“A Change of Habit”
Operations Guide
May 2015
Subtitle

School Cafeteria Recycling and Composting Program
We know the WHY
This is the HOW
Part 1 - Getting Ready to Launch
Part 2 – The Launch
How to Operate
How to Track
Part 1

Getting Ready to Launch

Subtitle
Build Community Support
(At Least) Two Different Ways to Get Started

Remember – the goal of this program is to outlast staff and students.

1. Build a Network of Partners Start-Up
   - School + Town: Bring together group of recycling and composting supporters from school, town government and Public Works to plan program
   - In-House: Bring together a network of committed Administration, staff and students who will drive the program
   - Talk about the transition from group to entire school community

2. In-House Champion(s) Start-Up
   - Green Team/Environmental Club Leader, Green Team/Environmental Club students, staff or Administration
   - Passing On the Cape – Talk about how staff and students will take ownership
What Does Success Look Like?
Setting Program Goals

- Milk carton recycling
- Full-scale recycling
- Composting
- Recycling & composting
What Are the Leverage Points for Your School?
What Is Most Important to Your Community?

- Environmental
- Economics
- Service Learning
- Classroom Connection
Create Incentives & Rewards

Build Commitment

Provide Leadership

Set Goals

Service Learning

Funding

Build Community Support

Address Problems

Training & Monitoring
Step 1: Before the program begins
First Steps

Identify Hauler for Composting Food Waste

Identify Hauler for Recycling

Contact Trash Hauler

Hold planning meetings with school stakeholder groups
Take Advantage of 3 Opportunities

#1. Service Learning

Staff and students create framework for program tasks and students take ownership. Identify appropriate Service Learning opportunities for your school.

- Student-to-student training.
- Monitoring at Sorting Stations during breakfast and lunch.
- Older students mentor younger students on training/monitoring.
- Custodial Staff support.
- Backyard composting.
- Special projects for any and all student groups, including Green Team, Art Club, Environmental Club and Student Council.
- Students create videos, prezis, posters and/or powerpoints for campaign of support.
- Fulfillment of Community Service Requirement.
In support of this “Change of Habit” in cafeteria and Service Learning, consider this option -

Develop a Green Code for your school

- A commitment to adopt and promote best environmental practices

- A set of guidelines to 1) raise awareness in school community around environmental issues and support changes in behavior and practices, 2) bring community together around sustainability practices, including Cafeteria Recycling and Composting program

- Launch in-house version that fits your school's goals or participate in a national program: Green School Network, Green Schools Initiative, The Greens Schools Alliance, Eco-Schools USA
Students, staff and Administration draft guidelines for Green Code

Incorporate Green Code into School Handbook and school culture

Benefits of Green Code

Incorporate principles of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Green Code Supports Cafeteria Recycling and Composting Program
Take Advantage of 3 Opportunities

#2. Get the Word Out

Get community’s attention from the beginning.

- School and community media
- School: Backpack mail, school newsletters, school Facebook and YouTube videos and web sites
- Community: Newspapers, TV and radio, municipal Facebook and web sites
- Post regular updates of program results
Take Advantage of 3 Opportunities

#3. Classroom Connection

Identify opportunities to integrate topics of waste reduction, recycling, composting and sustainability into outcome-based curriculum for students.
Meet with Key Staff

- Address Staff Questions
  - Q&A to address concerns and impact of “change of habit” on students and staff
  - Identify staff/Administration leadership
  - Importance of staff modeling program support
  - Commit to program

- Discuss Student Ownership of Program
  - What are the Service Learning roles, incentives and rewards for students
  - What is plan for students to take ownership of program with staff support

- Discuss Training and Monitoring and Set Launch Date
  - Identify training/monitoring options for school
  - Identify staff to guide training/monitoring
  - Determine training/monitoring schedule
  - Set Launch Date
Meet with Haulers

- Compost Hauler: Discuss responsibilities, fees and pick-up schedule
- Recycling Hauler: Discuss responsibilities, fees and pick-up schedule
- Trash Hauler: Discuss responsibilities and pick-up schedule, discuss change in trash management approach and review contract, if appropriate
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meet with Students, Custodial Staff and Food Service Staff</th>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Student Volunteers (e.g., Green Team, Student Council, and/or Homeroom Reps)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Custodial Staff</strong></th>
<th><strong>Food Service Staff</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Q&amp;A about program and Service Learning roles, and student management of program</td>
<td>• Discuss program’s impact on day-to-day duties and role in managing program, including troubleshooting steps</td>
<td>• Discuss program’s impact on day-to-day activities, including collecting recycling and left-over food behind the line, and role in managing program, including troubleshooting steps</td>
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<td>• Discuss training options and identify best approaches</td>
<td>• Q&amp;A to address specific concerns</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Develop Training and Monitoring schedules</td>
<td>• Addressing the “gross factor”</td>
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Step 2: Before the Program Begins

