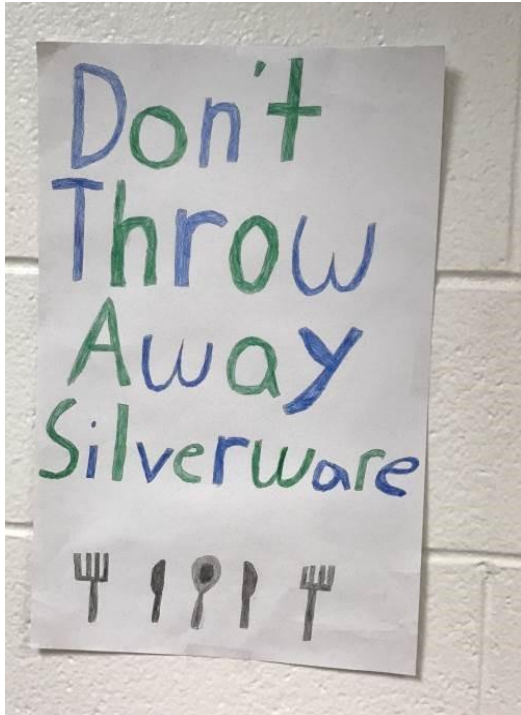


CCSMM: Increase Reuse & Recycling Working Group

January 10, 2023



CCSMM



School Cafeteria Waste

CCSMM Housekeeping

- This meeting is being recorded.
- Please keep your microphones muted unless sharing information.
- Participants are encouraged to turn webcams on and actively participate during the meeting.
- Please share your questions, comments & ideas through the ZOOM Chat feature. There will also be opportunity for public comment at the end of the meeting.
- Feedback can also be sent by email to: DEEP.RecyclingProgram@ct.gov

Disclaimer

These presentations are provided as part of DEEP's CCSMM IRR Working Group webinar series. This document does not constitute DEEP policy. Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute endorsement or recommendation of use. Links to non-DEEP websites do not imply any official DEEP endorsement of or responsibility for the opinions, ideas, data, or products presented at those locations or guarantee the validity of the information provided. Links to non-DEEP servers are provided. Links to non-DEEP servers are provided solely as a pointer to information that might be useful to DEEP staff and the public.

Today's Agenda

- **Welcome and Introductory Remarks**
 - Co-Chairs: Ben Florsheim and Denise Raap
- **Panel**
 - **Sherill Baldwin, CT DEEP**
 - Waste in Schools
 - **Katherine Beer Bruns, Recycling Coordinator, West Hartford**
 - West Hartford's School Cafeteria Food Scrap Collection Program
 - **Kyle Harris, Science Teacher, Litchfield High School**
 - School Cafeteria Food Scrap Diversion to Recovery
 - **Tammy Thornton, Executive Director, Wilton Go Green, and Chair, Zero Waste Schools Coalition**
 - Efforts/Initiatives of Schools in the ZW Schools Coalition/Resources/Wilton Go Green Evolution
 - **Heather Billings, Senior Waste Reduction Consultant, CET**
 - CET Resources for Schools
 - **Sherill Baldwin, CT DEEP**
 - Resources, Professional Development for Educators
- **Discussion/Questions**
- **Closing Remarks**

Time for
a Poll!



Review: Waste in Schools

Sherill Baldwin, CT DEEP



Waste Generated in Schools

Paper (office
paper,
newspapers,
flyers, posters)

- Administrative Offices
- Classrooms
- Teacher's Room

Bottles and Cans
(glass, metal &
plastic)

- Administrative Offices
- Classrooms
- Teacher's Lounge
- Kitchen/Cafeteria

Milk cartons/juice
boxes

- Classrooms
- Teacher's Room
- Kitchen/Cafeteria

Cardboard/Box
Board

- Administrative Offices
- Kitchen/Cafeteria
- Janitorial Closets/Supplies



CT's Mixed Recycling
(single stream)
Program

CT's Mixed Recycling Program

"What's IN, What's OUT"

IN

(accepted in recycling bin)

- Paper – copy paper, flyers, junk mail, posters
- Empty metal, plastic or glass food and beverage containers (bottles, cans, jugs, jars), incl. 10lb cans or other items from kitchen
- Empty milk cartons, juice boxes
- Cardboard

OUT

(not accepted)

- Paper - no construction or tissue paper; no paper with paint/glue/glitter
- Please empty make sure food containers are empty/free of food and liquids
- No plastic bags
- No plastic straws or wrappers, no plastic utensils

Paper, bottles and cans, milk cartons and juice boxes, cardboard

- Follow same recycling rules as home recycling

Uneaten food, food scraps

- Sharing Tables
- Classroom "worm farms"
- On-Site Composting
- Off-Site Composting/AD

Plastic film/Plastic Wrap

- Trex - contest

Candy wrappers, chip bags, misc. Items

- TerraCycle

Textile Recycling

- Collect for school/community fundraiser

Some examples for managing waste in schools

CT DEEP Webpage /Resources

- List of Municipal Recycling Coordinator/Contacts <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Reduce-Reuse-Recycle/Local-Municipal-Recycling-Coordinators>
- CT DEEP School and Institution Recycling <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Reduce-Reuse-Recycle/Schools/School-and-Institution-Recycling-Main-Page>
- CT DEEP – Educator Workshops <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Education/Educator-Workshop-Curricula>
- CT Green LEAF Schools (coordinated by COEEA) <https://www.coeea.org/ct-green-leaf-schools>
- Textile Recycling <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Reduce-Reuse-Recycle/Textiles-Reuse--Recycling>

West Hartford's Food Scrap Collection Program

Katherine Beer Bruns, Recycling Coordinator
West Hartford, Connecticut



FOOD SCRAP COMPOSTING PROGRAM

WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

WEST HARTFORD PROGRAM

- Background
- West Hartford Approach – onboarding new schools
- Food Scrap Program in Action



NBCCONNECTICUT.COM

Bugbee Students Learn About Sustainability Through Food Scrap Program in West Hartford

Food Waste Diversion Guide

for



Prepared by Center for EcoTechnology



www.cetonline.org

PROCESS

- Engage new school about 6 weeks ahead of planned implementation
- Send “informational packet”: Power Point, letters templates, pictures, link to NBC story
- Meet with principal & head custodian to discuss roles and responsibilities
- PTO – Google Doc for parent volunteers, etc
- Present at staff meeting (food waste crisis, recycling refresher)
- Teachers – help build excitement (one teacher made a power point)
- START!

