Minimizing Waste – Always in Good Taste

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Affiliation or Financial Disclosure

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Objectives

• Investigate ways we can minimize waste
• Review opportunities to maximize our resources
• Learn at least one new tip for minimizing waste
• Share our experiences on minimizing waste in our workspace
What is waste?
Definition of Waste

• Verb – use or expend carelessly, or of no purpose
• Adjective – eliminated or discarded, no longer has a useful purpose
• Noun – an act or instance of using something carelessly
• Noun – the unusable byproducts of something
Areas where we create Waste

- Food production and service
- Use of non-food resources
- Time/Energy
Ways we create waste

• Over serving
• Not implementing Offer Vs. Serve (OVS) properly
• Disposables vs. Re-usable ware and utensils
• Poor work scheduling
• Poor time management
• Wasting energy (ours and the district’s)
• Wasting financial resources (all of the above)
Activity – Waste or No Waste

• Review the checklist you were given when you arrived. Place a checkmark in the appropriate column.
Statistics on Waste

**FOOD WASTE BY THE NUMBERS**

- **288 lbs**
  The average American wastes 288 pounds of food annually. That is equivalent to 29 turkeys per person.

- **25%**
  Water is used to grow food. Nearly 25% of clean water is wasted due to food waste.

- **1,500 MILES**
  Fuel is consumed to truck our food. A typical meal travels 1,500 miles from farm to plate.

**CLEAN YOUR PLATE**
Food Waste in Schools

United States Department of Agriculture

Reducing Food Waste
What Schools Can Do Today

USDA Economic Research Service estimates that the overall food supply at the retail and consumer level went uneaten in the U.S. in 2010.

31%
Research shows...

Plate Waste New

Plate Waste Before

Extending lunch periods from 20 to 30 minutes reduces plate waste by nearly one-third.

Scheduling meals before lunch can reduce plate waste by as much as 30%.

Smarter Lunchroom Strategies:
- Such as where foods are named and where they are placed in the cafeteria, can facilitate healthy choices and increase food and vegetable consumption by up to 70%.

Schools across the country are stepping up to the challenge with innovative new strategies, such as:
- Allowing students to keep a lunchroom meal for consumption later in the school day.
- Using techniques listed on the USDA's Smart lunchroom self-assessment tool to help reduce food waste.
- Setting up a table for kids to place items they are not going to consume/give away or prepare and serve.
- Offering students the ability to choose food they intend to eat.
- Composting food waste for school gardens.
- Collaborating with local farmers to incorporate school scrap projects.
- Collecting excess victuals from food short conditions to donate to charitable organizations.
- Sign up for the USDA Food Waste Challenge to share your story on how you are reducing, reusing, or recycling food waste.

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Food Waste in Schools

• Research shows:
  • that plate waste continues to be a concern.
  • that scheduling recess before lunch can reduce plate waste by as much as 30%.
  • that extending lunch periods from 20 to 30 minutes reduced plate waste by nearly one-third.
  • that behavioral economics strategies can facilitate healthy choices and increase fruit and vegetable consumption.

• Source: USDA infographic
Combating Food Waste in Schools (BOH)

• Eliminating over production
  • Good menu planning
  • Using the production record as the tool it was designed for
    • Forecasting
    • Review for servings selected and left overs
  • Taking meal counts from classrooms
  • Batch cooking
  • Cycle menus
  • Standardized recipes
Combating Food Waste in Schools (BOH)

• Eliminating over serving
  • Implementing Offer vs. Serve PROPERLY
  • Smaller trays
  • Paper boats instead of trays
  • Correct serving utensils
  • Training
  • Utilizing portion cost as a teaching tool
Combating Food Waste in Schools (FOH)

- Eliminating happy trash cans
  - Implementing offer vs. serve properly
  - Share bins
  - Education campaigns
    - Teachers
    - Students
    - Community
- Choices
- Correct serving utensils
- Use self-serve for fresh fruits and vegetables
- Utilizing portion cost as a teaching tool
- Food Waste audits
Combating Food Waste in Schools (FOH)

