



Why Bother To Pack A TRASH FREE LUNCH? THE FACTS



1. Most of what we eat, drink, or use in any way comes packaged in petroleum plastic—a material designed to last **forever**, yet used for products that we **throw away**.

Just a generation ago, we packaged our products in reusable or recyclable materials—glass, metals, and paper, and designed products that would last. Today, our landfills and beaches are awash in plastic packaging, and expendable products that have no value at the end of their short lifecycle.

Source: 5 Gyres Foundation. http://www.5gyres.org/what_is_the_problem

2. Lots of **plastic** is getting into the oceans' food chain.

Humans produce millions of tons of disposable plastics a year and lots of it washes into the ocean. Most plastic floats near the sea surface where some is mistaken for food by birds and fish. Research shows that there are now 6 pounds of plastic pieces in the ocean for every pound of zooplankton, a basic food for most sea animals.

Source: Algalita Marine Research Institute. http://www.algalita.org/research/pelagic_plastic.html

3. The U.S. discards more than **250 million tons** of trash each year, or about **4.5 pounds** per person each day.

Most of that waste is either recyclable or compostable, but just one-third is actually recycled.

Source: USEPA. http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/nonhaz/municipal/pubs/msw_2010_rev_factsheet.pdf

4. Packing a **trash free lunch** helps our environment *and* **saves money** for both schools and families.

On average, schools who participate in the Grades of Green Trash Free Lunch Challenge reduce lunchtime waste by 70% and students who pack trash-free can save up to \$300 per year.

Source: Grades of Green <http://www.gradesofgreen.org/green-activity/trash-free-lunches/>