

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?

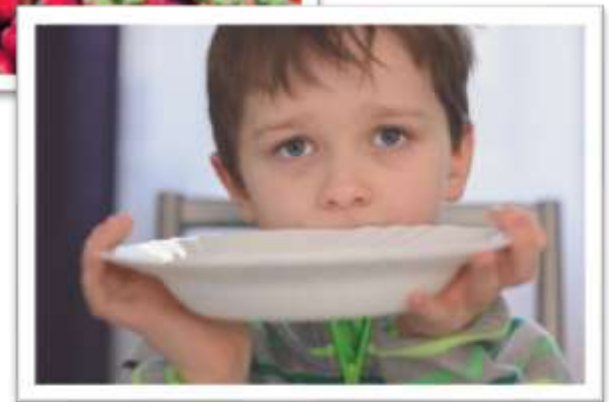
Overview

- **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.

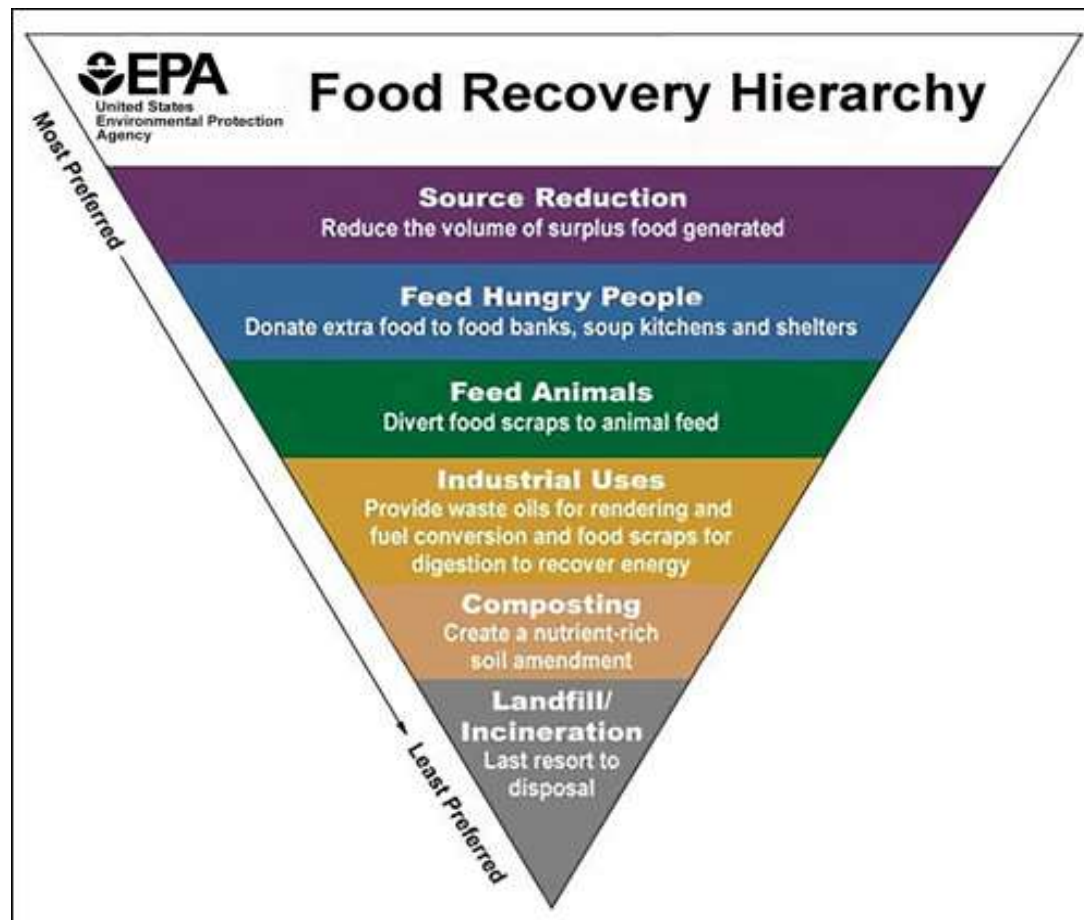


Purpose of the Food Recovery Program

- 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



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.

Beachside Montessori Village
Impact Dashboard

279

Items Rescued

55

Meals Rescued

34.5

Pounds of CO₂e
ReducedRescued meals
help feed families
in need!CO₂e
reduction helps
the environment
with less of a
carbon footprint.10 lbs. of Food
Converts To:

8 MEALS SAVED

5 LBS OF CO₂e

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
CAN CHANGE
THE WORLD

One Action



Empowers children to **reduce** greenhouse gases
and **feed** the hungry.

