



Eco-Schools USA Sustainable Food Audit



Learning Objectives

- Discuss the importance of health and nutrition and discover the impacts food can have on the body.
- Monitor their food choices, making healthier, smarter food decisions.
Create awareness campaigns about the importance of sustainable food focusing on children, staff and families as well as the impacts our food habits have on the environment.
- Work in a variety of settings to accomplish goals, i.e. small group, individually, etc.
- Carry out audits related to health, nutrition, and food.
- Collect, analyze, interpret and communicate information related to healthy and sustainable food via technological avenues when possible.
- Suggest ways to make healthy and sustainable food a priority at both school and home.
- Communicate about the importance of healthy and sustainable food to a variety of audiences, including other students, staff, parents and the local community.

Curriculum Links

English, Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, Health, and Citizenship

Eco-Schools USA Pathways

School Grounds, Water, Climate Change, and Healthy Living, Transportation, Healthy Schools

Background

More than 30 million children eat a school lunch five days a week, 180 days a year. Regrettably most of these school lunches are filled with poor quality, highly processed food that contributes to childhood obesity, diabetes, reduced attention spans and poor grades.

As well, kids today have little to no idea where their food comes from, how it was grown and harvested, how it was processed and or the waste and other impacts associated with the processing and transport of food. Food production across the world has benefited from new technology and we can eat practically whatever we want, whenever we want it. Never before has food been so easy and so cheap to get hold of. But what is the true cost of this food to not only our health but as well to the environment? Producing and distributing food in a sustainable way will not only reduce our impact on the environment but also provide us with fresh, less processed and healthier food.

Sustainable School Food Programs: Sustainable Food programs for schools are programs that work to bring healthy, local food from the community to the school. They provide healthy meals in school cafeterias, improve student nutrition, provide health, nutrition and food education opportunities and connect schools to their local communities and farms. These programs are comprehensive and extend beyond farm fresh salad bars and local foods in the cafeteria to include waste management programs like composting, and experiential education opportunities such as planting school gardens, cooking demonstrations and farm tours. These programs help children understand where their food comes from and how their food choices impact their bodies, the environment and their communities at large.

Procedure

1. Talk with your school administrator and see who in the school and district would be helpful to engage when working through the audit and starting initiatives, such as a Farm to School program, <http://www.farmtoschool.org/> . People in your school or district you might need to connect with include: principal/headmaster, school cafeteria manager, Nutrition Services Director, Chief Business or Financial Officer, members of the School Board, Superintendent, members of the District Wellness Committee, local managers of the top five food supply companies in your state.
2. The Eco-Action team should work together to gather the data needed to complete the audit.
3. Analyze the results and report the findings to the school community.
4. Formulate an action plan and be sure to monitor and evaluate along the way.
5. Keep this report with your records. This information will be needed when responding to periodic Eco-Schools USA surveys, when applying for awards, and when communicating with the community and members of the media.



BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

1. What percent of food is fresh?	_____ Less than 10% _____ between 10%-30% _____ Between 31%-50% _____ More than 50%
2. What percentage of food is sourced locally?	_____ %
3. Fresh vegetables other than potatoes are served every day?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Fresh fruit is served every day?	whole fruit <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No fruit salad <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No fruit in syrup <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No fruit juice <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5. Is there a salad bar?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
6. Is it colorful?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

List salad bar choices below:

NOTES:



BREAKFAST AND LUNCH continued...

7. Are whole grain products served – bread, rice, pasta? Do not include bread coatings.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
8. Are pre-packaged snacks part of the meal? i.e. packages of crackers, chips, dips, cookies or desserts	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
9. What percentage of food is prepared fresh rather than processed “heat and serve” items?	_____ %
10. How often are “fast-food” type entrees served during the week for either breakfast and/or lunch? Examples include pizza, hamburgers, hot dogs, French fries, hash browns, tater tots, donuts, chicken nuggets, cereal	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
11. Is flavored milk served at breakfast?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
12. Is flavored milk served at lunch?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
13. Is there enough room in the cafeteria to eat comfortably?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
14. Is the cafeteria an inviting space in which to eat?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
15. Are their murals, posters, signage encouraging healthy eating habits?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
16. Is breakfast served in the classroom? For younger kids this can really help increase numbers and ensure they don't start the day hungry and short on attention.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
17. Students understand food miles, meaning the distance their food have traveled to get to their plate. (The important concept here is eating what's in season and what is local.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
18. Seasonality of foods is a concept students understand at our school, meaning different crops are grown at different times of the year. (The important concept here is eating what's in season and what's local.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
19. Students understand the health and environmental impacts associated with processed food.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

NOTES:



COMPETITIVE FOOD

1. Are snack and/or fast food options available for students to eat as an alternative to a meal in the cafeteria? Yes No

List those foods here:

2. Is there a brand-name fast food chain or restaurant in the school? Yes No

3. Is it an open campus where students have easy access to fast food? Yes No

4. Are candy and soda or sports drinks available in vending machines or special event concessions? Yes No

5. What percentage of the school vending machines provides low fat, low sugar options?
- Less than 15%
 between 15%-50%
 Between 51%-80%
 More than 80%

6. Do a visual observation during a several lunch periods to answer the following:
How many students in the school are opting for "grab and go" foods instead of eating a balanced meal? Yes No

7. Is the school relying on revenue from "grab and go" foods to support other school programs? Yes No

8. Do a survey to answer the following:
How many students take their own lunch to school? Leave campus? Grab and go? Eat a school lunch?
- own lunch
 leave campus
 grab and go
 eat a school lunch

NOTES:



WHO SUPPLIES THE FOOD AND WHERE IS IT PREPARED?

1. Is food service in-house and run by staff employed directly by the school district	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Is food prepared on-site?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Is food provided by an external food service contractor? If yes, find out more about the company.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Is there a kitchen on-site?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5. If there is a kitchen on-site does it have the space and equipment to prepare meals from scratch?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
6. If the school does not have an on-site kitchen, where does the food come from?	



OUTSIDE THE MEAL

Utilize the Nutrition Director or call the secretary at the office of the District Superintendent

1. Does your school have a wellness committee?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Does your school district have a wellness committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Is the wellness committee active or enforced?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Does the committee have a policy on food in schools, meals and any other food?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5. If yes, does the policy say anything about controlling soda, candy, snacks, and junk food? You're not looking for a complete ban but something to ensure that healthy choices are the primary focus.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

NOTES:



SCHOOL GARDENS AND FOOD WASTE

<p>1. Does your school grow fruits, vegetables, and or herbs?</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="154 325 1015 472"> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </table>													<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>2. If your school does not currently have a school garden or livestock area, does the school have access to a garden or allotment area for growing food or raising animals within or outside the school grounds?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>												
<p>3. Is your school garden an NWF Certified Schoolyard Habitat?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>												
<p>4. Have you identified key district and school personal to help you carry out the Eco-Action teams goals for the Sustainable Food pathway?</p> <p>If yes, please list below.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="203 850 1015 955"> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </table>							<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>						
<p>5. Your school participates in the Farm to School Network.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>												
<p>6. Your school has utilized the Yellow Tractor program.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>												
<p>7. Our school has worked with the Truck Farm program</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>												
<p>8. Our school has worked with Food Corps.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>												
<p>9. Does the school, including staff and students, know how much waste is produced each week from breakfast and lunch?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>												
<p>10. We have implemented a composting initiative at our school.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>												
<p>11. Our school uses non-meat food scraps from school breakfasts and lunches in our compost bin.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>												

NOTES:

Summarize results from data collection: