Important Note: This activity was developed for the original Green Lunchroom Challenge program, a voluntary pledge program for K-12 schools to improve the sustainability of their food service operations. The project was coordinated by the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center Technical Assistance Program with funding from US EPA Region 5.

The following page(s) represent the content of this activity as it appeared on the original project web site, complete with available points and instructions for submitting documentation. **The project is no longer funded and as of June 2018 schools may no longer submit activity documentation to earn points and recognition as described.** The activity is presented for your information to guide your organization's sustainability efforts.

If your school or district implements the suggested activity and wishes to share its experiences, please email Joy Scrogum. Your story may be incorporated into a blog post on this web site, the main ISTC site, or shared on social media to foster networking and inspiration among peer institutions.

ILLINOIS

Illinois Sustainable Technology Center

PRAIRIE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Track the amount of food donated to a local food bank, shelter, or charity

Activity Category: Diverting Food for Human Consumption

Activity: Track the amount of food donated to a local food bank, shelter, or charity

Rationale: After source reduction, diverting food from the landfill in order to feed hungry people is the second most desirable category of actions on the US EPA's Food Recovery Hierarchy. The hunger-relief organization Feeding America has reported that in 2013, 49.1 million Americans lived in food insecure households, including 33.3 million adults and 15.8 million children. Meanwhile, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), 40 percent of food in the US goes uneaten. It only makes sense to divert as much of that uneaten food to the people who need it as possible, rather than allowing it to go to the landfill. If you're completing the Challenge activity to establish a policy to donate the unused edible food from your school or district to a local food bank, shelter, or charity, it makes sense to quantify your impact on hunger in your community by tracking the amount of food you divert in this way.

Activity Description: Measure the amount of food donated by your school district during a specified time (e.g. one month, two months, an average monthly amount over the course of multiple months, etc.). The time frame under consideration must take place after you signed up for the Challenge. Either weigh the food you donate before delivering it to a local food bank, shelter, or other charity (preferred method), or provide scanned copies of receipts from the organizations to which you are donating the food, if those receipts include some characterization of the amount of food donated (weight or the number of meals your donation provided).

Earn Challenge Points (150 points): Submit a 1-2 page report in Word or PDF format on the amount of food donated by your school or district, including:

🍴 The amount donated in pounds or meal equivalents

🍴 How the amount was measured (If you rely on information provided by the organization receiving donations, you must include scanned copies of acknowledgement letters or

receipts showing statistics. These copies will not be included toward the page limit of your report.)

- The time frame considered

- The names of organizations to which food was donated

Email this report to Joy Scrogum at jscrogum@illinois.edu.

Resources:

- US EPA Food Recovery Hierarchy

- Feeding America: Hunger and Poverty Fact Sheet

- Feeding America: The Federal Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act

- Feeding Illinois: Member Food Banks

- Ample Harvest: Find a Food Pantry Near You

- Green Lunchroom Challenge Archived Webinar: Food Donation for Schools

- Whole Earth Calculator and Lesson Plans (Link to Rock and Wrap It Up calculator which can convert pounds of donated food into meal equivalents and carbon dioxide averted equivalents, if you're curious.)

Follow Us

Green Lunchroom Challenge   About | Activities |UI Web Privacy Notice

ILLINOIS
Illinois Sustainable Technology Center
PRAIRIE RESEARCH INSTITUTE