



Food waste – how do we waste less?

The focus of this campaign is on food waste: reducing the amount of wasted edible food at school and at home.

The problem:

- According to the University of Saskatchewan, about 30-40% of all food in Canada is wasted.
- A University of Saskatchewan study estimates that 13,000 tonnes of edible food is wasted each year. That's **13 million kilograms**.
- An average sandwich weighs about 200g or 1/5 of a kilogram. Try to imagine 65 million sandwiches being wasted in Saskatoon, each year! That would be about **220 sandwiches per person** (more than one wasted each school day).
- **A major reason why so much food is wasted** is simply that throwing food in the garbage is the easiest way to deal with it.

But why does food waste matter?

1. Food waste and other organics like yard waste decompose in landfills, producing greenhouse gases like methane and carbon dioxide.
2. The energy that went into producing all that food is wasted and therefore unnecessary. Consider that before food reaches your house, it has been grown, nurtured, processed, and transported – each step needing energy.
3. There are opportunities to use edible food waste: it could be eaten by you; it could be donated and eaten by others; or composted, where the nutrients are recycled.

"Best Before" dates

Myth: you cannot eat food after its "Best Before" date.

Actually, according to the Government of Canada, the "Best Before" date tells us how long a food will maintain its freshness, taste, nutritional value, and other qualities. For example, orange juice may not have as much Vitamin C after the Best Before date. However, this date does not tell us if a food is or isn't safe to eat. To decide if it's safe, inspect food to check for signs of spoiling.



How much food do WE waste? Find out:

1. Do a garbage audit. SES staff can help with this if needed. At school, this involves collecting all the school's garbage for a full school day (except bathrooms). Then the waste can be sorted to investigate what is being thrown out.
2. Survey a few grocery stores to find out what they do with food that is past its "Best Before" date and produce (fruits and vegetables) that are bruised or misshapen.

What can you do? Here are some ideas:

1. Take leftover lunch food home to be reused, if it has not yet spoiled. If needed, put leftovers in the fridge as soon as you can.
2. Add an "Eat me first" container to your fridge at home. Then keep all foods that might spoil soon in that container so that everyone in the house knows they should be eaten first.
3. Talk to your favourite restaurant or the grocery store where your family shops about their food waste management. Do they:
 1. Donate to local food security organizations?
 2. Collect organics separately from garbage stream to be sent to city compost facilities?
4. Is there a nutrition program at your school? Do you notice any of this food being thrown away? How could you change that?



Curriculum Connections

Grade 2 Social Studies RW2.3 Contribute to initiating and guiding change in local and global communities regarding environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

Health Education USC2.2 Determine how healthy snacking practices influence personal health.

Grade 4 Health Education AP4.1 Design and apply, with guidance, two four-day action plans that require communication related to healthy eating and physical activity, prevention/ management of health challenges, negotiating disagreements, safety and protection, personal identity, and stressors.

Grade 5 Health Education USC5.1 Analyze personal eating practices. **AP5.1** Design and implement, with guidance, two five-day action plans that embrace health opportunities or address health challenges related to personal eating practices, changes of puberty, impact of illness/disease, identity and well-being, violence, peer pressure, and self-regulation.

Grade 6 Social Studies RW6.2 Contribute to initiating and guiding change in local and global communities regarding environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

Grade 7 Social Studies RW7.3 Assess the ecological stewardship of economies of Canada and the circumpolar and Pacific Rim countries.

Health Education DM7.8 Examine and demonstrate personal commitment in making health decisions related to blood-borne pathogen information, safety practices, harmonious relationships, food choices, interpersonal skills, and morality. **DM7.9** Examine health opportunities and challenges to establish personal commitment goal statements related to blood-borne pathogen information, safety practices, harmonious relationships, food choices, interpersonal skills, and morality. **AP7.10** Design, implement, and evaluate three six-day action plans that demonstrate personal commitment to responsible health action related to blood-borne pathogen information, safety practices, harmonious relationships, food choices, interpersonal skills, and morality.

Grade 8 Social Studies RW8.1 Analyze the social and environmental consequences of living in the Canadian mixed market economy based on consumerism. **RW8.2** Assess the implications of personal consumer choices.

Health Education USC8.6 Examine and assess the concept of sustainability from many perspectives, and develop an understanding of its implications for the well-being of self, others, and the environment. **AP8.10** Design, implement, and evaluate three seven-day action plans that establish multiple supports for responsible health action related to family roles and responsibilities, non-curable infections/diseases, violence and abuse, body image, sustainability, and sexual health.



Grade 9 Social Studies PA9.3 Investigate the roles and responsibilities of members of the societies studied and those of citizens in contemporary Canada.

Health Education AP9.12 Design, implement, and evaluate three eight-day action plans that demonstrate responsible health promotion related to comprehensive approaches to safety, non-curable infections/diseases, romantic relationships, healthy food policies, addictions, tragic death and suicide, chronic illness, and sexual health.

Level 20 Health Science 20 HS20-SDS1 Create and carry out a plan to explore one or more topics of personal interest relevant to Health Science 20 in depth.