**Be a Food Waste Warrior**

**Guidelines for Approaching Cafeteria Managers and School Administrators**

So you and your students have decided to become Food Waste Warriors! The next step is approaching your school administrators and cafeteria managers to give them more information about the project and why it is so important. This document serves as general guidance, but our WWF team can help facilitate additional resources on a case-by-case basis.

**Getting involved in the kitchen:**

Discuss with school administration and cafeteria managers the importance of conducting food waste audits to both find ways to encourage students to eat all of the nutritious food on their plates and reduce plate waste. Inform them that the students will be in the lunchroom weighing and recording food waste data. Identify concerns that the cafeteria managers have and utilize letters to cafeteria managers and school administrators provided below.

**Guidelines for Reduction Strategies**

Depending on which strategies your classroom decides to use in order to reduce food waste, you may utilize the following explanations to clarify the project to school administrators and cafeteria managers. Please refer to the USDA Guide to Conducting Student Food Waste Audits, pages 11-13, Food Waste Reduction Guidelines for Schools, and the WWF Food Waste Warrior PowerPoint Part 2 for more details about the following solutions:

* Reduction Solutions:
  + Implementing offer vs serve during lunch
  + Give food items, such as fruits and veggies, creative names
  + Extend the lunch period or have recess before lunch
  + Create incentives for students to reduce waste
  + Tailor serving sizes, go trayless, or use fewer disposable plates
  + Measure wasted food, survey students, do taste tests—make reducing food waste fun!
* Recovery Solutions:
  + Set up share tables
  + Allow students to keep uneaten items
  + Send a letter to the city government
  + Partner with non-profits or local food banks to donate food
* Recycling Solutions:
  + Start a compost pile as a science project
  + Utilize the Farm2School Network for local produce and compost pick-up

**Audit Introduction Letter to Cafeteria Managers and Administration**

Dear Cafeteria Managers/ School administrators,

Schools play an important role in achieving the United States’ first-ever [national goal to reduce food waste by 50% by the year 2030](https://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2015/09/0257.xml&navid=NEWS_RELEASE&navtype=RT&parentnav=LATEST_RELEASES&edeployment_action=retrievecontent). When schools commit to decreasing food waste, the benefits are numerous: lower food costs, additional educational opportunities for students, growth in participation for school meal programs, and increased consumption of nutritious meals. Additionally, engaging student leaders to think creatively about reducing food waste can have lasting, positive impacts that influence the school and community as a whole.

Therefore, we ask your permission to conduct the World Wildlife Fund “Food Waste Warrior” challenge in our school. With your approval, our classroom will perform at least one food waste audit during lunch or another designated meal time. My class and I will send you our proposed plan to reduce food waste based on the results from the audit. After several months of implementing these food waste reduction strategies, we will perform at least one more food waste audit to see if we reduced our food waste. We hope that conducting this audit will make students aware of the impact of food waste and begin a larger conversation in our school. This audit will be team-run, with my students conducting the majority of the audit themselves. Thus, the cafeteria staff only need to be involved if they wish to participate.

Sincerely,

Teacher and Class

WWF Food Waste Team