

OUSD Nutrition Services

Food Share Table

In an effort to reduce food waste and encourage consumption of unwanted food, OUSD Nutrition Services provides Food Share tables in the cafeteria. The Food Share table is centrally placed in the cafeteria that has containers with “Food Share” signs attached to encourage students to place their unwanted, still sealed items into for other students to select from during the meal time.

System Set-up

- For school without a waste sorting station: centrally placed table in cafeteria
- For school with a waste sorting station:
 - Place table to be a part of waste sorting station. Ideally it is placed first in the line, right before liquid milk dump bucket. For sites that need a double row of waste bins, the food share table can be placed in the middle that can include tray stacking as well.
- Racks or bins to hold food
- Signage on racks that states “Food Share” with pictures of food item examples (bins and signage provided)



Procedures

1. **Students** should be encouraged to select items they intend to eat and to eat what they have chosen.
2. **Students** are to put unwanted, sealed/unbitten items food share bins.
3. **Students** are allowed to select items from the food share bin during meal time.
4. **Custodian, cafeteria and kitchen staff** assistance on keeping table organized and maintained.
5. **Kitchen staff** at the end of the meal service are to bring back room temperature items to the kitchen to be cleaned and repurposed, for example, packaged graham crackers and whole fruit.
6. Hot and cold items cannot be repurposed and need to be separated in correct bins (food in plastic wrap cannot be placed directly in compost bin) or landfilled until Food Donation Program is in place.

Reasons

- Food waste is a national problem with approximately 40% of edible food from farm to fork is going to the landfill when 1 out of 6 Americans is food insecure. It is important to set an example for our students and to do our part in reducing edible food waste.
- Food Share comes in handy when student want an item that they did not think to get while in line, such as milk or a different type of fruit. At times, items run out that are being served; students can check the Food Share to see about different choices.
- A possible concern that sometimes comes up on a food share table is the potential of students taking too much of an item such as extra graham cracker packages to fill up on than eating a balanced meal. With adult monitors keeping an eye on the food share, this can be reduced. The benefits of a food share table offerings outweigh this issue.
- Food share is the first step in starting a food donation program which will capture inevitable surplus food and to help feed our hungry community.

Calif. Dept. of Education provides info. specific to school food share: www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/sn/mbnsdsn052008.asp

For additional information and/or questions, please contact: Nancy Deming, Sustainability Manager, Custodial and Nutrition Services, nancy.deming@ousd.org, 510-290-4875