OVERVIEW

- **Why Divert Food Waste?**
- Stakeholder responsibilities
 - Department of Public Works
 - Board of Education
 - Nutrition Services
 - Custodial

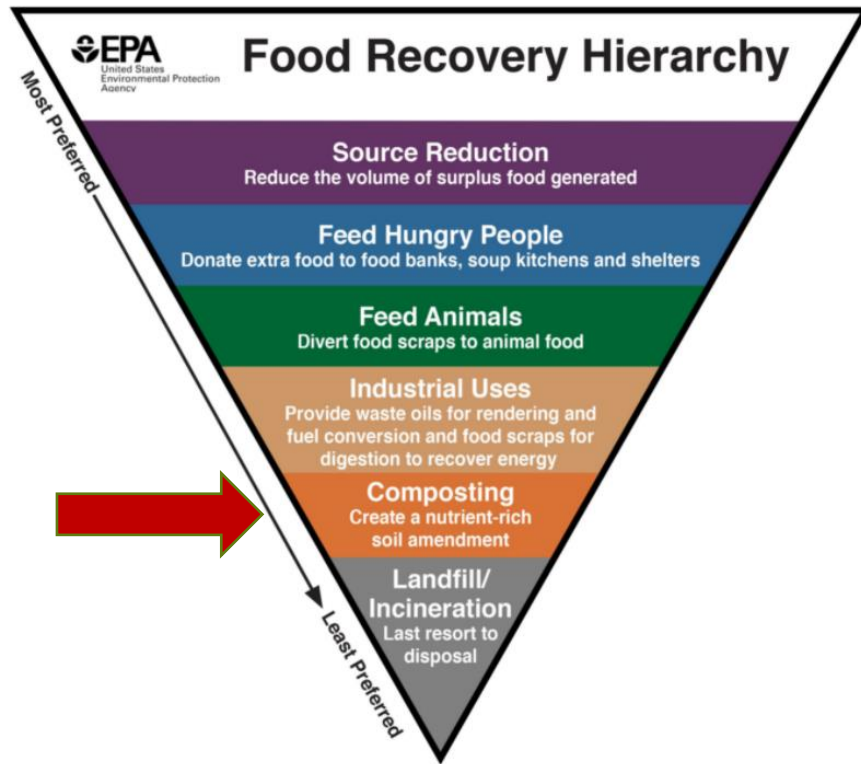
WHY DIVERT FOOD SCRAPS FROM TRASH?

- Environmental Benefits – reduces harmful methane emitted from food waste in trash
- Students will encourage similar behavior at home
- Students will connect personal behavior to environmental impact
- Students will feel empowered as change makers with this actionable practice
- Contribute to West Hartford's climate resiliency infrastructure
- Support CT, the UN, USDA and EPA – all have Food Waste reduction goals for 2030



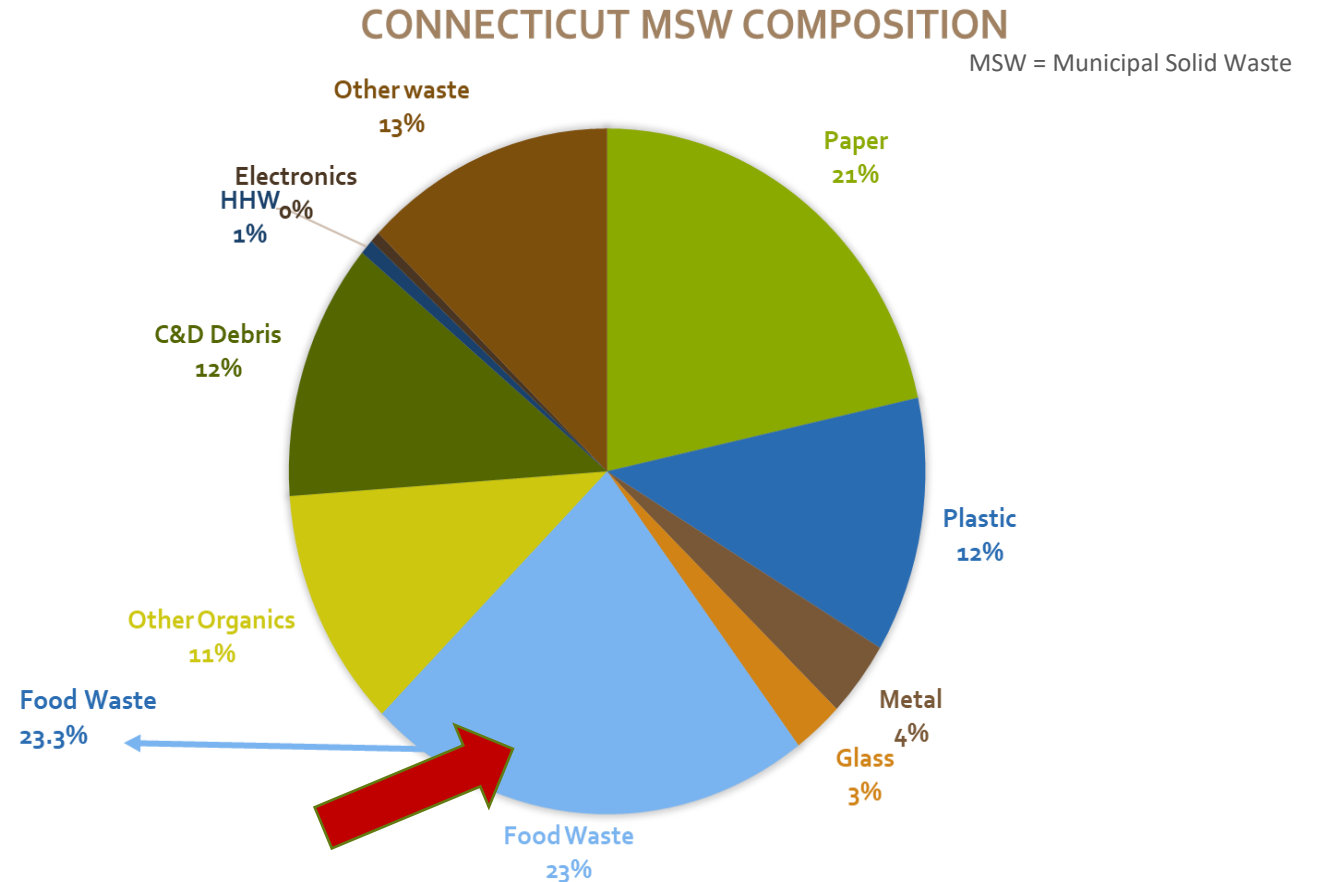
WHY COMPOST IN SCHOOL?

1. It is good for the environment and saves West Hartford money



2. Empowers our students! They learn THEY can make choices that are good for their earth

3. Diverting food waste from trash reduces trash volume, saving \$ on disposal costs



4. Circular economy learning opportunity: separate food waste → energy/compost → grow food → repeat

AVERAGE WEEKLY STUDENT FOOD WASTE IN WEST HARTFORD

Food Waste per Student per Week	Student #	Total Lbs of Food Waste per Week
Elementary 1.13 lbs/wk	3844	4345
Middle .75 lbs/wk	2087	1565
High School .35 lbs/wk	2946	1031
TOTAL		5910

Source: Recycling Works, MA

OVERVIEW

- Why Divert Food Waste?
- **Stakeholder responsibilities**
 - Department of Public Works
 - Board of Education
 - Nutrition Services
 - Custodial

DPW ROLE

- Provide and distribute equipment
- Collect and transport food waste
- Provide educational signage
- Resource for food compost related educational material
- Request the volume of food scraps diverted at each school from the hauler



PRINCIPALS

- Promote program through morning announcement, newsletters, parent programs, have students present at school board meetings, encourage “Green Teams,” school-wide assemblies
- Encourage PTO and parent participation
- Uphold vision of this vital town-wide initiative
- Work with staff to develop a program monitoring and maintenance system
- Keep teachers and staff up-to-date

