Florida School Food Recovery: How to Start a Food Recovery Program

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Broward County Public Schools
Schools across U.S. throw away over a BILLION unopened food items per year!!!
WHY?

• When students purchase lunch in the school cafeteria, they are required to take 3 food items.

• Most schools do not believe they are permitted to have share tables.
We teach our students that food has nutritional value...........

but then we train them to treat it as trash by not providing an alternative.
Some Common Obstacles..

The Federal Law was unclear about school food donations before November 2011, and while it is now clear, it is not widely known.

Fear of time commitment to begin the program

Concern meeting health department standards
Good News!

School Food Rescue Programs
USDA and EPA Join with Private Sector, Charitable Organizations to Set Nation's First Food Waste Reduction Goals

NEW YORK, Sept. 16, 2015 – Today, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Environmental Protection Agency Deputy Administrator Stan Meiburg announced the United States' first-ever national food waste reduction goal, calling for a 50-percent reduction by 2030. As part of the effort, the federal government will lead a new partnership with charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, the private sector, and local...
**BENEFITS**

- **ENVIRONMENT**
- **FEED LOCAL HUNGRY, NOT LANDFILL**
- **TEACHING VALUE OF FOOD**
Addresses
Environmental Concerns
Case Study: Beachside Montessori Village

• Sustainability class studying food systems

• Food in landfill creates methane gas, 21 times more potent than CO2.
Food Waste Audit

Revealed we were throwing away 300+ food items in lunch daily.
An average 52,020 unopened food items each year
Releasing over 6,000 lbs. of greenhouse gas each year
Questioned what impact could 220 schools have?
Food Recovery Strategies
Share Tables

• Not a food donation program! A food waste reduction activity

• Designated stations where children may return whole and/or unopened food or beverage items they choose not to eat.

• These items are then made available to other children who may want or need another serving during or after the meal service.

• The USDA expressly allows children to take additional items from the share table, at no cost, to consume immediately or later in another location. You may request to have the USDA memo regarding Share Tables emailed upon request.

• Need approval from Local Health Department as counties differing have rules.
The plans to provide the following ways:

a. When removed from the tray, the milk is immediately placed into a temperature-controlled environment. The milk shall be maintained at a minimum of 41°F Fahrenheit or colder. The temperature of a representative container of the milk on the sharing table shall be checked every 30-45 minutes and documented on a log sheet with the time and temperature. The log sheet shall be dated, initialed by the person checking the temperature, and maintained in the establishment for one year. The log sheets shall be immediately available to Department of Health personnel upon request. The container used to check (test) the milk temperature must be in the same cold holding environment and shall be discarded and never served to a consumer. If the container is labeled as test, sample, or similar distinguishing terminology and does not contaminate other milk containers, it may be re-used for temperature testing throughout the service period. If the temperature of the milk is above 41°F Fahrenheit at any time, all the milk containers on the table must be discarded immediately. Milk cartons are not to be stored in un-drained ice. Checking the temperature and maintaining a log is not required when the milk is placed in an electronic, refrigerated device that is designed to cool and maintain temperature, such as milk cooler or reach in refrigerator.

b. Prior to the beginning of the service period, the temperature of a representative sample of milk shall be checked and documented on a log sheet. Under this option, any milk placed on the sharing table shall be discarded at the end of the day's service period or four hours after the start of the service period. In no case shall milk remain out of a refrigerated environment for more than 4 hours. A representative sample shall consist of one milk carton per crate. The log sheet shall contain the date, total number of crates, temperature of each sample, and the state of the sample checked.
How Did We Do It?

1. Team - Food & Nutrition Service Director, Cafeteria Manager, Principal, parent volunteer, students
2. Supplies: Refrigerator & salad bar cart (B-stock)
3. Volunteers – monitor table
4. Spread the word: school assemblies – Offer vs. Serve, procedures
5. Food Share & Donate 3 times/week
After pilot, expansion throughout district…. COLLABORATED WITH FNS AND STEM TO OFFER TRAININGS DECIDED TO TRAIN OVER 40 SCHOOLS SINCE AUGUST, 15 UP AND RUNNING STAKEHOLDERS VARY: PTA, STUDENT CLUBS, TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATION INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED: REFRIGERATOR AND SHARE TABLE - ICED PARTNER WITH LOCAL NON-PROFITS FOR ASSISTANCE MISSION IS TO EXPAND THROUGHOUT FLORIDA AND BEYOND PRESENTED AT FNSA, EPA/FDEP, RECYCLE FLORIDA
Community Outreach

- Broward Schools Climate Youth Summit
- Water Matters Day
- Beachside Montessori Village, Hollywood
- Indian Trails Middle School Flagler County
Cafeteria as a Classroom Curriculum
WWF-ASU-NU

Connect students to food
WWF Food Waste Warriors Toolkit

https://www.worldwildlife.org/teaching-resources/toolkits/food-waste-warrior-toolkit
More possibilities...

Anna Montgomery, Davidson College
Identify food deserts within school district and open School Food Pantries – Lauderdale Manors Elementary, Ft. Lauderdale

UF/IFAS – Potential partner

Mobile School Pantry
zeina@mobileschoolpantry.org
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beachside Montessori Village</th>
<th>Projected Broward County</th>
<th>Projected Florida</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 school pop.=789 students</td>
<td>220 schools</td>
<td>4,269 schools</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Lunch numbers only...       | 81,650 children go to bed hungry each night  
*Feeding South Florida  | 800,000 children go to bed hungry each night  
*Feeding Florida           |
| Throwing away 52,000 items/year= 10,400 meals | Potential to recover the estimated 11.4 million food items thrown away each year  | Potential to recover the estimated 221 million food items thrown away each year |
| Emitting 6,400 lbs. greenhouse gases | Potential to offset the estimated 1.4 million lbs. greenhouse gases emitted each year | Potential to offset the estimated 27.3 million lbs. greenhouse gases emitted each year |
OUR MISSION IS CLEAR
“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”

-Margaret Mead
How Do We Expand?

- **Facilitate Awareness Campaign- Debunk the Myth**

- **Educate, train and support districts schools, parents and students on procedures, measure impact, intro cafeteria as extension of classroom curriculum (ASU/WWF/NU)**

- **Continue to partner and collaborate with municipalities, pantries and non-profits**

- **Infrastructure – Refrigerator and ice table – sponsors/donors**

- **Florida School Food Recovery Coordinator – connecting the School Districts, Food & Nutrition Service Departments, County Health Departments, School Stakeholders, and local food pantries**

- **Expand school food pantry program to schools located in food deserts.**
Resources
https://www.browardschools.com/Page/45033

- Checklist for starting a program
- Temperature log
- Sample Parent Letter
- Bytes to Bite App – Locate Florida Food Pantries
- http://www.foodrescue.net – metric for food recovering
One Action

- Empowers children to reduce greenhouse gases and feed the hungry.
- For assistance in beginning a program in your school contact
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  Melanie.Mason@FreshFromFlorida.com