



Waste-Free Lunch

CHALLENGE

Getting Started

Teacher's Planning Guide

in partnership with



A program of
The Recycling
Council of Ontario

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WASTE REDUCTION WEEK IN CANADA

Waste Reduction Week aims to inform and engage Canadians about the environmental and social ramifications of wasteful practices. It strives to educate, engage and empower Canadians to reduce, reuse and recycle waste.

The program's educational resources and 'take action' messaging empower all Canadians to adopt more environmentally conscious choices. Waste Reduction Week in Canada further provides information and ideas to reduce waste in all facets of daily living, creating the solutions to the many environmental challenges we face including climate change, water pollution and preservation of natural resources.

In 2011, the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge will be one of three key programs in Ontario to support Waste Reduction Week in Canada.

For more information about Waste Reduction Week in Canada 2011 and to download additional school resources and visit www.wrwcanada.com



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INTRODUCTION

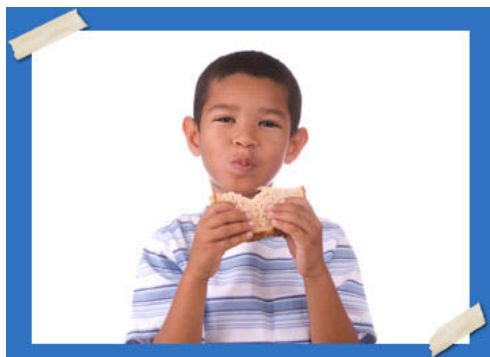
This guide was developed to assist schools in planning Waste-Free Lunch Challenge activities. It is recommended that you familiarize yourself with each section and keep the guide on-hand should you need more detailed information.

What is the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge?

The Waste-Free Lunch Challenge is a school program developed by the Recycling Council of Ontario in partnership with Metro Ontario and Tetra Pak Canada. The goal of the program is to help schools decrease the amount of garbage they produce and to educate students, staff and parents about waste reduction. School lunches are a major source of waste in Ontario. The average student's lunch generates a total of 30 kilograms of waste per school year, or an average elementary school generates 8500 kilograms (18,700 lbs) of waste per year.

There are two features of the program:

1. The challenge itself, where students commit to bringing a waste-free lunch every day during Waste Reduction Week (17th -21st October, 2011), and
2. A competition where classrooms/schools who register for the program, monitor the waste produced from their lunches on a normal day (prior to the Challenge) and then again each day during the week-long Waste-Free Lunch Challenge. To enter the competition, classrooms/schools are asked to submit a final entry form with their results and a brief summary of their experience. Prizes will be awarded to classrooms/schools with significant changes in the amount of garbage sent to landfill and those who make a contribution to improving waste management practices across the whole school.



Why a whole week?

Children and youth are becoming increasingly aware of waste management issues. To ensure the competition is a true challenge, we believe it should be completed over a full week.



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Why should your school participate in the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge?

The Waste-Free Lunch Challenge is an easy way to inspire your students and school community to implement the 3Rs – Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. The program also provides opportunities to:

1. Achieve learning outcomes in subject areas including Mathematics, Science and Technology and Social Studies;
2. Connect with your local community by involving parents, guardians and community groups in WFLC activities;
3. Increased awareness of packaging and waste reduction opportunities in your school;
4. Reduce waste generation from school lunches and take a step towards long term cost-savings for waste management;
5. Beautify your school by reducing litter;
6. Be part of an Ontario-wide environmental initiative and make waste reduction a 'skill for life', and
7. A chance to win \$1,000 for your school environmental projects and additional prizes for participating students (Now open to all Ontario elementary schools).



What can your school win?

Prizes of \$1,000 will be awarded to the Top classrooms/schools that are the most successful in reducing the amount of waste generated from their school lunches. Cash prizes are courtesy of Metro Ontario and Tetra Pak Canada, and will be awarded to classrooms/schools in the following categories:

- Waste-Free Lunch Stars (Top Beginners)
- Waste-Free Lunch Leaders (Top Advanced)

Schools will self-categorize based on their current waste reduction policies and practices. Participating students/classrooms/schools that submit a final entry form in the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge will be eligible for prizes that will support their waste reduction efforts.

Judging will be conducted by a panel selected by the Recycling Council of Ontario and will be based upon the following criteria:



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- Waste Reduction Performance - Change in lunch waste as a result of the Challenge;
- Commitment - How the class/school promoted the WFLC and level of participation;
- Sustainability of the waste-free lunch challenge - How the class and/or school will maintain their success through ongoing waste reduction activities around school lunches, and
- Advanced category (existing low/zero waste schools) - How the class/school promotes waste reduction and other environmentally sustainable practices in their local community.