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL RECYCLING AND CAFETERIA FOOD SCRAP COLLECTION

- Give students a little more time to clear and/or stagger when possible
- When in Doubt, Throw it Out
- Almost everything is trash including all little plastic wraps and covers, hot dog plates and snack bags
- Open milk BEFORE coming up to clear
- No cutlery, yogurts, foil lids, snack packs, lunchables, Capri Suns allowed in recycling
- Please don't pour milk like a waterfall! Keep milk carton down low when you pour
- Only liquids (milk and juice) in liquid barrel. No fruit cups
- Most important thing is to collect all food scraps! (ie – if you are running out of time, separate food scraps and throw away the rest)
- Only take cutlery or condiments you know you need (like milk, forks, ketchups)
- If you bring lunch from home and can't finish, rather than compost the food, take it home so someone can eat it
- Don't wishcycle – That is when you WISH something could be recycled, but it isn't allowed.
- Organizing tip: “take a look at your tray – can you organize and separate the food waste? The Trash?” Then it's faster when they come up

TEACHERS

- Stay informed about and actively participate in the food-separation program - share stats!
- Promote the program as a positive action students are taking for good environmental stewardship
- Incorporate recycling and food scraps diversion education into lessons when possible
- Assist at sorting stations, when possible

NUTRITION SERVICES ROLE

- Continue “back-of-house” collection in all school kitchens
- Ensure each manager is educated and trains staff on proper food scrap collection
- Consider other methods of waste reduction and food recovery (for example let students take ketchup if wanted rather than pre-serve)
- Review [Source Reduction of Food Waste Guidance](#)

CUSTODIANS

- **Custodians**

- Head Custodian - decides ideal placement of containers
- Place DPW provided educational signage above related bins
- Maintain and clean food collection containers
- Periodically, time permitting, educate students on proper disposal
- Communicate with teachers about contamination issues for ongoing student education



GOOD... DPW POSTERS AND GUIDELINES

Food Scraps & Recycling

West Hartford Public Schools

Introduction:
Teachers and
Lunchroom staff

3 → 2 → 1 → & DONE!

LIQUIDS

LIQUIDS ONLY NO CONTAINERS

Milk, water, juice

SPILL THE LIQUID INTO THE BIN
THROW CONTAINER INTO RECYCLING OR TRASH BIN

WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!
It's better than trashing the recycling bin.

www.westhartfordct.gov/recycle

RECYCLABLES

DRINKING BOTTLES & CONTAINERS

Milk cartons, soda cans, bottles, juice cans,
bottled water, sports drinks, drink boxes.

PLEASE EMPTY...AND KEEP LIDS ON

www.westhartfordct.gov/recycle

FOOD SCRAPS

ALL FOOD SCRAPS

Fruits, vegetables, dairy,
bread, grains, meat &
bones, oils, sauces, eggs

COFFEE GROUNDS AND FILTERS

WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!
It's better than trashing the recycling bin.

www.westhartfordct.gov/recycle

TRASH

ALL TRASH ITEMS

Paper towels,
napkins & tissues

Paper cups, stirrers &
straws, plastic utensils

Plastic bag & film, chip
and candy wrappers

(Plastic bags and film plastics can be recycled at a
film plastic drop-off location)

Styrofoam (all kinds)

WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!
It's better than trashing the recycling bin.

www.westhartfordct.gov/recycle

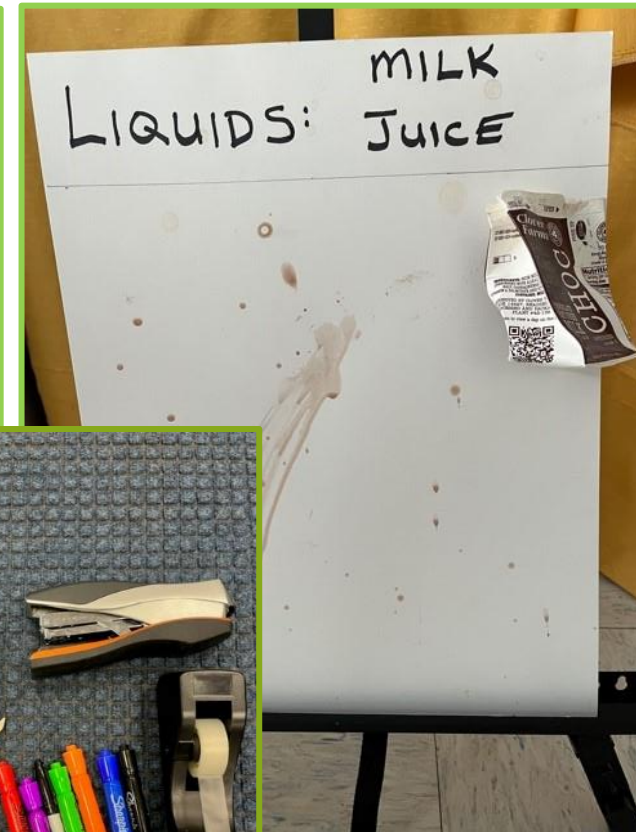
BETTER...

WHAT I START WITH AND...

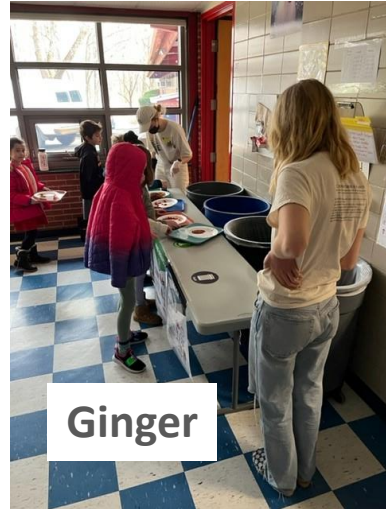


BEST! - WHAT IT REALLY LOOKS LIKE...

STUDENTS LOVE ADDING MATERIAL!



SOCIAL MEDIA: MAKE IT PERSONAL



IMPACT?



1.37 tons food scraps collected 4Q 2021

10.4 tons collected 4Q 2022!

(Paine's, Inc)

School	Enrollment #	Potential Diversion/week
Braeburn	347	392 lbs
Bugbee	371	420 lbs
Charter Oak	512	580 lbs
Duffy	478	540 lbs
Morley	303	342 lbs
Smith	352	398 lbs
Webster Hill	337	380 lbs
Total		3,052 lbs per week!
Coming Soon Aiken	284	320 lbs

Next Steps

Embrace funding for and implementation of reusable trays, plates and cutlery.

The typical American Student throws away 67 lbs of packaging along with 39 lbs of food a year!



CONNECTICUT REUSE REVOLUTION

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Connecticut schools can maintain their commitment to sustainable practices by encouraging students to pack waste-free lunches in reusable containers to reduce waste, save money and promote student health.

REUSABLES ARE SAFE!

- ✓ COVID-19 is mainly spread through aerosolized droplets when people are in close proximity rather than through contact with surfaces, according to the [CDC](#).
- ✓ COVID-19 can be found on both disposable and reusable materials, and [plastic](#) is one of the materials on which it survives longest, between 2-3 days.
- ✓ In a statement over [115 health experts](#) from 18 countries concluded, "Based on the best available science and guidance from public health professionals, **it is clear that reusable systems can be used safely by employing basic hygiene.**"

REUSABLES ARE HEALTHIER!

- ✓ Choosing reusables reduces exposure to [chemicals of concern](#) found in disposable products, such as PFAS and styrene, which affect childhood growth, learning, and behavior, interfere with endocrine and immune functions, raise cholesterol levels, and increase the risk of cancer.

REUSABLES ARE BETTER FOR THE EARTH!

