Important Note: This activity was developed for the original Green Lunchroom Challenge program, a voluntary pledge program for K-12 schools to improve the sustainability of their food service operations. The project was coordinated by the [Illinois Sustainable Technology Center Technical Assistance Program](#) with funding from US EPA Region 5.

The following page(s) represent the content of this activity as it appeared on the original project web site, complete with available points and instructions for submitting documentation. **The project is no longer funded and as of June 2018 schools may no longer submit activity documentation to earn points and recognition as described.** The activity is presented for your information to guide your organization's sustainability efforts.

If your school or district implements the suggested activity and wishes to share its experiences, please email [Joy Scrogum](#). Your story may be incorporated into a blog post on this web site, the main ISTC site, or shared on social media to foster networking and inspiration among peer institutions.

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Cut fruit and vegetables up and divide into discrete servings

Activity Category: Food Presentation

Activity: Cut fruit and vegetables up and divide into discrete servings

Rationale: We've touched on the importance of convenience in other activities in this category. Sometimes if you want to change behavior, you need to make the desired behavior easier for people. Consider younger students with smaller mouths, with many of their first teeth still in place. It can be easier for them to eat fruit and vegetables which have been cut up into smaller, bite-sized pieces, rather than biting into the same items left whole. Smaller pieces are also easier for smaller hands to hold. Studies show that slicing produce can make students more apt to try it and eat it (see the "Resources" section below). The popularity of pre-cut, packaged fruit and vegetables (e.g. bags of apple slices, tubs of cubed melon, baby carrots, etc.) in grocery stores suggests that even older students and adults are drawn to the convenience of cut produce.

Photo Source: USDA Blog, http://blogs.usda.gov/2014/10/16/farm-to-school-and-school-nutrition-programs-dedicated-to-serving-healthy-fresh-food/

Activity Description: Experiment with offering the same fruits and vegetables during different lunch periods, both intact and divided into sliced up portions, observing selection and consumption of the items in both conditions. Your comparison of consumption amounts may include any combination of visual assessment or physical sorting of trash/tray waste, information from point-of-sale systems, and observations of food service/lunchroom staff. See the "Tray Waste" video in the "Resources" section below for tips on measuring tray waste. **Note: This activity may only be completed once for a total of 100 points, even if more than one fruit or vegetable is experimented with.**

Earn Challenge Points (100 points): Write a report summarizing the results of your experiments, in Word or PDF format, including the following information:

> 🍴 The food item(s) you experimented with, and how the items were cut up (e.g. simple slices, cut into shapes, etc.)

> 🍴 The grade levels of student to which the items were offered

- ✕ 2-4 photos showing the items as offered in the lunchroom, both intact and in portions

- ✕ A summary of the results of selection and consumption of the food item under the two different name conditions. Did cutting the produce up have a noticeable effect on selection and tray waste?

- ✕ Whether your school/district will try this technique again

Your report should be 2-4 pages in length and should be emailed to Joy Scrogum at jscrogum@illinois.edu.

Resources:

- ✕ Making fruit easier to eat increases sales and consumption in school cafeterias⬈

- ✕ Giving Kids a Taste for Fruits and Vegetables⬈

- ✕ A Simple Trick to Get Your Kids to Eat More Fruits and Veggies⬈

- ✕ Smarter Lunchrooms video: Tray Waste⬈ (helpful in measuring tray waste)

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