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  - Food Waste audits
Share bins

• Allowable under USDA regulations
• Consult your state agency
• Consult your local health department
• Share experiences
Choices

• Giving students choices encourages them to take items they will eat.
Correct serving utensils

- Do you need to serve 1 cup?
- Or ½ cup?
Food Waste Audits

• Guide to Conducting Student Food Waste Audits – A Resource for Schools
  • Great resource
  • Can be modified for your needs
  • Provide excellent cafeteria/classroom connection.
School Nutrition Operations Report

• Based on a survey of 1550 school districts nationwide
  • Nearly two thirds (64.1%) of districts encourage students to share unwanted/unopened food items with their peers through cafeteria **share tables**
  • 18.3% collect uneaten food to **donate to charitable organizations**
  • 18.1% are **composting** food waste
Other Ideas for combating food waste?
Nonfood Waste in Schools

- What percentage of your trash is nonfood items (disposables)?
- 2015 study showed that we could save $11.4 Billion dollars if more paper, aluminum, glass and plastics were recycled?
- Do you know of any recycling programs?
- Do you feel you should be informed?
- What difference does it make?
Case Study – Chanhassen High School

- 1600 students
- Producing more than 350 pounds of cafeteria trash each day
- Minnesota GreenCorp
- Partnered with Principal and students
- Reduce milk carton waste, organic waste and switch to reusable silverware
Case Study – Chanhassen High School

• Before:
  • 355 lbs. cafeteria trash daily
  • 1420 lbs. cafeteria trash weekly

• After:
  • 31.7 lbs. cafeteria trash daily
  • 158 lbs. cafeteria trash weekly
  • Average daily diversion from landfill – 300 lbs.

• Resulted in smaller dumpster, fewer trash pick-ups and lower costs
Combating Nonfood Waste

• Switch back to reusables
• Education campaign
• Switch from a larger plastic box container to a deli bag for appropriate items
• Using paper trays instead of foam
Time Bandits (wasters)

- Inefficient production schedules
- Inefficient work flow
- Set work schedules that cannot be adjusted
- Failure to utilize cycle menus and standardized recipes effectively
- Inefficient equipment or using the wrong equipment for the job
- Lack of proper training
Combating Time Waste

• Seek out resources and training opportunities – ICN has great time management and KPI training courses
• Organize your recipe so you can grab everything you need from the stockroom at one time.
• Mise en Place – everything in its place
• Invest in proper equipment
• Create realistic work schedules
• Create efficient production schedules
Combating Time Waste

- Examine work flow and paths for efficiencies
- Set ball park time frames for steps in preparation
- Enlist the help of your staff – small steps toward efficiencies pay off in big dividends
- If there is resistance to changes for efficiency – ask the staff what they would do to solve the problem
- Collaboration is the key to making any change
- Utilize cycle menus and standardized recipes
Food

Nonfood

Time
Pulling it Together

• The size of your operation determines your opportunities
• Your district policies may impact your choices
• Combatting waste in any area will pay big dividends for your financial bottom line
• Combatting waste also improves the perception of your program
• Waste reduction is an opportunity that will continue to grow in our industry.
• Utilize your resources and make a difference!
Practical Advice

• From a friend of mine –
  • Modify menus at the end of the year or periodically to utilize any inventory that is accumulating in the warehouse or freezer.
    • Sub-sandwiches on summer menus due to large stock of packaging material
    • Tuna salad subs on summer menus due to accumulated tuna in warehouse
  • Utilize the food-buying guide to determine how much to purchase so you do not over-order. (Example – what size apple do you need to buy)
  • If you are catering, create scratch based menus for your catering operation. More efficient, economical and better perception. (Increase $)
  • Power the central kitchen with Natural Gas Co-generators. They don’t sell the extra power but they get a discount from the electric company.
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