Food Recovery Strategies

Source Reduction

School Nutrition Professionals:

Buy what you need (USDA Food Buying Guide)	Market you meals
Give kids a choice	Cut fruit into smaller pieces

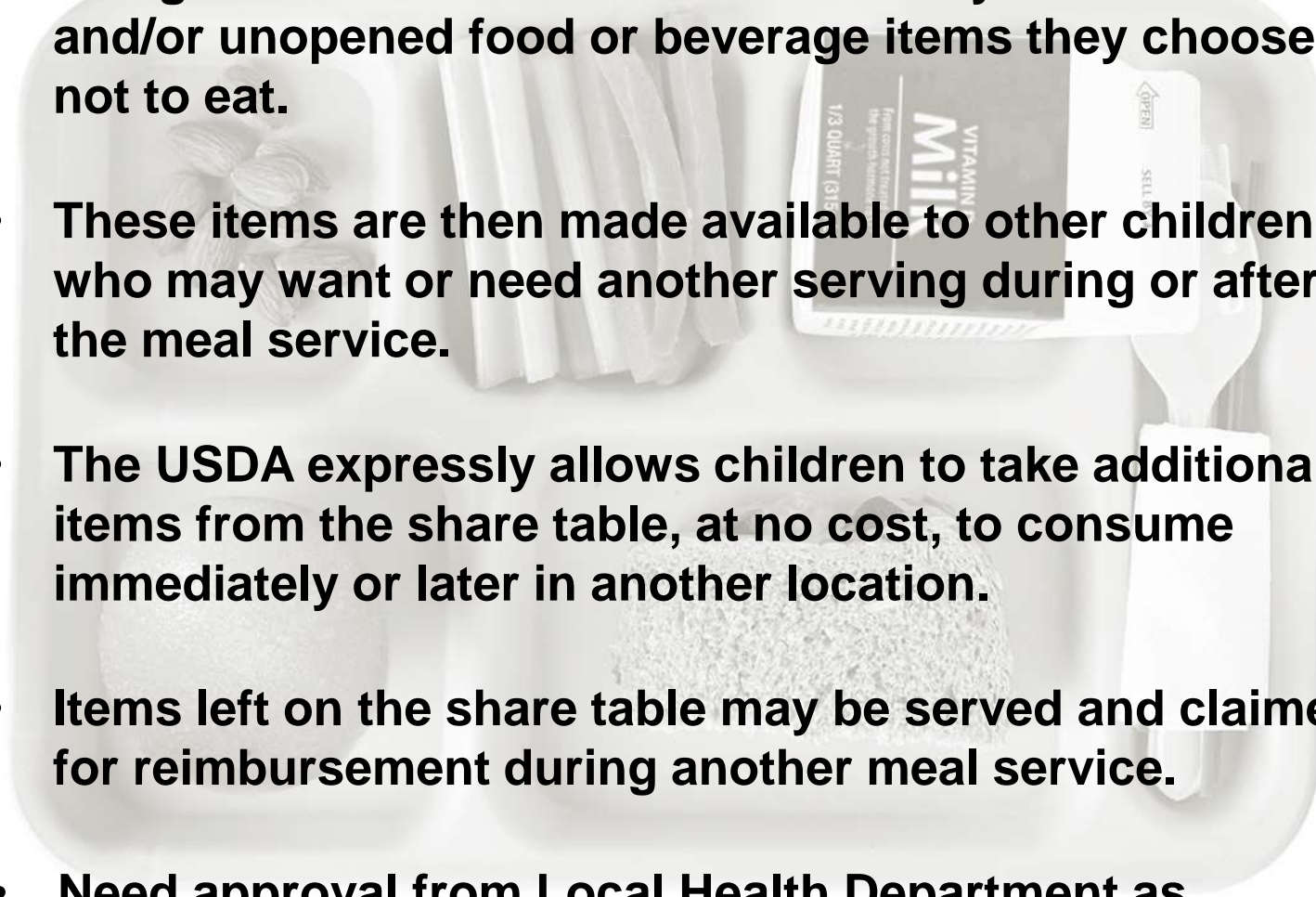
Teachers and Administrators:

Do a class project - Student Food Waste Audit and Challenge	Learn about food - school gardens, FoodRescue.Net tracking tool
Visit local food producers	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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