

LAUNCH for Long Beach Toolkit: Campus Food Rescue

Rescue Food From the Big Bad Trash Monster!

It's time to stop sending wonderful, edible food to the landfill. Reduce your waste and share leftover food with this Campus Food Rescue Toolkit.

Within this toolkit, you'll find various downloadable resources. For your convenience, you can access them all in one place by scanning the Toolkit Resources QR code on the last page to view them in a Google Drive folder.

This toolkit was created in partnership with the City of Long Beach Utilities.



Want to use this toolkit in español? Scan the QR code to the right!

Toolkit Details

GRADES of green LAUNCH Eco-Toolkit
Campus Food Rescue
Reduce your waste and share leftover food by using our Campus Food Rescue Toolkit!

Skill Level
Grades K-5, led by a teacher, parent or school administrator

Climate Crisis Topic
Waste Food

Project Time
One month, up to a full school year

What You'll Need
Empty crate or box & signage



Have you registered?



Versión en español:



NGSS

This toolkit address the following Science and Engineering Practices (SEPs) within the Performance Expectations of NGSS for Grades K-2 and 3-5:

- Asking Questions and Defining a Problem
- Planning and Carrying out Investigations
- Analyzing and Interpreting Data
- Using Mathematics and Computational Thinking
- Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions
- Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information

What You Will Accomplish

A campus food rescue program will cut down the amount of edible food that ends up going in the trash, which will reduce methane emissions that lead to climate change. At the same time, this food can be reused to feed students on campus or community members who struggle with food insecurity.

- The USDA encourages the use of food donations and share tables and offers great resources for schools. (see the QR code to the right)
- To encourage institutions to donate healthy food that would otherwise go to waste, protection from criminal and civil liability is provided under the Good Samaritan Food Donation Act. (see the QR code to the right)
- The California Public Health Department has information regarding the donation of food to nonprofit organizations (see the fourth QR code on the next page)

What is Long Beach Doing to Increase Food Rescue and Waste Diversion?

The City of Long Beach has started pilot projects to tackle both food waste and methane emissions from landfills. In a recent pilot of 115 commercial restaurants across the city, all of their food waste that is tossed out or not eaten by customers is going to the Puente Hills Materials Recovery Facility in Whittier where the food waste is broken down into a slurry to make biogas otherwise known as renewable energy, which is energy that can be continuously created. This is one of the many ways that the City of Long Beach is tackling its food waste problem since not all leftovers can be recovered. Keeping food waste out of landfills is especially important as SB1383 implementation took effect on January 1, 2022, and all levels of the community will need to be educated on appropriate organic waste recycling, edible food recovery, reduction, and diversion. Check out the QR codes on the next page for some examples of programs aimed at reducing food waste.

Learning Objectives

Project Management

- Students will identify routines to accomplish their goal of rescuing reusable food
- Students will practice leadership skills by delegating tasks to one other as needed

Collaboration

- Students will research and connect with a partner organization to redistribute rescued food to members of the community facing food insecurity
- Students will develop a logistics plan to ensure food is successfully transported from campus to the partner's facility

Evaluation and Assessment

- Students will track and evaluate the impact of their project

Reducing Food Waste at Schools - USDA



Good Samaritan Food Donation Act



**Food Waste
Recycling – LACSD**



**Long Beach Food
Scraps Collection
Program**



**School Waste
Reduction –
CalRecycle**



**CA Public Health
Dept. Guidelines for
Donated Food**



Educator Project Plan

Follow the steps below to set up a successful Campus Food Rescue at your school! Need help? Email us at info@gradesofgreen.org!

Track your metrics and submit your impact after implementing this toolkit. Your feedback helps keep our programs free for all across the globe.

Determine Participants

Use our Campus Food Rescue Sign-Up Sheet Template to create your team!

- A Student Group (such as a club, before/after school program, non-school organization)
- A whole class
- The whole school

Campus Food Rescue Sign-Up Sheet:



Pro Tips:

- Working with a small group of students? Pick one or two days per week to hold your food rescue and consider setting up a share box that will be available to hungry students on campus.
- Working with a larger team? Add a food rescue system into your lunchtime routine every day and partner with an organization that will collect and deliver the food to community members in need.

Why Should You Host a Campus Food Rescue?

The resources provided below can be shown as a slideshow (see the QR code below) or printed out as individual worksheets for students to review.



