



## Food Waste: Long Term Strategies

Reduce – Recover – Recycle

### Reduction

- Schedule meal times that are at least 25 minutes long<sup>i</sup> and that are held at regular meal times, and whenever possible, schedule recess to take place before lunch.<sup>ii iii</sup>
- Encourage your school to purchase as much food as possible from local farmers and other producers. You can contact your local county agricultural extension office to find out who is in your area or ask your school nutrition staff to reach out to your food service provider. Reaching out to other schools in your district will strengthen your ask and might make it a more economical choice for the provider to consider.
- If your cafeteria uses disposable plates, find out what would be involved in switching to reusable plates.<sup>iv</sup>

### Recovery

- Once your school is on board you can expand your recovery program to include your cafeteria's kitchen and identify ways for prepared food to be rescued and donated. Tell your Principal about the Good Samaritan Act encouraging donations and protecting against liabilities.<sup>v</sup>
- Work with your food service staff to develop strategies for freezing leftovers and incorporating them into later meals.
- Identify a food bank or shelter that will accept pre-cooked food and find out the requirements and safe food handling measures to be taken in order to donate food that has been cooked. Ask about the process for transporting food including specifics on how items should be packaged or labeled.
- Begin rescuing leftover food directly from your cafeteria and providing nutrient dense meals to the hungry in your community.
- Remember to share these accomplishments with the entire school.
- Don't forget to thank and commend your food service staff for the time and energy they are putting in to reduce food waste at your school.
- Including **nearby schools** will increase your impact while raising greater awareness in the community about your Play.

## Recycling

- Ask your **Principal** about the possibility of speaking with other schools in your district about aggregating food waste and contracting with a service provider to haul your waste to a commercial composting or anaerobic digestion facility.
- Talk to your **waste hauler** about the possibilities of composting in your area.
- Use [BioCycles locator tool](#) to find a nearby composting facility.

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<sup>i</sup> Cohen, Juliana F.W. et al. [Amount of Time to Eat Lunch Is Associated with Children's Selection and Consumption of School Meal Entrée, Fruits, Vegetables, and Milk](#). 2016. Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics , Volume 116 , Issue 1 , 123 - 128

<sup>ii</sup> Getlinger, Mary Jane et.al. [Food Waste is Reduced when Elementary-School Children Have Recess before Lunch](#). 1996. Journal of the American Dietetic Association, Volume 96, Issue 9, 906 – 908.

<sup>iii</sup> Price, Joseph and Just, David. [Lunch, recess and nutrition: Responding to time incentives in the cafeteria](#). 2015. Preventive Medicine. Elsevier.

<sup>iv</sup> Williamson, S. Bock, LG., and Keller, P.A. Of Waste and Waists: [The Effect of Plate Material on Food Consumption and Waste](#). 2016. Journal of the Association for Consumer Research. Chicago Press.

<sup>v</sup> [Model of Good Samaritan Food Donation Act and Transfer of That Act to Child Nutrition Act of 1996](#). P.L. 104-210; 104<sup>th</sup> Congress.