

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



OnCampus ecoAmbassadors are college students who implement projects from EPA's partnership programs to help carry out the Agency's mission to protect human health and the environment. The program is open to ANY college student, regardless of program, age, or background. All interested students are encouraged to participate.

Did You Know?

- Food waste is the second largest waste stream in the United States, after paper and paperboard waste.
- When excess food, leftover food, and food scraps are disposed of in a landfill, they decompose and become a significant source of methane, a potent greenhouse gas.
- The United States generates more than 34 million tons of food waste each year, and less than 3% is recovered and recycled.
- Food wastes dumped in standard trash cans and dumpsters can attract rodents and insects, as well as generate bad odors.

Learn More

WasteWise helps organizations save money, improve efficiency, and reduce their climate footprint through waste reduction. Any organization, including large and small businesses, colleges and universities, nonprofit organizations, and federal, state, local, and tribal governments, can become a WasteWise partner.

For more information, please visit:
www.epa.gov/wastewise



Food Recovery Donation Project

Most food "waste" is not waste at all, but actually safe, wholesome food that could potentially feed millions of Americans. The donation of surplus, wholesome food and the donation of food scraps for animal feed is a great way to reduce food waste while helping those in need. Participants in the Food Recovery Donation Project will organize a food donation project in their community. Potential projects include starting a food drive to donate unused food to a food bank or initiating a partnership with a local farm to donate leftovers.

Goals of the Food Recovery Donation Project

- Reduce the volume of food waste by donating uneaten, surplus food and donating food scraps for animal feed
- Empower students to be environmental leaders on campus
- Educate and encourage others to reduce food waste

If You're Interested In:

- Developing relationships with local charities and farms
- Learning how to conduct a food waste assessment
- Initiating an environmental project on your campus
- Working with your campus' dining services and facilities staff to improve waste management
- Gaining valuable project management, event planning, and basic data analysis skills

... then the Food Recovery Donation Project is for you!

See page 2 for a step-by-step checklist for
 the Food Recovery Donation Project.



Students Taking Action

Food scraps from the dining facilities at Rutgers University are diverted from the trash and donated to a local farm for use as animal feed for hogs and cattle. In 2007, Rutgers' partnership with a local farm saved Dining Services more than \$100,000 in hauling costs. While Rutgers incurs added maintenance costs by collecting and storing food waste in a refrigerated area, their system decreases the labor and storage space needed for waste management.

The Food Recovery Donation Project is ideal for students pursuing degrees in communications, education, environmental economics and policy, environmental science, environmental studies, and social welfare.

Checklist for the Food Recovery Donation Project

Follow the steps below to conduct a Food Recovery Donation Project on your campus.

☐ 1. Find out what's being done on your campus.

Meet with campus administrators, facilities staff, sustainability directors, service organizations, and environmental clubs on campus to learn more about your campus' current donation programs, waste management practices, and what is being done to educate students and faculty about food waste disposal.

☐ 2. Form a team.

Gather support for your efforts by developing relationships with facilities staff, dining services, service organizations, environmental clubs, and clients who will receive your donated food and food scraps.

☐ 3. Organize your donation and reuse activity.

Choose donation activities that suit your interests and your campus' needs. Refer to the additional resources (see right) while planning your activity and contact WasteWise for additional feedback and support.

- *Charitable* - Research food banks in your area and contact them about organizing a food drive for your campus. Check with service-based student organizations about existing partnerships with food banks in your area. Choose a date and target audience for your food drive, and publicize the drive so that people know when and where to donate their unused food items. Coordinate a pick-up/drop-off with the receiving client.
- *Agricultural* - Look up local farms that would be willing to accept donated food scraps. If your campus offers agricultural majors, contact professors in those departments to discuss existing relationships with farms. Contact your campus dining and facilities staff to discuss options for donation. If necessary, meet with administrators or student government representatives to discuss funding options for the additional separation, storage, and transportation costs. If there is a significant need for funding, consider applying for a grant.

☐ 4. Publicize and document your success.

Utilize multiple media outlets to get the word out about your activity. Promote your efforts in your school newspaper and have your project sponsored by relevant student organizations and campus officials to reach a larger audience. Take photos while completing your activity to post to the OnCampus Facebook page. Track your results through Re-TRAC by registering as a WasteWise partner and celebrate your success. Record lessons that you learn so that you can make your next activity even better.

☐ 5. Fill out your completion form.

Record the information that you are required to report to EPA on the event completion form, including your name, date of the event, name of your college, a description of the event or events, the number of interactions (include any interesting comments), and additional comments.

Resources

Helpful Resources

Donating surplus food to the needy:
www.epa.gov/waste/partnerships/wastewise/pubs/need2.pdf

Managing food scraps as animal feed:
www.epa.gov/waste/partnerships/wastewise/pubs/farm.pdf

How to use Re-TRAC to track your progress:
www.epa.gov/osw/partnerships/wastewise/retrac.htm

Food Waste Website

For more information on economically, socially, and environmentally beneficial food waste management, visit:
www.epa.gov/foodrecovery

Tips for Successful Events

1. Find a suitable space.
2. Put up posters to advertise the event.
3. Create a Facebook event.
4. Ask friends to spread the word.
5. Plan to have snacks available – find out if you can get donations.
6. Arrange for music at the event.
7. Arrive early to set up the space, including snacks and music.
8. Use sign-up sheets to record attendance.
9. Create a written summary of the event.

EPA Contact Info

WasteWise

(800) EPA-WISE

oswwastewise@epa.gov

Allow a few days for a return call or contact the OnCampus team.

EPA OnCampus Team

EPAOnCampus@epa.gov

EPA OnCampus Websites

Visit the EPA website at

www.epa.gov/ecoambassadors/oncampus



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