- ✓ [Life cycle analyses](#) reveal that reusables have significantly less environmental impacts than single-use disposables, including energy use and air pollution.
- ✓ The typical American student discards 67 lbs of [lunch packaging](#) and 39 lbs of [uneaten foods](#). If every CT public school student packed a reusable, waste-free lunch, over **58 million pounds** of trash could be diverted towards the state goal of 60% waste reduction by 2024.
- ✓ Reusable, waste-free lunches are consistent with classroom lessons on environmental stewardship and civic responsibility, emphasizing the importance of protecting the planet and public health.

REUSABLES SAVE MONEY!

- ✓ Packing a reusable, waste-free lunch costs less for families, schools and municipalities.
- ✓ A disposable lunch and snack [costs](#) about \$9.01 a day per compared to \$6.69 a day for a waste-free option, a difference of **over \$400 per person per school year**.
- ✓ Reusable, waste-free lunches help schools and municipalities cut hauling and disposal fees by reducing the amount of trash they send to incinerators.





FOOD DONATION

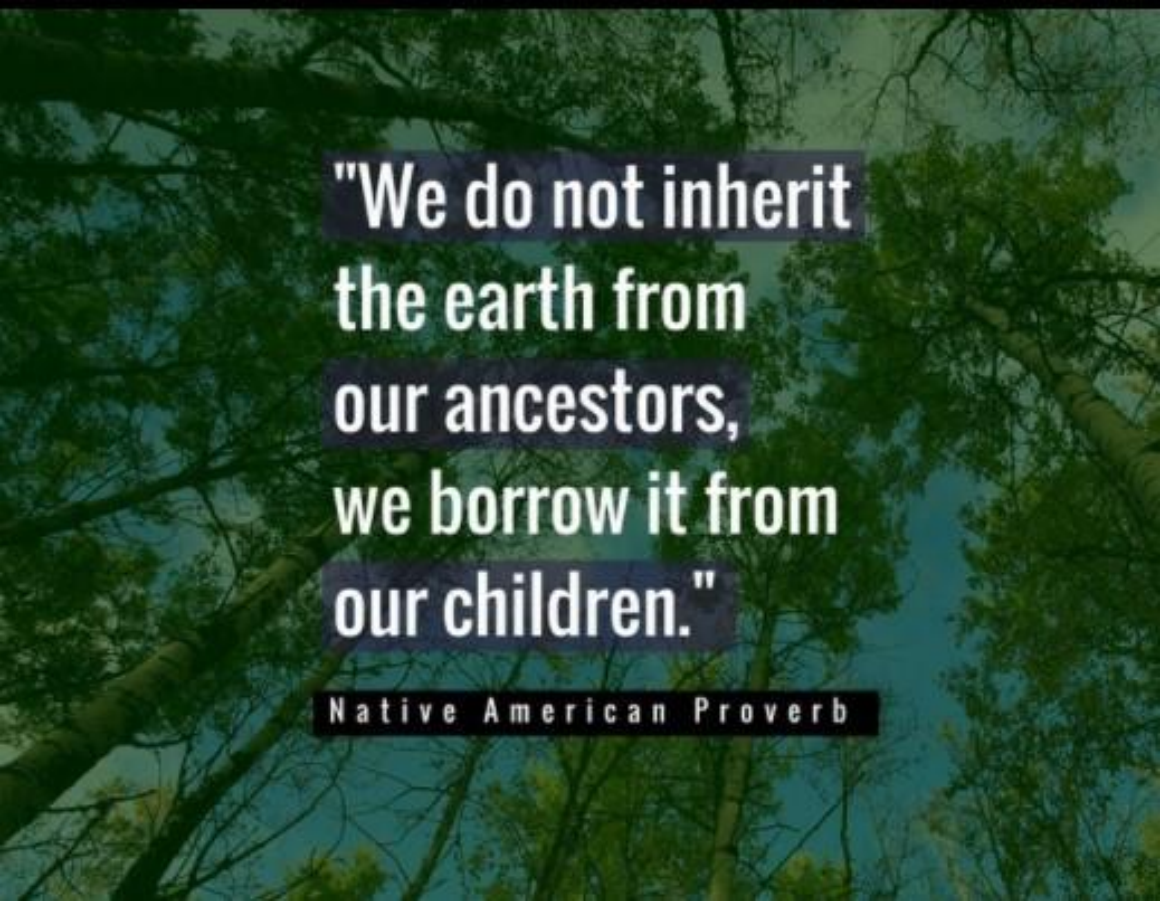


Connecticut Requirements for Foods and Beverages on Share Tables in Child Nutrition Programs (CNPs) Complying with Connecticut Public Health Code 19-13-B42	
Allowed	Not Allowed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole pieces of fruit with a peel that is removed by the consumer before eating, e.g., bananas and oranges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole pieces of fruit without a peel, e.g., apples, peaches, grapes and plums
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercially packaged unopened intact fruits and vegetables, such as cans and plastic-type containers where the consumer pulls the lid or covering off, e.g., individual containers of fruit cup, peaches, and applesauce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fruits and vegetables that have been prepared and packaged by the CNP's food service staff, e.g., apples wrapped in plastic, and canned fruit portioned into plastic cups with lids.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bags of commercially packaged pre-cut fruits and vegetables, such as bags of baby carrots or sliced apples, except for commercially packaged cut melons, cut tomatoes, or cut leafy greens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bags of fruits and vegetables packaged by the CNP's food service staff, e.g., bags of baby carrots or sliced apples. Commercially packaged cut melons, cut tomatoes, or cut leafy greens.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercially packaged unopened intact grain items such as crackers, croutons, and cookies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grain items packaged by the CNP's food service staff, e.g., rolls wrapped in plastic or cookies in plastic bags.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bags of commercially packaged nuts and seeds, such as peanuts, sunflower seeds, or trail mix. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nuts and seeds packaged by the CNP's food service staff in bags or plastic cups with lids, e.g., peanuts, sunflower seeds, and trail mix.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercially packaged unopened intact condiments such as portion control packages of ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, relish, and salad dressing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Condiments packaged by the CNP's food service staff, such as ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, relish, and salad dressing packaged into plastic cups with lids.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air-cooled hard-boiled egg with shell intact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meat/meat alternate items, such as poultry (e.g., chicken and turkey), meat, cheese, fish, eggs (including water-cooled hard-boiled egg with shell intact).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unopened shelf-stable aseptically packaged juice Note: Shelf-stable aseptically packaged juice does not require refrigeration until after opening. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opened shelf-stable aseptically packaged juice Opened or unopened frozen or refrigerated juice that is not shelf stable aseptically packaged
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unopened or opened containers of milk

EMPOWER OUR STUDENTS

Schools, which serve more than 4 billion lunches per year in the US, can turn cafeterias into classrooms and measure the scale of the issue as part of a learning experience, and once armed with data and awareness, empower the next generation of food waste warriors to start looking for solutions.

