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Waste-Free Lunches

What's In *Your* Lunch Box?

Welcome to the world of waste-free lunches! The purpose of the waste-free lunch is to reduce the waste generated each day in your school's cafeteria. This not only conserves energy, natural resources, and landfill space, thereby protecting our environment, but it also cuts down on the amount of waste your school generates, which can help keep your school clean, inside and out, and reduce your solid waste costs.

Ideally, when packing a waste-free lunch, the top priority is to use reusable materials or materials that are consumed completely, so you are not producing any waste at all. However, when waste must be generated, it is best to use products that can be recycled or composted, so they do not end up in a landfill.

Even if your school does not have a compost bin or if some of your recyclable materials are not accepted for recycling in your community, using these types of materials is still a good first step, as it raises awareness of what can be composted and recycled. If this is the case in your school or community, you may wish to go a step further and build a compost bin for your school or work with your community to increase the number and types of items accepted for recycling.

So, what's in your waste-free lunch box and what do you do with it?

Your lunch box contains the following:

- 2 waste-free lunch posters for your school's cafeteria.
- Ideas to make packing waste-free lunches fun and exciting, along with ways to incorporate the concepts into your school's curriculum.
- A fact sheet on how to organize a waste-free lunch day (*Organize a Waste-Free Lunch Day (or Week!)*).
- Sample waste-free lunch menus (*Pack Waste-Free and Healthy*).
- Worksheet to compare waste from lunches before and after learning about how to prepare a waste-free lunch (*Did You Pack a Waste-Free Lunch?*).
- Sample newsletter article and letter to parents with tips on how to prepare waste-free lunches for children.
- A CD containing all of the above electronically (except the poster) so that you can use and modify the materials to best fit your needs.