE: Reduce – Menu Planning

• Self serve and self portion
  • (OVS and food bars/salad bars)

• Cutting fruits into bite size
  • Student Input
    • Taste tests
    • Surveys
  • Student Ambassadors or Councils
FOOD WASTE: Reduce – Purchase Imperfect Produce . . .

Types of Imperfection

- Over/under-size
- Misshaped
- Texture
- Superficial scarring
- Uneven coloration on the surface

. . . save $ and great for food bars
FOOD WASTE: Reduce – Purchasing

- Buy seconds or imperfect produce if cutting up & offer clear descriptions (superficial scarring, etc.)
- Order ripening fruit mid-week → menu it early in the following week
- “Use by Dates” and “Best by Dates” are guidelines, not law
FOOD WASTE: Reduce – Storage

Train staff

• Inspect all products for:
  • Temperature
  • Quality
  • Expiration or best use dates

• Move items to proper storage quickly

• Specify in bids
  • that deliveries arrive before or after meal service
  • what shelf life you expect (yogurts, bagged ready to serve salad greens/vegetables)
FOOD WASTE: Reduce – Preparation

Train staff
- Knife skills
- Use of equipment
- Batch cooking
- Provide accurate recipes
- Use of shallow pans at end of service
- Completed production records
FOOD WASTE: Reduce via Policies or Marketing

• Recess before Lunch
  . . . Mo’s Toolkit available
• Extending lunch periods from 20 → 30 minutes
  • ↓food waste by 30%

• Apply Smarter Lunchroom ideas
  (60 low cost and no cost ideas)

www.smarterlunchrooms.org
FOOD WASTE: Recover – Sharing Tables

USDA Memo: SP 41-2016, The Use of Share Tables in Child Nutrition Programs

- Pre-packaged foods: milk, cheese sticks, graham crackers/crackers, bowl pack cereals, condiment packets
- Original packaging, unopened
- Supervised by staff
- In Missouri → food stays within school for student consumption
  - . . . later in the day at no cost
  - . . . can be claimed for reimbursement for the after school program

Refrigerated Barrel
Turlock Unified School District, CA
FOOD WASTE: Recover – Sharing Tables

- Prepare meeting with local food safety inspector
- Develop SOP
- Use labels, table tents to guide students
- Train staff and students
Guide to Conducting Student Food Waste Audits

A Resource for Schools

USDA

EPA

United States Environmental Protection Agency

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS
Waste audits, provision of supplies, continuous training and partnership with community sanitary agency leads to increase in participation at Castro Valley Unified School District, CA.
Compost goes . . . .

- **On site** for use in school gardens
  
  OR
  
- **Off site** to composting facility

- Nearly 80% of school food waste is recyclable or compostable . . .

What an opportunity!
FOOD WASTE: Recycle – Livestock Feed

Cafeteria Food Waste Recycling:
How to Turn Elephants into Pigs

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qn9siiliDw4
FOOD WASTE: Educating Staff & Students
FOOD WASTE: Educating Staff & Students
FOOD WASTE: Additional Resources


• National Resource Defense Council (NRCD)
  [https://www.nrdc.org/issues/food](https://www.nrdc.org/issues/food)

• [http://savethefood.com](http://savethefood.com)

• SAVETHEFOOD Social Media Press Kit

• Hennepin County Composting