

R E D U C I N G F O O D W A S T E

WHAT SCHOOLS CAN DO TODAY



USDA's Economic Research Service estimates

31%

of the overall food supply at the retail and consumer level **went uneaten** in the U.S. in 2010



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Scheduling recess before lunch can **reduce plate waste by**

AS MUCH AS 30%



Extending lunch periods from

20 TO 30

minutes reduced plate waste by nearly one-third



BEST PRACTICES ACCORDING TO SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE DIRECTORS

Involve students in menu planning and conducting taste tests, implement Offer versus Serve at all grade levels, provide more menu choices, serve foods with familiar flavors, serve ready-to-eat fruit, and invite school staff and teachers to eat meals with students.



SCHOOLS ACROSS THE COUNTRY ARE STEPPING UP TO THE CHALLENGE WITH INNOVATIVE NEW STRATEGIES, SUCH AS:

- Allowing students to keep a lunch or breakfast food item for consumption later in the school day
- Using techniques listed on the [USDA's Guide to Conducting Student Food Waste Audits](#) to help reduce food waste
- Setting up a table for kids to place items they are not going to consume (packaged or pre-portioned items)
- Letting kids self-serve
- Composting food waste for school gardens
- Collaborating with local farmers on composting or food-scrap projects
- Collecting excess wholesome food after mealtimes to donate to charitable organizations