



2017 National LifeSmarts Championship

Competition 1: Conducting a Food Waste Audit

Survey Instrument

This is a printable version of the form you will complete online for Competition 1: Conducting a Food Waste Audit. Use this document to gather the information you will submit online. When you are ready, complete the online document entitled, [Food Waste Audit Submission Form](#). You cannot save information in the online form, so be prepared to complete it in one session.

Section One: School demographics, school lunch processes, and food waste activities

School demographics

1. School name
2. Principal's name
3. Address
4. City
5. State
6. Zip
7. Number of Students
8. Lowest grade in your school
9. Highest grade in your school
10. If your school is more than just high school, list how many students attend each level
 - a. Elementary or lower
 - b. Middle grades
 - c. High or upper school
11. Is this a public or private school?
 - a. Public
 - b. Private
12. Number (or percent) of free or reduced lunch offered
 - a. Free
 - b. Reduced
13. List the students who participated in the audit and completed this form

Background about school lunch

14. Please estimate how many students buy lunch in the school's cafeteria
 - a. Less than 10%
 - b. 10-30%
 - c. 31-50%
 - d. 51-70%
 - e. 71-90%
 - f. More than 90%
15. How long (in minutes) do students have to eat lunch?
16. Are students allowed to eat lunch in rooms/buildings other than the cafeteria?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
17. Are students allowed to leave campus for lunch
 - a. No
 - b. Yes
 - i. Grades/students allowed to leave
18. Does the school offer breakfast?
 - a. No
 - b. Yes
19. Are there any times during the school year when breakfast or lunch is free to all students?
 - a. No
 - b. Yes
 - i. Explain
20. Who controls the portions and servings students receive?
 - a. Students (buffet style or open access allows students to portion items)
 - b. Cafeteria staff portion items into servings (e.g. fruit into cups), but students select items and number of servings themselves
 - c. Cafeteria staff plate lunch items, students do not choose serving size
 - d. Meals are prepackaged. Students and staff do not affect portions or servings received
 - e. Other (please specify)
21. Does the school serve set meals (e.g. chicken nuggets with potatoes and carrots), or can students choose what they want from the menu?
 - a. The students receive sides with the entrée, whether they want it or not
 - b. The students can pick which sides they would like, if any
 - c. Other (please specify)
22. Are fruits/vegetables required with every meal and/or included in every meal price?
 - a. No
 - b. Yes, included in price
 - c. Yes, charged separately

23. In your teams' opinion, students are content with the meal options at school
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly agree
 - i. Space for response
24. What types of utensils are used?
- a. Reusable utensils, such as metal
 - b. Disposable utensils, such as standard plastics
 - c. Compostable utensils, such as certain plastics
 - d. Other (please specify)
25. What types of plates/trays are used? (Note: this question refers to the item the food is placed directly onto, such as a Styrofoam tray with compartments for entrees and sides. It does not refer to the plastic tray the plate, drink, and silverware might be placed on to carry to the table)
- a. Reusable plates or trays, such as plastic
 - b. Disposable paper plates or trays
 - c. Compostable paper plates or trays (specifically labeled or marketed as compostable)
 - d. Styrofoam plates or trays that are recovered for recycling
 - e. Other (please specify)

Food waste activities at the school

26. Does the school use any of the following waste reduction activities? (Select all that apply)
- a. Menus revised to reduce commonly wasted food items
 - b. Procedures put in place to reduce food over-purchasing
 - c. Procedures put in place to reduce food loss to expiration
 - d. Students learn ways to reduce food waste
 - e. Offer smaller portion options for students who may want less food
 - f. Food is served in the most efficient way possible to reduce food waste
 - g. Trays are no longer used
 - h. "Offer" versus "Serve" policy in place
 - i. Share table created for unopened food items
 - j. Unopened food is recovered for afterschool or supplemental snacks
 - k. Recess occurs before lunchtime
 - l. Lunch time has been extended, in part, to reduce waste
 - m. Other (please specify)
27. Has the school performed a food waste audit previously?
- a. Yes, the school has performed a waste audit (including cafeteria waste)
 - b. No, the school has discussed performing an audit but decided not to move forward
 - c. No, a waste audit has not been considered
 - d. Other (please specify)

28. Which of the following generates the majority of the food waste? (If data is not tracked, please answer the best you can based on your perception or belief.)
- Student food waste
 - Spoilage/expiration from kitchen
 - Food preparation
 - Unserved food after lunch period is over
 - Other (please specify)
29. Food waste is an issue at school
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree

Section Two: School Waste Data Form

- School (fill in the blank)
- Students in attendance (fill in the blank)
- Number of lunches served (fill in the blank)
- Menu (fill in the blank)
- Date (fill in the blank)
- Waste type: Unopened Food

Type	# items	Weight of empty bin	Total weight	Net weight (total – empty)
Fruit sides				
Vegetable sides				
Yogurt/dairy				
Chips/Crackers				
Milk cartons				
Sandwiches				

TOTAL WASTE: _____
(please include units, e.g. pounds)

Notes: _____

- Waste type: Food

Bin/Bag	Weight of Empty bin	Total weight	Net weight (Total – Empty)	Picture taken?	Percent full
1					
2					
3					

4					
5					
6					

TOTAL WASTE: _____
(please include units, e.g. pounds)

8. Waste type: Liquid

Bin/Bag	Weight of Empty bin	Total weight	Net weight (Total – Empty)	Picture taken?	Percent full
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

TOTAL WASTE: _____
(please include units, e.g. pounds)

9. Waste type: Recycling

Bin/Bag	Weight of Empty bin	Total weight	Net weight (Total – Empty)	Picture taken?	Percent full
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

TOTAL WASTE: _____
(please include units, e.g. pounds)

10. Waste type: Other (landfill)

Bin/Bag	Weight of Empty bin	Total weight	Net weight (Total – Empty)	Picture taken?	Percent full
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

TOTAL WASTE: _____
(please include units, e.g. pounds)

30. Describe the process you used to establish clear guidelines for students to follow to sort their food waste. (space to answer)

31. We would be interested in being part of the food waste panel at Nationals
- Yes
 - No

Section Three: Critical Thinking

Formulate answers to three of the following critical thinking questions and enter the team's answers below.

1. Based on your observations during the food waste audit, make three recommendations to your School Board to reduce food waste.
2. Justify a school's role in teaching children about food waste and the impact food waste has on school budgets, the environment, and hunger in the community.
3. The US Environmental Protection Agency has set a goal to reduce food waste by 50% by the year 2030. Based upon your experience conducting this food waste audit, will the US meet this goal? Explain why or why not.
4. Detail two or three findings or observations that surprised you. Describe how conducting this food waste audit has impacted you and your team, and the way you think about food in America.
5. What is one obstacle your team faced during the audit and how did you work to resolve it? If the issue went unresolved, what steps would you take to reevaluate your approach?

Section Four: Bonus Question

Answer this bonus question for additional points.

1. Should all schools be required to do food waste audits on a regular basis? Why or why not? Support your answer. (space to answer)

Thank you for joining LifeSmarts and our Earth Day partners to conduct this food waste audit!