

JOIN THE STOP FOOD WASTE SCHOOL CHALLENGE

The **STOP FOOD WASTE SCHOOL CHALLENGE** is an educational program designed by StopWaste to engage Alameda County students and educators in the practice and benefits of proper waste sorting and reducing the amount of food going to waste in the landfill.

The Challenge is comprised of classroom curriculum and activities that track a school's food waste and charts progress towards achieving food waste prevention goals. Student "Green Team" monitors, teachers, custodians and nutrition services staff lead efforts that build awareness and engage the whole school in reducing the amount of food going to waste.

WHY FOOD WASTE?

The State of California has recognized that wasted food is the #1 item sorted incorrectly into landfill bins across the state and is contributing to climate change. Students throughout Alameda County, have found that on average, 50-90% of what is tossed in the landfill bin is edible food that could have been eaten or shared on a food share table. Schools, students, teachers and families can make a big impact by taking action to reduce food waste and in some cases, starting a food share table in the school cafeteria.

WHY SHOULD YOUR SCHOOL PARTICIPATE?

The Stop Food Waste Challenge provides a number of benefits to schools, students, teachers, parents and the surrounding community.

— Increased academic achievement

- The impact of Environmentally-Related Education on Academic Achievement Literature Review study by Community Resources for Science shows that students who engage in environmental education can increase academic achievement.
- The StopWaste curriculum provides real-world application of academics and is aligned to Common Core and Next Generation Science standards, allowing students to meaningfully apply math, science and English language arts skills outside the classroom

— Leadership, service-learning and civic education

- By collaborating to set goals, monitor school progress and help teach their peers how to sort and reduce food waste, students are empowered to become leaders and spokespeople in their schools, families and communities while practicing school values such as "Respect" and "Responsibility".



— Free resources for teachers and schools

- StopWaste offers a free in-class 4Rs Student Action Project academic program with lessons including a scientific waste audit where students compare and contrast data they collect. StopWaste also provides students with school-wide rewards, such as school supplies, as incentive for meeting goals.

— Opportunities to become a leading school and develop new community partnerships

- Participating schools have the opportunity to be seen as a leader and inspire other schools in their district and county

— Support compliance with state regulations

- Laws about proper sorting, like CA Senate Bill 1383, that requires proper sorting of organic (green bin) material, impact schools. Participating in a Stop Food Waste Challenge can educate the school community about proper waste sorting and support compliance with this and other state and local regulations

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HOW IT WORKS

Interested schools can sign up for the Stop Food Waste School Challenge by:

- Registering through participation with the 4Rs Student Action Project by emailing Schools@StopWaste.org.

A StopWaste Schools Team liaison will work with each school to set up the Stop Food Waste Challenge.

Schools meet the Challenge by following these basic steps:

1. Conduct a scientific waste audit investigation

- Students sort through a sample of cafeteria landfill trash, measuring weight and volume and analyzing the data to make conclusions and assess if their prediction was correct.

2. Set a school-wide diversion goal

- Students, in collaboration with StopWaste staff, set a school-wide goal to reduce the amount of wasted food in the landfill bin and track progress for 2 weeks.

3. Develop a school-wide campaign to reduce wasted food

Campaign elements include:

- StopWaste coordinates a Stop Food Waste School Challenge kick-off assembly and a Student Green Team shares baseline waste audit findings to introduce the Challenge. If the school district's nutrition services department is participating in StopWaste's Smart Cafeteria Initiative, the assembly also announces a new food share cart, provided by StopWaste.
- Designated StopWaste Schools Team liaison communicates program details to school stakeholders, including teachers, parents, principal/vice principal, custodians and nutrition services staff.
- Bulletin board in cafeteria sorting area displays Stop Food Waste Challenge posters and progress charts (Display materials provided by StopWaste).

4. Conduct a waste audit after 2 weeks to assess progress and distribute school-wide prizes when goal has been reached

5. Reflect, evaluate and celebrate the school's achievement!

- The Student Green Team creates a final report of the school's accomplishments and receives framed Stop Food Waste Challenge certificates of achievement.
- StopWaste documents the entire project through photography, data collection and reporting and conducts outreach to share the school's achievement of their goals.
- The Stop Food Waste Challenge achievement becomes a success story to inspire other schools in the district and county.



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For more information about Stop Food School Challenges or Smart Cafeteria Initiative, visit www.StopWaste.org/Schools or email Schools@StopWaste.org.