Food Waste Audit

• Veteren’s Hill Elementary did a food waste audit.
• This is where students divide all the food that students throw away into categories and measure them.
• The students also take a survey of their peers to find the reasons for the waste.
Results

• At Veteran’s Hill we found some interesting results.

• Children are required to take a minimum of 4 oz of fruits and/or vegetables but were throwing away nearly 4 oz of fruits and/or vegetables.

• One elementary school in one day was creating 90 lbs of compostable waste. This exploded to roughly 2000 lbs a week of compostable waste created by just the 5 elementary schools.
Amount of Waste Per Child per Order in Ounces

- **compost**: 2.9 ounces
- **pizza**: 0.9 ounces
- **liquid**: 3.1 ounces
- **baked**: 5.2 ounces
- **fish**: 2.8 ounces
- **sandwich**: 1.2 ounces
We Also Had Telling Results From the Interviews
Where to Go From Here

• As you can see we have a lot of “full” and “don’t like”
• The “don’t like” is especially interesting because the kids choose everything they eat.
• The “full” is an issue too.

A look at some trays are very telling.
So How Do We Attack This? Let’s Think.
Action Plan

**ACTION PLAN FOR FOOD WASTE CHALLENGE**

- Create education piece for teachers on snap shot of “what makes a plate”.
  - Get buy-in from principals. Ask that teachers take a moment to educate classes on what is required for them to take at lunch and why.
    - Use as an opportunity to educate on not taking more than you can eat beyond requirements.
    - Use as an opportunity to educate on slow, woe and go.
    - Pilot with one school that already has buy-in before full implementation.

- Contact compost retrieval.
  - Create compost program at 1 school as pilot program.
    - Check with Region representative about programs.
    - Check with EPA about grants.
    - Contact local community garden about compost needs.
      - Create program with community garden and school district to add magnet gardening program.

- Contact farmers or petting zoo on adopting an animal with use of thrown out fruits.
  - Use donation of food as an unofficial trade for livestock or discounted events.
  - Create separate trash bin dedicated to discarded fruit. Create signage for adopting an animal with pictures around bin.
    - No meat is allowed to be mixed with fruit. Ask for some help from school to supervise the area so that the right food is discarded in bin. Custodial is a good place to start.
  - Contact Region representative to see if there any programs in place.
    - If there are no programs in place discuss with region representative about plan. The rules can be interpreted differently by different people. Must get sign off by Region representative.

- Educate students on not taking more than you can eat.
  - Refer back to education piece for classrooms.
  - Create simple verbiage for servers to use as education throughout service.
    - “You only have to take that orange, but you can have as much fruit and vegetable as you like as long as you will eat it.”
    - “Now don’t take that if you’re just going to throw it away.”
    - “It’s so great that you’re taking so much fruits and vegetables but make sure you not taking more than you can eat.”
    - “Get food to feed you, not feed the trashcan.”

- Talk with SHAC about changing recess times to before lunch.
  - Have studies showing the effects of recess before lunch vs. after.
    - Found through EPA.
  - Show results of food waste audit.