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Grades of Green Aims to Reduce School Waste

The program, which challenges students across Los Angeles to reduce their lunchtime waste, is now accepting applications from schools.

By [John Schreiber](#) | [Email the author](#) | August 16, 2012

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Grades of Green, the Manhattan Beach-based organization that encourages school-aged children to care for the environment, is now accepting applications from schools for its Trash Free Lunch Challenge.

The challenge, which aims to reduce lunchtime waste by encouraging kids to pack trash-free lunches, recycle and compost, is now beginning its second year and offers cash prizes for winning schools.

According to the organization's website, last year's efforts helped prevent approximately 10,000 bags of trash from reaching area landfills and saved schools thousands of dollars in the process.

Last year's winner, Jefferson Elementary in Redondo Beach, received a \$1,000 grant from Chevron for winning the challenge after reducing its lunchtime waste from 16 bags per day to only two.

[According to Grades of Green](#), to win this year's challenge, schools "must demonstrate significant waste reduction," its website says. "All students, including those who buy lunch, will learn how to pack a trash free lunch or sort their waste into different bins, such as landfill, recycle, liquids and ideally compost."

Schools interested in applying [must do so through the nonprofit's website](#) by September 14. The first 16 schools to register and create a profile will receive an eco prize kit, which the organization says is valued at more than \$2,500.

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