

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.

I ILLINOIS

Illinois Sustainable Technology Center
PRAIRIE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Have a "zero waste" or "waste-free" lunch day

Activity Category: Zero Waste Lunchrooms

Activity: Have a "zero waste" or "waste-free" lunch day








Rationale: A waste-free lunch reduces the waste generated each day in your schools lunchroom. Organizing a waste-free lunch will help keep your school clean, inside and out, and reduce your solid waste costs, but more importantly expose students and parents/caregivers to the concept of waste free lunches. Ideally in a waste-free lunch, the top priority is to use reusable materials or materials that are consumed completely, so you are not producing any waste at all. However, when waste is inevitable, products that can be recycled or composted should be given greater attention, so they do not end up in a landfill. Even if your school does not have a compost bin or if some of your recyclable materials are not accepted for recycling in your community, promoting these types of materials is still a good first step, as it raises awareness of what can be composted and recycled.



Activity Description: Organize and host a zero waste or waste free lunch day. Note that if you distribute the ISTC guide, "Waste-Free Lunches" as part of your promotion, [there is a separate Challenge activity related to that specifically](#), for which you can earn points.

Earn Challenge Points (200 points): In one file in Word or PDF format, submit a copy of the announcement of the waste-free lunch day/instructions sent to the students and parents, plus 2-4 pictures of students participating on the day of the event. Email your document to jscrogum@illinois.edu.

Resources:

-  [Organize a Waste-Free Lunch Day](#)
-  [Waste Free Lunch Day Sample Letter to Parents](#)
-  [Zero Waste Guide: Waste-Free Lunches \(2015\)](#)
-  [Waste-Free Lunch Day Tips](#)
-  [Waste-Free Lunch Day Worksheet](#)
-  [Zero Waste Lunch Campaign](#)
-  [Waste Free Lunch Kits](#)

Follow Us  

[Green Lunchroom Challenge](#)

[About](#) | [Activities](#) | [UI Web Privacy Notice](#) 

I ILLINOIS

Illinois Sustainable Technology Center

PRAIRIE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

© 2018 University of Illinois Board of Trustees