Food Waste is Expensive

A lot of perfectly good food is wasted across the world every day for many different reasons. On school campuses, food waste usually happens because students don't like the food that is served, are given more food than they can eat, or don't have enough time to eat their entire meal. The result is a lot of food being thrown in the trash, which ends up in landfills. Reports estimate that U.S. schools waste 530,000 *tons* of food per year, which costs as much as \$9.7 million a day to manage [1]. The City of Long Beach recommends working with local organizations to eliminate food waste and provide food to community members. There are many financial benefits to saving food such as receiving tax deductions and reducing waste disposal expenses.

Food Waste Heats Up the Earth

Food waste in landfills is a big contributor to climate change. When food breaks down in a landfill, it gives off methane, a powerful greenhouse gas. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, food is the single largest category of material placed in United States' landfills and is the third-largest source of human-related methane emissions in the country. [2]

Slideshow:



Food Can Be Repurposed

Safe and wholesome food that is currently being wasted could help feed families and individuals in need and reduce food insecurity. Each year, food banks like Feeding America rescue and redistribute around 3.6 billion pounds of food – only a small percentage of the food that could have been donated instead of going to a landfill. Furthermore, Californians send 11.2 billion pounds of food to landfills each year, some of which are still fresh enough to be recovered to feed people who are food insecure. [3] Reducing food waste and increasing food rescue plans allows your students and school to join the rest of the community to save food from being tossed out.

Citations

[1] – Food Waste Warriors



LB Food Waste Recommendations



[2] – Why Should We Care About Food Waste?



[3] – EPA: Wasted Food Scale



LB Food Recovery Requirements for Businesses



Why Food Waste is a Social Justice Issue

While industry-level food production – animal factories and agricultural land – provides nutrition to a majority of individuals across the world, large-scale pollution is very often a consequence of populations living in close proximity to the production facilities. For example, these facilities are located in or near lower-income communities. The underserved communities suffer from resource limitations, in addition to the health and environmental complications caused by mass food production. If we are able to capture and repurpose unused and uneaten food, overall food demand should lower along with the resources used to grow the food. Resources like land, water, energy, and labor are used up all throughout the chain to grow food and by not selling it in markets or by tossing edible food away, we are wasting our finite natural resources.

Watch This Short Video to Learn More on Reducing Food Waste at School:



'Reduce Food Waste at Schools'

Think About It!

Pre-Activity Questions

- What types of food do you see thrown away the most at school?
- Why do you think food waste is harmful to the planet?
- Can you think of places in your community where there is a need for food?
- *Attention educators, please keep track of this metric:* Have you donated food to local organizations before? If so, how did it go?

Take Action: How to LAUNCH Campus Food Rescue

Lead students through the “Campus Food Rescue” activity with guided instructions. Check out “Pro Tips” with each step for useful help:

1. Assign Roles

- Determine who and how many students/staff are participating. Use the Campus Food Rescue Sign Up Sheet
- Assign participants to roles such as:
 - Peer education and marketing
 - Overseeing food collection at lunch
 - Communicating and developing a plan with a partner organization

Campus Food Rescue Sign-up Sheet:



2. Meet Your School's Decision Makers

Set up a meeting with your principal and custodial staff to get permission and discuss the best way to add a food rescue program into your current lunchtime routine.

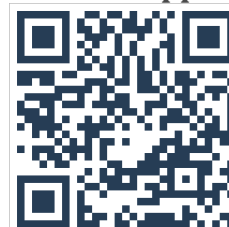
Find a Food Bank or Organization:



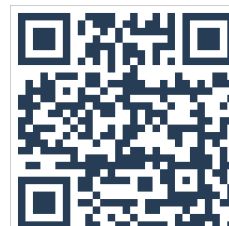
3. Connect With a Partner

- Find and connect with a partner organization that will either accept or redistribute your rescued food throughout the community like a food bank, church, shelter or food rescue organization. Some organizations have the ability to come and collect food at your campus while others will ask that food be delivered to them. If food needs to be delivered, find a parent or staff volunteers who can help manage this.
- Work with the partner organization to decide how often food will be picked up in addition to the logistics of collecting it from campus (where it will be stored, how they will gain access to campus, etc.).
- Find a partner organization:
 - Find a local food bank or organization recommended by Long Beach Recycles.
 - Use the CareIt App – connects you with food banks in your area throughout the US and Canada
 - Use the Food Rescue Locator to find an organization near you
- Alternatively, you can keep rescued food on campus by using a “share basket” so that the food can be given to other students who are still hungry or can be offered in after-school programs.