(World Wildlife Fund Report)



**"We do not inherit
the earth from
our ancestors,
we borrow it from
our children."**

Native American Proverb

Litchfield's High School Food Scrap Collection Program

Kyle Harris, Science Teacher
Litchfield, Connecticut

CT Coalition for Sustainable Materials Management (CCSMM)

Increase Reuse and Recycling Working Group

1/10/23
Kyle Harris
Science Teacher
Litchfield High School

A Teacher's Perspective for Non-Educators

- Where does change begin?
- How can we encourage schools to improve their sustainability practices?
 - Reach out to superintendents and/or building principals
 - Connect to the goals of educators:
 - Critical thinking and reasoning
 - Communication, collaboration, and civic engagement
 - Problem-solving and innovation
 - Self-direction and resourcefulness

A Teacher's Perspective for Educators

- Questions to consider:
 - What are the issues?
 - What do we need to know about the issues?
 - How are students involved in the process?
 - Who do we need to collaborate with?
 - What is a realistic approach to solving this problem?
 - What strategies can we employ to increase our chances of success?
 - **Proactive collaboration**
 - **Utilize student voice**
 - **Publicity**

Litchfield High School - Composting Initiative

Timeline	
August 2022	Met with SMART Task Force
September 2022	Introduced project to students SMART Task Force visit to LHS
October 2022	Students develop action plan Students develop presentation Students present idea to administration
November 2022	Students create educational materials for peers Students run week-long pilot program
December 2022	Students reflect on data Students create survey for peers

Litchfield High School - Composting Initiative



What is Composting?

Composting is a natural process of recycling organic (living or once-living) matter, such as leaves and food scraps.

Compost is a mixture of decomposed organic material that can be used as a fertilizer (to help plants grow and to improve soil quality).



- Decomposing organisms, such as worms and nematodes, decompose matter; the product often ends up looking like fertile garden soil (this is compost!).
- Compost is very rich in nutrients and is often used in agriculture.



What gets Composted?

YES	NO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruits • Vegetables • Eggshells • Pasta • Tea Bags • Flowers and plants • Grains and beans • Coffee grounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish • Meat • Bones • Dairy • Shellfish • Napkins • Paper towels • Plastic • Produce stickers • Straws

* While dairy products, meat and bones can technically be composted, they require more time, attract pests, and may contaminate the rest of the compost.



Why Should we Compost?*

- Composting enriches soil, helping retain moisture and prevent plant diseases and infestation (pests).
- Reduces the need for chemical fertilizers, which can cause soil degradation and loss of carbon in soil.
- Encourages the production of beneficial bacteria and fungi - the decomposers that break down organic waste into compost.
- Reduces methane emissions (the waste does not go to landfills when it is composted), therefore lowering our carbon footprint.



* Information from EPA



Why Should we Compost?*

- Town taxes pay the cost of bringing waste to an incinerator or landfill (\$110 per ton)
- Litchfield will pay approximately \$600,000 to dispose of trash this year.
- About 25% of trash is compostable and food scraps are typically heavier than other waste produced.
 - This means the town could save around \$150,000 a year on waste disposal by composting.
- Litchfield is home to one of the nine food scrap facilities in Connecticut registered under the [Connecticut Solid Waste Demonstration Project](#).



* Information from SMART Task Force



Litchfield High School - Composting Initiative

Goal: Plan and implement district-wide changes to improve our schools' sustainability practices.

Phase 1 Action Steps	Person(s) Involved/ Responsible	Resources Needed	Anticipated Date Completed
1. Collaborate with community-based groups to learn about town-wide initiatives, processes, and procedures.	APES Class, SMART Task Force Members	Time and space to meet	September, 2022
2. Meet with admin to share presentation	APES Class, LMS/LHS administration	Composting presentation, time and space to meet	October, 2022
3. Educate LMS/LHS staff and students on composting	APES Class, LMS/LHS staff, LMS/LHS students	Educational materials	November, 2022
4. Composting Pilot	APES Class, LMS/LHS students, cafeteria staff, recycling employee	Composting buckets, location in cafe for buckets, storage location, scale	November, 2022

Litchfield High School - Composting Initiative

Composting Data

Date	Monday 11/28	Tuesday 11/29	Wednesday 11/30	Thursday 12/1	Friday 12/2	Total*
Amount Composted	12 lbs	13 lbs	13 lbs	8 lbs	8 lbs	54 lbs

*Total does not include the amount of waste composted by the cafeteria staff

Week-long pilot program in Litchfield schools aims to cut Litchfield's trash fees

BY JOHN MCKENNA | REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN November 28, 2022 184 0



LITCHFIELD, CT - 28 November 2022 - 112822JM01 - Litchfield First Selectman Denise Raap watches as Litchfield High School Junior Claire Climstead dumps a container of uneaten lettuce into a 5-gallon bucket in the school cafeteria on Monday, the first day of week-long food waste diversion pilot program. John McKenna Republican-American



bz Litchfield.BZ
November 29 at 8:01 PM · 🌐

<https://www.litchfield.bz/.../food-waste-collection.../>

Students at Litchfield High School/Middle School on Monday got their first taste of a food waste diversion program that will be implemented as a way to save the town money.



Litchfield High School - Composting Initiative

Future Timeline

January 2023

Student survey
Presentation to the BOE
Meet with stakeholders to formalize plan
Full Implementation at LMS/LHS

February 2023

Reach out to other district administration
Develop educational materials for K-6

March 2023

LCS and LIS School visits

April 2023

District-wide implementation

May/June 2023

Monitor implementation

Contact Information

Kyle Harris

harrisk@lpsct.org

9-12 Science Teacher

Litchfield High School

14 Plumb Hill Rd., Litchfield CT 06759

Zero Waste Coalition – example of successful stories

Tammy Thorton, Executive Director, Wilton Go Green and
Chair, Zero Waste Schools Coalition

Increase Reuse and Recycling Working Group: Topic - School Cafeteria Programs

Tammy Thornton

President, Wilton Go Green
Chair, Zero Waste Schools Coalition

tammy@wiltongogreen.org



www.wiltongogreen.org



WHO WE ARE



Wilton Go Green

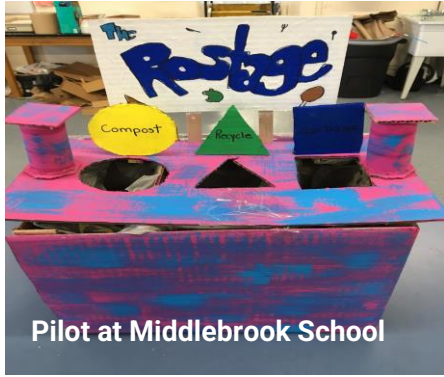
- Incorporated as a 501c3 in 2010
- Volunteer run and donor driven
- Focuses on energy efficiency and waste reduction
- Mission: To engage, educate and inspire green living

Zero Waste Schools Coalition

- Formed in the fall of 2018
- Mission: To create a platform for schools in Connecticut and beyond to connect, learn and share ways to introduce or enhance programming to reduce waste in our schools.
- Over 100 stakeholders in 35 CT towns



OUR STORY



Pilot at Middlebrook School



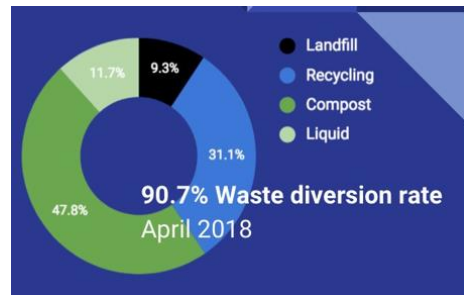
All four schools integrate full program with updates



Present

2017 - 2018

2016 - 2017



Move into each school at different Capacities. Introduce bi-annual Zero Waste Weeks

2018-2019



3 out of 4 schools running. School donation increasing. Reusable tray pilot. Plastic free lunch days



COALITION MEMBER REPORTS



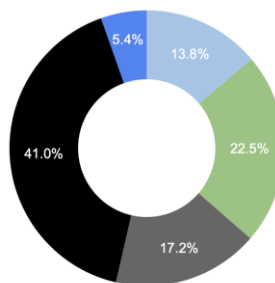
Greenwich, CT

- Currently reintroducing and expanding the waste reduction program with educational training, bilingual signage and sorting stations including share or donation tables, liquid collection, recycling right and tray stacking.
- Initiating a food scrap collection pilot with an organics hauler at New Lebanon School in January 2023. A reusable ware system with a new commercial grade dishwasher and stainless steel trays to be installed in spring.
- Launched a food donation program at Old Greenwich School via Food Rescue US.