The judges' decision is final and no late submissions will be considered.

Who can participate?

Schools across Ontario are welcome to participate. We encourage everyone to participate in the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge and reduce their ecological footprint. We are pleased to announce that Ontario classrooms and schools from **jk – 8 are eligible to win prizes.**



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Who is organizing the WFLC?

The Waste-Free Lunch Challenge (WFLC) is an initiative of the Recycling Council of Ontario (RCO) in partnership with Metro Ontario and Tetra Pak Canada.

The Recycling Council of Ontario is a not-for-profit organization committed to minimizing society's impact on the environment by eliminating waste. RCO's mission is to inform and educate all members of society about the generation of waste, the avoidance of waste, the more efficient use of resources and the benefits and/or consequences of these activities. Since its inception in 1978, RCO has actively assisted municipalities, corporations, other organizations and individuals in reducing their waste. For more information about the RCO, please visit www.rco.on.ca.



Metro Ontario is a Canadian company with annual sales of over \$11 billion and over 65,000 employees. Metro Ontario is a leader in the food and pharmaceutical sectors in Quebec and Ontario, where it operates a network of more than 600 food stores under several banners including Metro, Metro Plus, Super C and Food Basics, as well as over 250 drugstores mainly under the Brunet, The Pharmacy and Drug Basics banners.



Tetra Pak is the world's leading food processing and packaging solutions company. Working closely with its customers and suppliers, it provides safe, innovative and environmentally sound products that each day meet the needs of hundreds of millions of people in more than 170 countries around the world. With almost 22,000 employees based in over 85 countries, Tetra Pak believes in responsible industry leadership and a sustainable approach to business. Its motto, "PROTECTS WHAT'S GOOD(tm)," reflects its vision to make food safe and available, everywhere. For more information about Tetra Pak Canada visit www.tetrapak.ca



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WHAT IS A WASTE-FREE LUNCH?

A waste-free lunch (sometimes called litter-less, smart, garbage-less or waste-not lunch) contains no throwaway packaging. Food and drinks are packed in reusable containers within a reusable lunch bag or box. All containers are resealable so that leftover food and drink can be consumed (or composted) later. Some schools have a 'boomerang' lunch program where all uneaten food and waste material is returned home and is not added to the school's waste collection. Both waste-free and boomerang lunches qualify for participation in the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge. Below are some tips for a waste-free lunch.

Yes please	Please avoid
REUSABLE lunch carrier	AVOID paper or plastic bags
REUSABLE container (Tupperware, plastic)	AVOID plastic wrap, foil, wax, or Styrofoam
REUSABLE drink bottle or thermos	AVOID single-use containers
CLOTH NAPKIN to wash and re-use	AVOID paper napkins
CUTLERY/SILVERWARE to wash and re-use	AVOID plastic forks/spoons
HEALTHY snacks	AVOID over-packaged snacks

For 'boomerang' lunches, any uneaten food and waste material produced must be returned home and cannot be added to the school's waste collection. More information about waste-free lunches, recycling and waste reduction is available online at www.wastefreelunch.com in the Teacher Resources section.



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GETTING STARTED – BEFORE THE CHALLENGE

1. Nominate who will be in charge of your event

You may choose to select a teacher(s) and/or principal to be the coordinators for the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge in your school. This coordinating group may meet briefly in the lead up to the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge to plan and promote the event. This may include making sure that letters to parents are sent out, PA announcements are made and a press release is sent to the local news.

Make sure you tell everyone what you hope to accomplish with your Waste-Free Lunch event. Include all staff and students in the design of the program and make sure the instructions are clear. Once it is up and running, provide regular updates on your success. A Waste-Free Lunch Challenge Planning List is available online at www.wastefreelunch.com in the Teacher Resources section. Feel free alter the tasks according to your needs.

2. Confirming the date

The Waste-Free Lunch Challenge will be happening from 17th to 21nd October, 2011 as part of Waste Reduction Week in Canada.

However, we understand that this week may not suit every school because of prior commitments such as sporting events or field trips. If this is the case, please register your classroom/school and conduct the challenge during a week where as many students can get involved as is possible. Whenever you hold your Waste-Free Lunch Challenge, you will still need to register your classroom/school and submit your final entry form before Friday 28th October, 2011 to be part of the Ontario-wide event.