CareIt App:



Food Rescue Locator:



Share Basket Sign:



4. Pre-Food Rescue Observation

Before you begin your Campus Food Rescue program, have student volunteers see how much edible food is wasted at the end of a lunch period. Estimate how much thrown out food could have been donated using this audit sheet.

5. Plan It Out

- Determine a date to kick off your Campus Food Rescue program
- Determine what foods you will be collecting and where it will be stored.
 - Non-perishable, unopened packaged foods and whole fruits can be stored in a secure location on campus until it is collected for redistribution.
 - Perishable foods such as milk, juice, and hot foods will need to be stored in a refrigerator or warming area on campus until it is redistributed. According to California health standards, cold food should be stored at 41°F or below while hot foods should be stored at 140° or above before donation release.
- Create a schedule for your team to:
 - Monitor the food collection at lunch to make sure that only the predetermined foods are placed in the food collection receptacles
 - Collect rescued foods each day from the lunch area after all students have eaten and transport them to where they will be stored on campus
 - Use the Campus Food Rescue Organizer resource to keep track of your schedule

6. Educate Your Classmates and School Staff

Use the script to educate your community how and why rescuing edible food is good for the planet and community.

7. Set Up Your Food Rescue Station in the Lunch Area

- Work with your custodial and lunch staff to determine the best method of collecting edible foods during lunch
- Find a table and container for students to place their uneaten foods

Campus Food Rescue Pre-Project Audit Sheet:



Campus Food Rescue Organizer:



Pro Tip:

If some meals become spoiled, have a backup plan for those meals in place, such as composting them. Check out our Composting at School toolkit, or if you already have your own outdoor/worm compost bin, go ahead and add fruit and veggie scraps into that box!

Composting at School Toolkit:



Campus Food Rescue Peer Education Script:



Pro Tips:

- Get creative! Make and print signs (or use our Food Donation or Share Basket Signs on the next page) to let students know which foods can be sorted for rescue.
- Repurpose tables or desks from your campus along with items like plastic milk crates for collecting food.

Food Donation Sign:



Share Basket Sign:



8. Kick Off Your Food Rescue Program

- On your predetermined date, make sure the entire school community knows that your campus food rescue program is starting. Use announcements or a school newsletter to spread the word. Customize the template to the right for your announcements.
- Have student volunteers in the lunch area remind students which items can be sorted into food rescue and make sure that only those items are placed in the containers.
- Using the Campus Food Rescue Project Audit, keep track of how much and what type of food is being collected. These totals can be used for the Campus Food Rescue Organizer and should be compared with your Pre-Project Audit to measure your impact.
- After all students have eaten, scheduled student volunteers should record donated food on the Campus Food Rescue Organizer and take it to a safe area on campus to be stored until it is redistributed to your partner organization.

Campus Food Rescue Newsletter Template:



Campus Food Rescue Project Audit Sheet:



Campus Food Rescue Organizer:



Reflection Questions

How'd It Go?

- What foods are donated to the food rescue most often?
- Explain how you and your peers have become more aware about food waste since doing this project.
- What have you enjoyed the most about doing this project?
- *Attention educators, please keep track of this metric:* How can you implement a food rescue plan at home?

Report Students' Impact

Congratulations!! You've implemented Campus Food Rescue! Don't let all that hard work go unnoticed. **Submit your results by scanning the QR code below.**



Project ongoing? No problem! Let us know what you've done so far.

By reporting your impact, Grades of Green can:

- CELEBRATE and elevate your students' hard work and success.
- Offer our programs FREE for all students across the globe.
- AWARD stipends and certificates to hard-working educators and students.

Please take a few minutes to submit your results. Thank you!

Provided Resources

Campus Food Rescue Sign-up Sheet:



Campus Food Rescue Organizer:



Campus Food Rescue Peer Education Script:



Campus Food Rescue Pre-Project Audit:



Campus Food Rescue Project Audit:



Campus Food Rescue Wrap Up Form:



Share Basket Sign:



Food Donation Sign:



Food Rescue Newsletter/Announcement:



Toolkit Resources – Google Drive Folder:



Congrats on completing the Campus Food Rescue Eco-Toolkit!

Did you enjoy this toolkit? Find your next project below!

