



National LifeSmarts Championship 2017

Competition 1: Conducting a Food Waste Audit

To kick off the 2017 National LifeSmarts Championship and to celebrate Earth Day, LifeSmarts is excited to join forces with a number of organizations by asking teams to conduct food waste audits. The LifeSmarts focus on food waste addresses content across all five LifeSmarts topics, requires skill in planning, data collection, and critical thinking, and promotes teamwork.

Teams attending the 2017 National LifeSmarts Championship will conduct a food waste audit at their school or a similar location as their first competition. To complete this activity and earn points for Competition 1, teams will complete the [Food Waste Audit Submission form](#) on the LifeSmarts web site. Teams may earn up to 110 points on this activity.

Teams will:

- Conduct a food waste audit at their school or a similar location
- Provide audit demographics
- Compile and submit audit data
- Respond to critical thinking questions

Scoring:

- Points will be awarded by a panel of judges who will evaluate the data and responses submitted. The rubric will be used to evaluate food waste audit submissions.
 - Organization and execution of the audit – 30 points
 - Data collection and waste results – 30 points
 - Critical thinking questions demonstrating reflection and recommendations for food waste strategies – 40 points
 - Bonus critical thinking question – 10 points

Steps:

Working together, the team will:

1. Review the [Detailed Measurement Guidelines](#) and the competition [Food Waste Audit Rubric](#).
2. Review and print the [PDF version of the Food Waste Audit Submission form](#).
3. RECOMMENDED: Review the lesson, “[Our Wasted Food](#)” available through Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future’s *FoodSpan* curriculum. [A LifeSmarts guide to “Our Waste Food”](#) is available on the LifeSmarts web site.

4. Meet with administration to explain the project and gain approval. You may also be asked to meet with the cafeteria management or staff. We have provided [a sample letter](#) to introduce the food waste audit. Modify this to suit your needs.
5. Determine whether the school has the resources needed (bins, bags/liners, scale, gloves, piece of wood or flat object (if needed), milk crate or box (if needed), or whether any of these will be purchased. (Teams may request reimbursement of up to \$50 for purchasing materials to conduct the audit.)
6. Select a day for the food waste audit between March 1 and March 31.
7. Print or make signs to be used the day of the audit. [Sample signs are available here.](#)
8. RECOMMENDED: The team will begin communicating about the food waste audit to the student body 1-2 weeks before the audit.
9. Conduct the food waste audit, weighing bins, collecting data, and taking pictures.
10. Complete the [PDF copy of the Food Waste Audit Submission form](#) to ensure that all information and critical thinking question responses are complete.
11. Complete the online [Food Waste Audit Submission form](#).
 - a. Upload up to 10 photos highlighting the food waste audit. Remember to show your team in action.
12. OPTIONAL: Answer a bonus question for up to 10 additional points.
13. OPTIONAL: Submit the [reimbursement form](#) if you purchased materials to conduct the audit.
14. OPTIONAL: Apply for a spot on the LifeSmarts Food Waste Panel which will be held during the luncheon at the National LifeSmarts Championship on Earth Day, Saturday, April 22.
 - a. Five teams will be selected. These teams will:
 - i. Elect one to two members to join the Food Waste Panel
 - ii. Attend a separate 45 minute session with LifeSmarts staff to advise LifeSmarts about future food waste competitions and activities
 - b. LifeSmarts is able to disburse travel stipend funds to eligible teams thanks to our food waste audit partners

Additional Information:

- Questions? Join a Webinar hosted by LifeSmarts staff. [Click here to register](#). Dates are:
 - Tuesday, February 28 at 3 p.m. Eastern time
 - Wednesday, March 1 at 5:30 p.m. Eastern time
 - Tuesday, March 21 at 3 p.m. Eastern time
- Visit the [EPA's web site](#)
- Use additional lessons from the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future's [FoodSpan Curriculum](#)
- Contact Lisa Hertzberg at: lisah@nclnet.org

Background:

LifeSmarts is excited to celebrate Earth Day by conducting food waste audits across the country. Organizations that have helped to make this effort possible, through various contributions, research, and technical expertise, include the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) World Wildlife Fund, The Environmental Research & Education Foundation (EREF), Johns

Hopkins Center for a Livable Future, The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). Findings from the LifeSmarts food waste audits will be compiled with data from other food waste audits being conducted. The opportunity to be a part of a larger effort to study food waste in America has provided structure for Competition 1 for the 2017 National LifeSmarts Championship.

In the U.S almost 40% of food produced is thrown out. NCL has become a leading consumer voice on this issue, and LifeSmarts touches a key consumer demographic that is proven to be motivated to create lasting change. LifeSmarts students and educators can become strong partners in addressing this issue, and help inform schools, organizations, and entire communities about food waste.

Last April, with the help of Denver city employees and the EPA, LifeSmarts piloted a food waste audit at the 2016 National LifeSmarts Championship held in Denver, CO. After a group meal all uneaten and discarded food was separated and weighed. Participating students, educators, volunteers, and sponsors were not told ahead of time that their plate scraps would be measured. The audit served as an interactive introduction to the issue of food waste that is so prevalent in our country.