3. Registering your classroom/school

The easiest way to register your classroom/school is online at www.wastefreelunch.com. First, you will select classroom or whole school registration. All you need is the district school board name, school name, principal, classroom grade and teacher contact details. Fill in and submit this information. Approximately 10 minutes after you have registered for the challenge, you will receive an email confirmation. If you do not receive this confirmation, please check your junk mail. For problems, please email: wflc@rco.on.ca.

As program resources are limited, only Ontario elementary schools (jk-8) will be eligible to win prizes. The deadline for registration is **Friday 7th October, 2011.**



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Once you have registered, you can download each of the teacher resources and tools to help you host your Waste-Free Lunch Challenge. Your registration will enable us to keep a record of your participation and reward those outstanding classrooms/schools who submit winning entries upon completion of the Challenge.

4. Promote your Waste-Free Lunch Challenge

Here are some suggestions for promoting your event as part of the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge. All resources are available online at: www.wastefreelunch.com.

- Use the sample newsletter resource to put a notice in the school newsletter advertising the date and asking for support from parents.
- Submit a press release to local news stations, letting the local community know about your school's participation in the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge. A sample press release is available online.
- Use the *sample letter to parents* to send a letter home before the Challenge notifying parents about the event. This letter includes information about waste-free lunches and how they can support the program.
- Put up a poster on the school noticeboard where parents will notice it when visiting the school. A sample poster (see right) is available online.
- Make announcements leading up to the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge to let staff and students know the dates and serve as a reminder for them to bring waste-free lunches *all week*.
- Set-up a demonstration table with examples of waste-free lunch "do's and don'ts". Provide an opportunity for students to make suggestions about ways to make waste-free lunches.

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Are you ready for the **Challenge?**

Go waste-free from **October 17 to 21** as part of the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge for your chance to win fabulous prizes.

Register now and you could
WIN \$1000
for your school's
environmental projects

Register your class or school online at www.wastefreelunch.com
(The deadline for registration is October 7th, 2011)

In Celebration of Waste Reduction Week!

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PREPARE YOUR STUDENTS

Once your registration is complete, it's time to prepare the students for the event. Here are a few classroom activities to complete in the lead up to the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge. Please note that the waste audit is the only compulsory activity for classrooms/schools entering the Challenge.

1. Conduct a Waste Audit - *Required*

A waste audit provides you with idea of where your class/school is with regard to their waste management practises currently. By looking at a sample of lunch waste on a normal day, the overall waste produced by your students' lunches can be estimated. The waste audit will tell you not only the type, quantity, or origin of waste produced but also the management policies and procedures that affect waste generation.

Note: To be eligible for prizes, your classroom/school will be required to complete an audit of school lunch waste on a normal day before the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge. Instructions on how to complete this audit (as a lesson plan) and a Waste Audit Tool (Excel spreadsheet) are available online at www.wastefreelunch.com in the Teachers Resources Section.

The waste audit will be repeated during the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge to determine whether there has been a reduction in the amount of lunch waste produced in your classroom/school. Classrooms/schools that do not currently have a recycling or organic collection service are also eligible to enter the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge. Simply complete the audit exercise and record your results as if there are recycling and organic waste collections available. This will enable your classroom/school final entry to be judged fairly with others.

For instructions about completing your Final Entry Form – see *After the Challenge – Submitting your Final Entry*.

2. Track your garbage - *optional*

Create a map or diagram with students of what happens to the items in their lunch that they recycle, compost or if throw it away as garbage. This can be used as the basis for a discussion on the environmental impacts of waste disposal and local issues around landfills or recycling facilities.



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3. Pledge your commitment - optional

Have students fill out a personal pledge to bring a waste-free lunch and attach the pledges to a large drawing of a lunch box or waste-free lunch poster prominently displayed in the classroom. Remind students the day before to make sure they bring a waste-free lunch and that you will be measuring all of the waste produced after lunch that day.

4. Tote-your-own-trash - optional

Students and staff attach a plastic bag to their belt for the day. All their recycling or garbage (with the exception of bathroom waste) goes in the bag; students do a personal audit at the day's end and formulate a plan to reduce or reuse personal garbage.

COMPLETING THE CHALLENGE

During your Waste-Free Lunch Challenge week, the following steps are recommended to complete your Challenge.

1. Each day, just before the lunch or nutrition break, ask your class to make sure they place any throwaway items into a single bag or container that is separate from other bins used in the school. This bag/container will be used to audit student lunch waste later on in the day. Reusable lunch bags or lunch boxes shouldn't be placed in this bag/container as they will be returned home for washing and reusing.
2. Repeat the *Waste Audit Instructions and Lesson Plan* (including the appropriate worksheet) after lunch to measure how much waste (if any!) was produced by students in your classroom/school. Remember to record the number of participating students on your worksheet. Keep the worksheets on hand for submitting your final entry later on.
3. *Optional* - Take photographs of your Waste-Free Lunch activities to record and promote your success. Group photographs of your class/school with their waste-free lunches, the waste audit

If your class/school is really committed to the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge you may not have any waste to measure at all! In this case, you will still need to record your results (0kg is ok), including the number of student lunches audited.



