Food Waste Education for Youth

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The Problem

- 30-40%, or 133 billion lb. food is wasted in the U.S.
- 90 billion pounds of that is \textit{wasted} by consumers alone

Enough to fill Lucas Oil Stadium every day for a year!
Multi-Faceted Problem

- **Social-**
  - We will need to double our Ag by 2050
  - We can feed the hungry with our waste

- **Economic-**
  - ~$2,200 per family/year
  - $165 billion for the country

- **Environment-**
  - Water
  - Wildlife
  - Climate Change
Tackling the Food Waste Problem

• U.N. and U.S. EPA and USDA goal to halve food waste by 2030

• Key activities:
  – Seek prevention strategies and use the food recovery hierarchy
  – Increase public awareness: furthering food stewardship, donation and waste reduction begins with education and outreach about the collective effects of food waste and providing replicable best practices.
  – Improve the data
  – Forge new partnerships and expand the existing ones
  – Clarify date labels and food safety
  – Build food loss and waste infrastructures
Food Waste in Schools

- U.S. schools spend over $1 billion on wasted food annually
- Largest component of school waste
Solution?

- Purdue Extension program
- Free natural resources formal and informal curriculum
- K-12 educators
- Wildlife, health and wellness, food waste
- STEM standards-based
- Pilot tested and peer reviewed
- Wide usership - thousands of downloads
- www.purdue.edu/nature
Objectives

Understand that natural resources are limited.

Describe the amount of food wasted and resources used throughout the food production process.
Curriculum: What a Waste of Food!

Objectives

Identify how, where, and why food is wasted

Describe how their eating habits can affect the food waste problem

Accurately interpret expiration and “best-by” dates

Describe proper storage methods for various foods

Propose various techniques for using older foods and food byproducts
Upcoming Curriculum: Food Waste

• Food Waste and the Environment
  • Food Waste and Water
  • Food Waste and Climate Change
  • Food Waste and Wildlife

• Food Waste Solutions
  • Food Waste Solutions for School
  • Food Waste Solutions for Home

• Transporting Food Waste
Nature of Teaching Teacher Workshops

Email busser@purdue.edu to host a workshop
Teacher Workshop Impact Data 2017-2018

- Understand benefits of connecting with nature
- Understand connection between nature and food waste
- Know how to connect nature and food waste
- Confident incorporating school gardens
- Confident incorporating nature into curriculum
- Confident incorporating food waste into curriculum
- Comfortable utilizing outdoors with students
Additional Resources
EPA-Food Recovery Challenge and Food: Too Good to Waste Tool Kit
• Student-driven
• Toolkit provided
• Online data recording
• Calculator—converts to meals and CO2 e
• Cafeteria Rangers
• Student-driven
• Classroom activities
• Cornell University
• Scorecard to grade your cafeteria
Zero Waste Cafeterias

- Great local resource
- Facilitates youth climate action leadership including zero waste cafeterias like IPS School 91
- For more information contact Jim Poyser at jimpoys@earthcharterindiana.org
WWF Food Waste Warrior Toolkit

• Provides classroom activities
• Take-home materials
• Waste audit toolkit
• Posters and infographics
What Teachers Can Do

• Talk to students about food waste
• Encourage students to help their parents make their sack lunch
• Encourage students to only take the minimum amount of food
• Encourage students to think before they snack
• Allow sharing of snacks in your classroom
• Teach students about waste-free lunches
• Keep to-go containers in the classroom/have students bring one at the beginning of the year
• Talk to parents about food waste and waste-free lunches
What Schools Can Do

- Give fruits and veggies creative names
- Put white milk in front
- Sharing tables/buckets
- Allow students to serve themselves
- Allow students enough time to eat
- Donate extra food to a local pantry
- Use extra food in classroom cooking projects
- Compost
- Collaborate with local farmers on composting or food-scarep projects
- Audit food waste-EPA or K12 Food Rescue
- Recess before lunch
- Allow tasting
What Students Can Do

• Pack their own lunch/reusable containers
• Take less
• Take time in the lunch line
• Talk less
• Always know what’s for lunch
• Communicate with lunch workers
• Talk with others about food waste
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