The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Food Recovery Program
Today’s Agenda

• What is food recovery and why is it important?
• How does food recovery relate to Florida’s schools?
• What is the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services’ (FDACS) role?
• How can you engage in food recovery?
Overview

• **Food Recovery/Rescue/Salvage**
The practice of collecting edible, wholesome foods, that would otherwise go to waste, from places such as restaurants, grocery stores, produce markets, farms and schools, and re-introducing it into the food supply chain.

• **Food Insecurity**
The state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food.
Why is Food Recovery Important?

- Approximately 40% of all food produced in the USA is wasted at the farms, retail and consumer levels, including school.

- Food makes up 21% of landfill weight, making it the single largest component going into municipal landfills.

- 1 in 6 American families is food insecure, including more than 13 million children.
Purpose of the Food Recovery Program

• Helps students improve their access to wholesome foods;

• Provides surplus food to local volunteer and nonprofit organizations for distribution;

• Offers healthier food options to those in need; and

• Reduces food waste;
How to Reduce Food Waste

Food Recovery Hierarchy

- **Source Reduction**: Reduce the volume of surplus food generated.
- **Feed Hungry People**: Donate extra food to food banks, soup kitchens and shelters.
- **Feed Animals**: Divert food scraps to animal feed.
- **Industrial Uses**: Provide waste oils for rendering and fuel conversion and food scraps for digestion to recover energy.
- **Composting**: Create a nutrient-rich soil amendment.
- **Landfill/Incineration**: Last resort to disposal.
Beachside Montessori Village
Broward County Schools

• Sustainability class studying food systems

• Schools across U.S. throw away ONE BILLION unopened food items per year.

• Food in landfill creates methane gas, 21 times more potent than CO₂.

• BMV threw away on average 52,020 unopened food items. Releasing over 6,000lbs. of methane gas each year.
Food Rescue

- Bill Emerson Act
- School Based Team
- Supplies: Refrigerator & salad bar cart
- Volunteers
- Spread the word: School assemblies
- Food Share & Donate 3 times/week
One Action

Empowers children to reduce greenhouse gases and feed the hungry.
## Food Recovery Strategies

### Source Reduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Nutrition Professionals:</th>
<th>Teachers and Administrators:</th>
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- **Teachers and Administrators:**
  - Do a class project - Student Food Waste Audit and Challenge
  - Visit local food producers

- **School Nutrition Professionals:**
  - Buy what you need (USDA Food Buying Guide)
  - Market you meals
  - Give kids a choice
  - Visit local food producers

### Do a class project - Student Food Waste Audit and Challenge
- Learn about food - school gardens, FoodRescue.Net tracking tool
- Schedule recess before lunch
Food Recovery Strategies

Share Tables

- Designated stations where children may return whole and/or unopened food or beverage items they choose not to eat.

- These items are then made available to other children who may want or need another serving during or after the meal service.

- The USDA expressly allows children to take additional items from the share table, at no cost, to consume immediately or later in another location.

- Items left on the share table may be served and claimed for reimbursement during another meal service.

- Need approval from Local Health Department as counties have rules.
Food Recovery Strategies
Donations: How Can Schools Donate Leftover Food to Food Bank and Pantries?

**Step 1:** Review the following:
- USDA memo allowing for the donation of USDA foods (regardless of program) to non-profit agencies (i.e. food pantries and soup kitchens).
- Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act
- The Why Reduce Food Waste in Schools? Flyer at FoodRescue.net.

**Step 2:** Contact your Food Service Director and discuss your plans for developing a food waste diversion program together.
- Bring copies of the USDA memo and the flyer.
- Link to an open letter to school administrators at FoodRescue.net.

**Step 3:** Reach out to your local health department. They can provide you with guidelines on how to donate food to a non-profit organization.

**Step 4:** Arrange a meeting between the school and a non-profit food pantry to discuss scheduling regular pick-ups. You may also want you to have a written agreement with the non-profit you wish to work with.

**Step 5:** Bring your plan to the school district. They can then make food donations from your school (or all schools) a district policy.
**Food Recovery Strategies**

**Composting**

- The USDA and EPA have partnered to increase *Reducing, Recovering, and Recycling Food Waste*, including composting food waste for school garden.

- Using compost in school gardens to produce vegetables that can be served in school cafeterias is allowable under **FL Admin Code-Chapter 62-709**, as long as composting guidelines are followed.

- [Palm Beach County School Composting Guidelines](#).

- “One school sharing leftover cafeteria food with farm animals” *(Eastern Iowa)*
What is FDACS’ role?

• Identify organizations interested in food recovery;

• Offer organizational meetings to facilitate and provide support at the local level;

• Increase public awareness of the program;

• Connect schools and share success stories.
How can you help?

• Share this information!

• Sign up today to learn more about implementing food recovery strategies in your school.

• Coming soon: FDACS resource tool.
Thank You!

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