NLS Waste Audit (Fall 2022)

41.7% Diversion

- Share Table
- Liquid
- Disposable Trays
- Trash
- Recycling



REUSABLE ALTERNATIVES: Stainless Steel Trays & Dishwashers

- Piloted at elementary school in spring 2019
- Stainless steel tray: Winco 6 compartment mess tray, style B
- Champion under counter dishwashing machine



OGS DOLPHINS GO ZERO WASTE!

How Old Greenwich School students reduce cafeteria waste by 43% & are on track to cut 8,370 pounds of trash annually - that's the weight of 10 common bottlenose dolphins!

- FOOD DONATION**
 Any uneaten or unopened food is put into the donation bin to be donated to our friends at Yerwood Center in Stamford - an average of 19 pounds a day!
- LIQUID COLLECTION**
 By pouring out liquids, recycling is cleaner & the trash weighs less. In a year, liquids collection diverts almost 4,000 pounds - the weight of a great white shark.
- RECYCLING RIGHT**
 With new signage & separating only beverage containers, hard plastics, & foil, recycling is now clean, saving money for our community.
- TRAY STACKING**
 Neatly stacking trays saves space in the trash bin & reduces the number of bags of trash generated each day.
- REUSABLE FOOD WARE**
 By packing food in durable containers that can be used over & over again, we cut waste from single-use disposables & save our families money.

COALITION MEMBER REPORTS



Fairfield, CT

- Composting pilot program at two elementary schools. Riverfield School and Holland Hill
- Separating milk cartons in order to establish delivery to Kelly Green Products in Waterbury



Essex Elementary School, CT

- First year of food scrap pick up funded by Town miniature liquor bottle funds. District funding going forward.
- Reusable trays



COALITION MEMBER REPORTS



Weston, CT

- High school Green Team
- Sustainable Solutions - Science Elective/100% project based
 - Working on improving and implementing cafeteria composting and new classroom protocols
 - Bottle redemption
 - Compost/mulch bay



Stamford, CT - Westhill High School

- Environmental club - 80 kids in the club and about 40 show up
- Great relationship with the City of Stamford Director Recycling & Sanitation
- Looking to use match grant funds to get a composter similar to City
- Bay State Textiles
- Looking to put in a pollinator garden
- School rebuild in approx. 5 years



COALITION MEMBER REPORTS



Westport, CT

- Compost collection in ALL schools
- District Sustainability Committee as well as school-specific committees
- Food Rescue at many of the schools weekly
- Staples High School has a Thrift Store, working on a bottle collection program



COALITION MEMBER REPORTS



Rowayton Elementary School, Norwalk, CT

- Kitchen conversion to dishwasher in 2017 - trays and utensils
- Classroom party boxes - emphasize reuse versus single use
- Compost collection happening pre-Covid - not back in full yet



COALITION MEMBER REPORTS



Beecher Road School, Woodbridge, CT

- Parents, teachers, students & community members supporting food waste diversion program in the school cafeteria since 2019
- Grades K-6 (900+ students)
- Students sort waste into:
 - Liquids
 - Food Donation
 - Recyclables
 - Compostable Food Waste
 - Trash
- 2022/23 stopped using plastic sporks & switched to metal flatware
- BRS Green Team featured in [People Magazine for Earth Day 2022](#)



SUPPORTS



Center for EcoTechnology - Offers FREE technical assistance to schools looking to reduce waste
www.cetonline.org

CT Green Leaf Schools - Provides resources and support that encourage public and private K-12 schools to achieve every day environmental improvements.
<https://www.coeea.org/ct-green-leaf-schools>

Cafeteria Culture - Works creatively with youth to achieve zero waste/ climate smart schools communities and a plastic free biosphere. <https://www.cafeteriaculture.org/>

Food Rescue US - Committed to reducing food waste and food insecurity in America. School Food Donations. <https://foodrescue.us/>

Center for Environmental Health - CEH protects people from toxic chemicals by working with [public] and private sector to demand and support business practices that are safe for public health and the environment. <https://ceh.org/>

Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation - Establishing sustainability as an integral part of every child's K-12 learning experience. <https://celfeducation.org/>

Plastic Free Restaurants - Eliminating petroleum-based plastic, one restaurant [school] at a time. <https://plasticfreerestaurants.org/>

Ahimsa - To provide safe products so that families can focus more on mealtime. School Cafeteria Line <https://ahimsahome.com/pages/cafeteria-trays>

FUNDING

- Check locally with Rotary, Kiwanis, PTA, Foundations
- Grassroots Fund - <https://grassrootsfund.org/grant-programs>
- Sustainable CT Community Match Fund Program <https://sustainablect.org/funding>
- Bay State Textiles - <https://www.baystatetextiles.com/>

Upcoming Webinar



LIVE WEBINAR

K-12 CLIMATE ACTION IN CONNECTICUT

Laura Schifter
Senior Fellow,
This Is Planet Ed at the
Aspen Institute

Peter Dart
Superintendent,
Mansfield Public Schools

Randy Walikonis
Chair, Mansfield School
Building Committee

How can Connecticut schools mitigate their climate impact and adapt to the effects of climate change

WEDNESDAY | FEBRUARY 1 | 7-8 PM

ORGANIZED BY

SUPPORTED BY

SCAN TO REGISTER
or visit
bit.ly/K12climateaction



Thank You!

Tammy Thornton

President, Wilton Go Green
Chair, Zero Waste Schools Coalition

tammy@wiltongogreen.org
www.wiltongogreen.org



Technical Assistance and Resources for Schools

Heather Billings, Green Business Specialist, Center for
EcoTechnology (CET)

Free Waste Assistance for Connecticut Businesses

CET is under contract with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to provide business recycling assistance