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lesson and any displays or posters in the classroom or foyer may be useful for school newsletters, annual reports or local news media.

4. *Optional* - You may also like to hold your own in-school contest to see which classroom generates the least amount of garbage or which class had the most students participating. A student certificate is available online at www.wastefreelunch.com in the Teacher Resources section.

AFTER THE CHALLENGE – SUBMITTING YOUR FINAL ENTRY FORM

Once you have completed your Waste-Free Lunch Challenge, it is time to let us know how it went!

There are five easy steps to submitting your classroom entry:

1. Collect your Waste Audit Worksheets and ask your school Principal to give permission for your entry to be reproduced by the Recycling Council of Ontario. This will allow us to promote outstanding schools in future years.
2. Go to the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge website homepage (www.wastefreelunch.com) and click on the SUBMIT YOUR RESULTS button.
3. Complete all sections of the final entry form. If you are interested in the viewing the final submission questions, they are available in Appendix 4 of the *Waste Audit Instructions and Lesson Plan*.
4. Submit your final results on the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge website by **Friday October 28th, 2011**. (Note: There will be NO staff available to assist you after 4:30pm on October 28, 2011. If you have any troubles submitting your final entry form, please email: wflc@rco.on.ca.)

Judging will take place between October 31st and November 11th 2011. Winners will be announced after November 14, 2011.

Now that your students are experts on waste reduction, why not consider having a waste-free lunch once per week, such as 'Waste-Free Wednesday'? If your school is really committed to waste reduction you may consider having waste-free lunches every day!



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Which category should I nominate my class/school for?

The Section 1 of the final entry form asks you to nominate your class as a Beginner or as Advanced. The following descriptions will help you to select the appropriate category.

- Beginner – First time the class and/or school has participated in waste-free lunch activities
- Advanced – Classroom/school actively supports waste-free or boomerang lunches on a regular basis (e.g. as part of school eco-plan or environmental policy); previous Waste-Free Lunch Challenge participant.

Reporting your waste audit results in your entry form

Section 2 of the final entry requires your waste audit results. Use the values on your waste audit worksheets to complete this section. *It is recommended that you use the Waste Audit Tool which will help you calculate the final results required in Section 2.*

RESOURCES PROVIDED BY RCO

The resources mentioned throughout this guide are available online at www.wastefreelunch.com

Getting Started:

1. WFLC Summary Video
2. Getting Started - Teacher's Planning Guide (PDF)
3. Planning Your Event Task List (WORD)
4. Waste Audit Instructions and Lesson Plan (PDF)
5. Useful Web links (PDF) - includes links to helpful videos and classroom activities
6. Waste Audit Instructional Video

Spread the Word:

7. Waste-Free Lunch Challenge Poster (PDF)
8. Sample Letter to Parents (WORD)



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9. Sample Announcements (PDF)
10. Waste Reduction and Recycling Facts (PDF)
11. Sample School Newsletter
12. Waste-Free Lunch Challenge Sample Web Banner (GIF) - upload to your school website to remind parents about the event!
13. Sample School Media Release

Waste Audit:

14. Waste Audit Tool (EXCEL) - please read instructions provided in first tab prior to use
15. Weight of Common Lunch Items (PDF)
16. Sample Student Certificate (PDF)

Parent Resources:

17. Fridge Reminder Resource
18. How to pack a waste-free lunch Video
19. How to Shop for a waste-free lunch Video



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WASTE-FREE LUNCH CHALLENGE CONTACTS

For further information about the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge please contact:

Recycling Council of Ontario

Phone: (416) 657 2797 extension 5

Email: wflc@rco.on.ca

Website: www.wastefreelunch.com

Address: 215 Spadina Ave, Suite 225
Toronto, ON, M5T 2C7

REFERENCES

Waste Reduction Week in Canada

<http://www.wrwcanada.com/>

Ontario EcoSchools

<http://www.ontarioecoschools.org/>

ResourceSmart Schools Awards

http://www.resourcesmart.vic.gov.au/for_educators_3351.html

State of Victoria (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development)

<http://www.det.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/commrel/events/RFL/rubbishfreelunchVELSIv1.pdf>



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