Collect Data
Data Collection
Before Launch

Data Collection
Launch Day

Ongoing Data Collection
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Collection Before Launch</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Gather <strong>baseline</strong> data to compare with post-launch data and track progress</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Trash Audit</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Trash bag survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Dumpster fill estimate</td>
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<th>Data Collection Launch Day</th>
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<td>• Trash bag survey</td>
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What Can be Recycled and Composted in your cafeteria?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recycle This!</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milk/OJ Container</td>
<td>Pre-Pack Container</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cereal Containers</td>
<td>Metal Cans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applesauce Container</td>
<td>Any numbered plastic container</td>
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<tr>
<td>Juice Boxes</td>
<td>Any cardboard container</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smoothie Containers</td>
<td>Paper plates, cups and bowls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aluminum Foil, Pans, and Containers</td>
<td>Glass bottles and containers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooking Spray Cans</td>
<td>Paperboard trays (if used)</td>
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Note: Adapt this list to match the items in your cafeteria and your hauler’s requirements.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Compost This!</th>
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<td>Left-over Food from Student and Staff Breakfast and Lunch</td>
<td>Food scraps from Food Service prep</td>
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Note: Adapt this list to match the items in your cafeteria and your hauler’s requirements.
### Trash This! | Trash This!
---|---
Plastic containers without numbers | Plastic sandwich bags
Styrofoam bowls, cups, plates and trays | Plastic wrap
Plastic straws | Mustard, mayo, ketchup, salad dressing packets
Plastic sporks, spoons, knives and forks | Wrappers for granola bars and other snacks
Chip Bags and other snack bags | Napkins, paper towels and kleenex
Plastic wrappers for crackers, bagels, cheese sticks, and croutons | Capri Sun pouches (if your school does not work with TerraCycle)

Note: Adapt this list to match the items in your cafeteria and your hauler’s requirements.
Step 3: Before the Program Begins

- Collect Needed Equipment
- Set up Sorting Stations
Liners, Gloves, Sieves & Tongs, Signs, Bins and Buckets
Color-Coded Buckets and Bins in Sorting Station
Adapt bucket and bin colors to meet your school’s needs.

Five (5) or six (6) color-coded collection units.

1) 5-gal. White plastic bucket for leftover liquids.

2) Blue recycling Tote with liner OR Metal folding frame and clear bag for recyclables.

3) Barrel container with hole cut in top for redeemable cans/bottles (optional).

4) Grey Trash barrel with liner for trash.

5) Green 10-gal. Bucket with liner for left-over food.

6) Blue Bin for stacking trays.
Other Equipment Needs

*Sieve for Liquids Bucket
*Long-handled tongs for removing items from bins
*Rubber gloves
*Aprons to protect clothing
*Spatulas to scrape food from trays
*Hand sanitizer
*Liners
A sieve in Liquids Bucket catches straws, soup noodles, etc.

Use tongs to take out items that are in the wrong bins.
Determine number of Stations needed to maintain smooth traffic flow

Set-up per number of students per shift:

* Elementary students: 20 - 40 per station
* Middle school students: 30 - 50 per station
* High school students: 40 - 60 per station

Locate containers for collecting Recycling and Food Waste behind Food Service line.
Locate Station(s) to fit cafeteria layout and traffic flow

* Along the walls
* In the middle of cafeteria
* Or both

Set up Sorting Stations
Set up Sorting Stations

- Be consistent
  
  Use same color buckets and bins in each sorting station for “visual cues.”

  Use same buckets and bins in the same order, every day, to avoid sorting confusion.
Set up back-to-back Sorting Stations so students can sort from both sides.
Set up Sorting Stations

✓ Make “visual reminder” signs for each bin to show “what goes where.”
Post signs on wall above Sorting Station or post them above Station located in middle of cafeteria.

Consider using free-standing sign holder to display posters.
Set up Sorting Stations

✓ Remove all trash barrels from cafeteria area except for barrel(s) in Sorting Station(s).

If students eat in room(s) other than cafeteria, determine central location(s) for Station(s).
If cafeteria is multi-purpose, identify storage area for Sorting Stations between meals.
Many schools have built rolling platforms to move bins quickly in and out of cafeterias.
Use Blue Bin or tower to stack trays to save liners.

After meal, move trays to Trash or Recycling as appropriate.
Step 4: Before the Program Begins

Train
School
Community
Kick-off Assembly and Program Announcement

* Hold all-school assembly to announce start-up of program
* Outline the Why and How of “change of habit”
* Set up Sorting Station for demo
* Introduce Service Learning roles
* Talk about the “gross factor”
Use best training approach for each grade:

* Grade-by-grade assembly
* Training prezi (grade appropriate)
* Hands-on demonstration
* Sorting game
* Homeroom presentation by teacher or student
* Combination of above approaches

To model support for program, train all staff
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>In Charge of</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Back-Up (if not available)</th>
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**Day-to-Day Management and Troubleshooting**

Circulate list with Names, Contact Information and Responsibility (and Back-up person) for day-to-day management and trouble-shooting. Include staff, students and haulers.
Saving the Environment

One Cafeteria At a Time
Don’t Trash It
Sort It!