Evaluate existing waste streams

Identify opportunities to prevent, recover, and divert waste

Create customized waste bin signage

Conduct cost analysis

888-410-3827

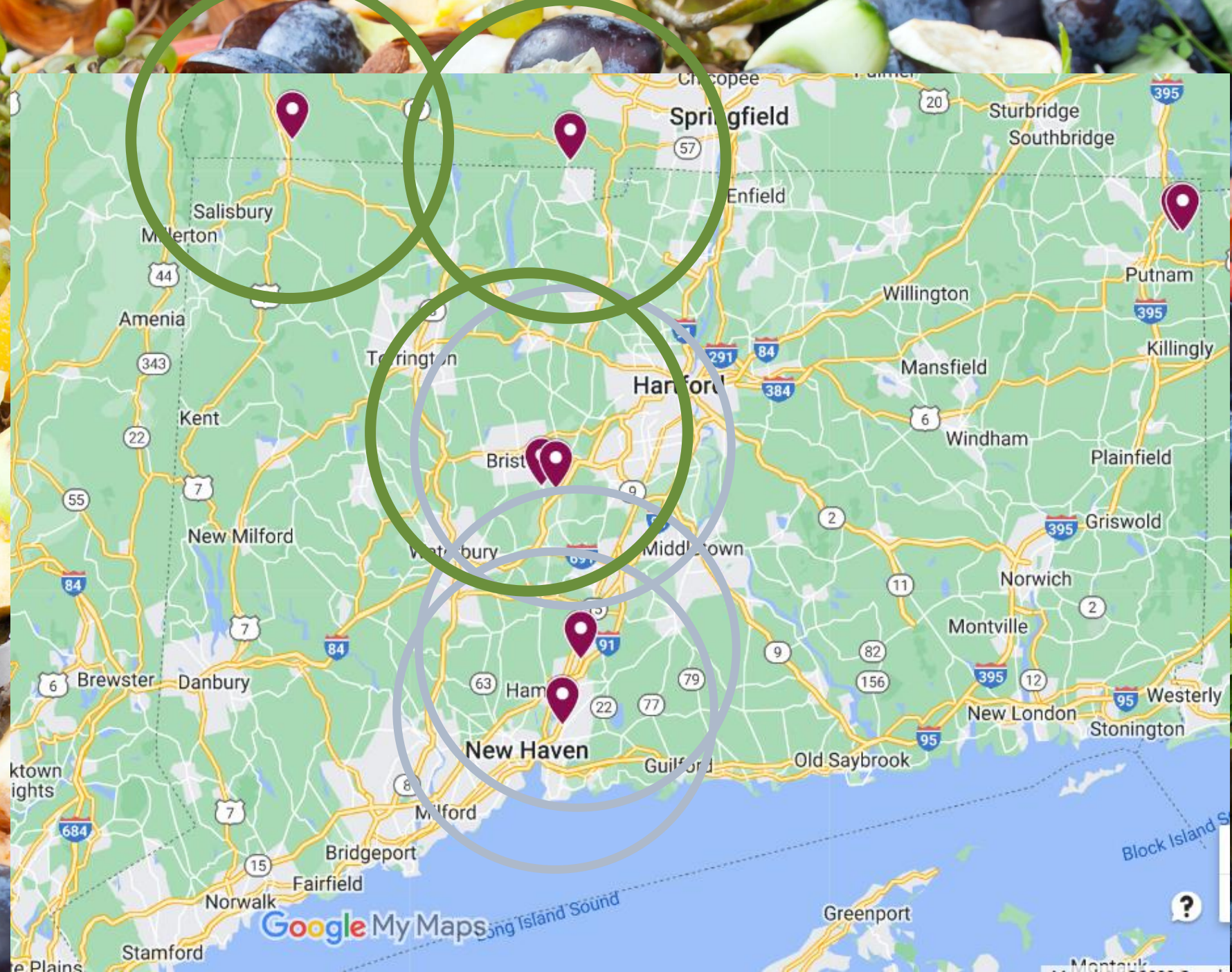
centerforecotechnology.org/ctwasteassistance

Anaerobic Digesters in CT

- Active Sites
- Upcoming Sites

If your school is near an Active Site, you may be eligible for no-cost assistance.

Contact Us!



School specific tips

Administrative support

Identify Compost Champion

Custodial and Food Service program input

Education-Training

Sorting station & signage

Bin monitoring-students/staff

Collection details & housekeeping

Celebrate successes!



Cafeteria Sorting Station

1 Food Share*

Why Here?

Drop off heaviest items first to prevent spills

Best Practices:

- Clean bins maintain food safety & appeal
- Only items from the school meal program
- Keep like items together

2 Liquids

Why Here?

Pour liquids as they are not allowed in the recycle bin

Best Practices:

- Don't empty juice containers as they take longer to empty
- Raise the bucket with a crate to prevent spills

3 Recycle Bin

Why Here?

Milk cartons are captured immediately after liquids

Best Practices:

- Materials should be as empty and dry as possible

4 Landfill Bin

Why Here?

Capture contaminants before the compost bin

Best Practices:

- Capture landfill items at student tables throughout lunch
- Squishy, flimsy plastic goes in the landfill bin

5 Compost Bin

Why Here?

Capture compostables before stacking trays

Best Practices:

- Tap trays against the inside of the bin to release stuck on food
- No plastic wrapped food allowed

6 Stack Trays

Why Here?

Neatly stack trays to save space in the compost bin

Best Practices:

- Stage a small stack of trays to model nesting
- Stack trays like a puzzle and push down on the stack of trays



General Tips & Best Practices:

- Clear signage above the opening of the bins prompts proper sorting behavior
- Keep space for students to access the sorting station on both sides
- Placement of sorting station should flow with tray stacking ending nearest the exit
- Wipe down the sorting station every day

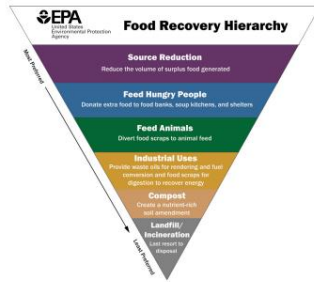
CT Resource Documents



Food Waste Reduction Made Easy in CT

This food waste reduction guidance document is part of a series aimed at helping commercial food service providers in Connecticut – e.g., restaurants, hotels, corporate cafeterias, and institutions – reduce the volume of organic waste they send to incinerators.

Source reduction (prevention) is the top strategy on the US EPA's [Food Recovery Hierarchy](#). This guidance document provides practical tips and best management practices for implementing reduction strategies in commercial and institutional kitchens. Businesses can optimize their wasted food management by practicing strategies across the hierarchy. See CET's corresponding guidance documents on [food donation](#) and [separating food scraps](#) for animal feed, anaerobic digestion, and composting.



centerforecotchnology.org/ctwasteassistance



[Food Waste Reduction Made Easy in CT](#)

Food Scraps Diversion Guide



Prepared by Center for EcoTechnology



[Food Scraps Diversion Guide for West Hartford Public Schools](#)

FOOD DONATION BY CONNECTICUT SCHOOLS
Guidelines & Resources

The US EPA's Food Recovery Hierarchy ranks feeding hungry people as a top strategy for reducing wasted food. Schools should consider how each strategy on the EPA Hierarchy can contribute to a comprehensive food waste reduction plan. The Center for EcoTechnology (CET) has worked with stakeholders including the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Connecticut Department of Public Health, Connecticut State Department of Education, Connecticut Department of Agriculture, food rescue organizations, food banks, and local health officials to develop this guidance document.

This document, produced in 2019, is intended to provide guidance for Connecticut schools on opportunities to donate food internally and externally. The document consolidates federal and state regulations, including information on liability protection, health codes, and more.

Food Donation Laws and Liability Protection

The Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act (42 U.S.C. § 1791) encourages food donations by providing liability protections for businesses that donate "apparently wholesome" food in "good faith" to nonprofit organizations. [42 U.S.C. § 1791](#) explicitly states that schools participating in the national lunch program that donate excess food receive liability protection under the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act. [Extensive legal research](#) does not turn up a single legal case related to food donation liability. There are several laws pertaining to food donation at the federal and state level.

Connecticut has also passed [state legislation](#) to provide additional liability protection for donors. These laws protect donors that donate food to nonprofits for distribution by that nonprofit or to nonprofits that distribute it to other nonprofits, unless the donor "knew or had reasonable grounds to believe" that the food was not fit for human consumption.

SHARE TABLES IN CONNECTICUT – INTERNAL DONATION

"Share tables" are tables or stations, some of which include small refrigerators with glass doors, where children may return whole food or beverage items they choose not to eat. These items are then available for other children who may want additional servings.

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Connecticut State Department of Education support the use of share tables when the school food authority (SFA) implements measures to prevent foods and beverages from being leftover, and complies with all local and state health and food safety codes. It is important to remember that the intent of the school nutrition programs is to serve healthy meals to students, and SFAs must take steps to minimize excess food. If a SFA continually has excessive quantities of leftover foods, the food service program must review and adjust food service items, menus, production practices and customer acceptance to ensure the maximum consumption of meals and snacks by students during the school day.

888.813.8552 | waste4food.ceonline.org/states/connecticut | waste4food@ceonline.org

[Food Donation by Connecticut Schools Guidelines and Resources](#)



ALL FOOD SCRAPS

- Fruit & vegetable peels
- Dairy, eggs, grains, bread
- Meat, fish, poultry
- Bones, shells
- Napkins



NO

- Tissues, paper towels
- Plastic bags, cutlery
- Yogurt cups, wrappers
- Plastic, metal, glass
- Drink cartons, snack trash



Example of customized signage for food scraps in school cafeterias



Resources for Schools (1)

- CT Green LEAF Schools www.coeea.org/ct-green-leaf-schools
 - Resources for teachers, funding, professional development
- CT DEEP – Environmental Education <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Education/Environmental-Education-Workshops>
 - Educator workshops, activity guides, curricula
- Carton Council www.recyclecartons.com
 - Resources for teachers, community, including school funding
- CET (Center for EcoTechnology) www.cetonline.org
 - <https://wastedfood.cetonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/CT-School-Food-Donation-Resource.pdf>
 - Tech assistance for schools
- RecycleCT Foundation www.recyclect.com/grants
 - School Grant program, educational materials
- Plastic Free Restaurants www.plasticfreerestaurants.org
 - Up to \$5/tray for purchasing new durable/washable trays
 - Switching to reusables database
- CT Science Teachers Association <https://csta.wildapricot.org>
 - Resources, funding, annual conference (pre COVID)
- CT Water [Connecticut Water - School Water Bottle Filling Stations \(ctwater.com\)](http://ConnecticutWater-SchoolWaterBottleFillingStations.ctwater.com)
 - School Grant program for water bottle filling station – **due Jan 31, 2023**

Resources for Schools (2)

- Textile Recycling <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Reduce-Reuse-Recycle/Textiles-Reuse--Recycling>
- Collection Containers for Recycling, Composting & Trash <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Reduce-Reuse-Recycle/Event-Recycling/Collection-Containers>
- TREX Plastic Film Recycling Challenge (started November 15, 2022, ends April 15, 2023) [School & Community Recycling Programs | NexTrex](#) - winners announced Earth Day, winners receive a bench made from plastic film
- TerraCycle <https://www.terracycle.com/en-US/> - collects candy wrappers, chip bags, toothpaste tubes and more
- GotSneakers <https://gotsneakers.com/> - sneaker recycling program
- Local funding opportunities
 - PTA, Rotary, Kiwanis, New England Grassroots Fund, SustainableCT Community Match Fund, your local Community Foundation, local banks, utility companies
- **List of Municipal Recycling Coordinator/Contacts** <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Reduce-Reuse-Recycle/Local-Municipal-Recycling-Coordinators>

Professional Development for Educators

- COEEA (CT Outdoor Environmental Education Association) [Professional Development | coeea](#)
 - Workshops, conferences, small grants
- CT Green LEAF Schools www.coeea.org/ct-green-leaf-schools
 - Resources for teachers, funding ideas, professional development
 - [Teacher Professional Development | yellowfarmhouse](#)
- CT DEEP – Environmental Education <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Education/Environmental-Education-Workshops>
 - Educator workshops, activity guides, curricula
- EE-Smarts - [eesmarts Summer Institute | EnergizeCT](#)
 - Mostly energy, occasional waste related workshops
- Yellow Farmhouse Education Center www.yellowfarmhouse.org/teacherpd
 - Mostly agriculture, occasional waste related workshops, Farm tours
- CT Science Teachers Association <https://csta.wildapricot.org>
 - Resources, funding, annual conference (pre COVID)
- WWF – [Be a Food Waste Warrior](#)
 - K-12 lessons, activities, and toolkits to teachers

Resources to Reduce/Reuse School Cafeteria Waste

- Center for Environmental Health - <https://ceh.org>
 - Inventory of PFAS free food service ware
- Cafeteria Culture - www.cafeteriaculture.org
 - Zero waste Cafeteria Toolkit, climate-smart and plastic free resources
- The Green Team - <https://thegreenteam.org/recycling-facts/food-waste-reduction/>
 - An environmental club that shares educational programs to empower students and teachers
- NERC Food Service/Cafeteria Waste Reduction - [School Food Service/Cafeteria Waste Reduction \(nerc.org\)](https://www.nerc.org/school-food-service-cafeteria-waste-reduction)
 - Guidance for school cafeterias
- USDA - [12 schools - Schools | USDA](https://www.usda.gov/12-schools-schools)
 - Strategies to reduce food waste at k – 12 schools
- National Farm to School Network – [Plate Waste Warriors](https://www.nfsn.org/plate-waste-warriors)
 - Procurement choices, education on how to reduce food waste
- Food Donation/Food Recovery
 - Food Rescue US <https://foodrescue.us/about/our-locations/>
 - Fairfield County, Hartford County, Northwest CT
 - Haven's Harvest <https://www.havestharvest.org>
 - Greater New Haven area, New London

School Cafeteria - Case Study and Webinars

Webinar:

- [How to Avoid PFAS in Your Food Service Ware](#) – Zoom
 - CT DEEP webinar resource for teachers to re-think about food trays

Case Study:

- [The Cost and Environmental Benefits of Using Reusable Food Ware in Schools](#)
 - A Minnesota case study that addressed the financial and environmental benefits of switching to reusable food ware at school cafeterias.
- [ReThink Disposable Institution Case Study: Palo Alto Unified School District](#)
 - Palo Alto successful transition of single-use foodware to reusable in 12 elementary schools using a central kitchen distribution model.

Additional ways to stay informed

- Sign up for **CCSMM updates** [HERE](#).
- Participate in **Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) meetings**:
 - SWAC meeting agendas & materials are posted [HERE](#)
 - Instructions for self-subscription to the SWAC email listserv are posted [HERE](#)
- Municipal representatives should sign up for the **CTRecyclers listserve** and the **CT Municipal Recycling Coordinator Newsletter**
 - Contact sherill.baldwin@ct.gov for more details

Q & A

- Attendees can post questions in the chat box or raise hand to request to speak.

Upcoming Programs

SAVE THE DATE

K-12 Climate Action In Connecticut Webinar

Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2023

7:00-8:00pm

Virtual

Increase Reuse & Recycling Work Group Meeting:

Tuesday, March 14, 2023

1:00-2:30pm

virtual

Thank you!

Connecticut Coalition for Sustainable Materials Management



CCSMM