

Team Name & School: The Special Ones/ Elite Scholars Academy

Teacher Name: Mrs.Mather

Green Heart Action Plan

Problem Definition/ Problem Statement

We observed that food waste in our school usually sprouts from short lunch periods, unappealing food quality, and vast portion sizes, leading to over 50% of fruits and vegetables often being discarded. This is a critical issue because food in landfills releases methane (a potent greenhouse gas) that harms the environment around us and the planet.

Root Cause of the Problem

The root causes of food waste of fruits and vegetables stems from the fact that the food looks unpleasant, there are very diverse portion sizes, or because people prefer to socialize at lunch rather than to actually eat the food provided. Almost 8 percent of the world's food waste comes from public schools all around the world as annually a student will waste 39 pounds of food and 29 cartons of milk.

List at Least Three Credible Resources that Support Your Problem Statement

<https://www.psu.edu/news/research/story/us-school-cafeterias-waste-more-food-those-other-developed-countries>

<https://www.usda.gov/foodlossandwaste/schools>

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-food-waste-day#:~:text=In%20addition%2C%20the%20disposal%20of,increasing%20the%20cost%20of%20food>

<https://extension.sdstate.edu/food-waste-schools-and-strategies-reduce-it>

<https://moveforhunger.org/the-environmental-impact-of-food-waste>

<https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/educating-youth-about-wasted-food>

Proposed Solution

We propose getting students to compost their food to help the soil around the school that is either not alive or not growing. Composting will decrease waste going to landfills and contributing to harmful methane gases and will be used to add life and different bacteria and fungi that helps break down materials to give the soil on our school property nutrients.



How We Will Measure Our Success

We will weigh the amount of compost that is made each month and see if we reach a specific calculated goal showing that our plan is working. This will show that people are actually composting their food.

Who are Decision Makers We Need to Reach

School Principals: They influence daily operations and breakfast program implementation.

Superintendent and School Board: They hold final authority on policy, budget, and contract procurement.

Garden Club: The Garden Club will determine whether we can use the compost

Our 3-5 Step Plan for Change

1. Meet with our principal for approval of bins to collect fruit and vegetables in the cafeteria and permission for students to help encourage dropping compostable foods in the bin. Permission for using compost on the school's garden and in areas where the soil is not growing grass.
2. Attend a beta club meeting and request members to help and encourage students to separate their compostable food waste for community service hours.
3. Make posters/signs and other advertisements to try and spread the word about compost and its benefits.
4. Compost extra food waste and use it for gardening
5. If we have success in our plan we would like to broaden our plan for change throughout more schools in the county and beyond.

Impact & Equity

Composting uneaten or partially eaten fruits and vegetables at our school will help lower climate change by decreasing methane (a greenhouse gas that traps heat causing the Earth to become warmer than average). This greenhouse gas is the second most significant greenhouse gas and reducing it would help decrease climate change and pollution, greatly benefiting the Earth. This would also help those people with respiratory health issues. Composting would also help give the soil nutrients which traps carbon dioxide and prevents it from being released into the atmosphere, which also decreases climate change. The simple change of composting helps all of the Elite students to learn another way of life that they can then share with their families and others in our community which will affect everyone in the community and help them to live a healthy well thought out life.

What Help We Need to Be Successful

We are asking for money to purchase compost bins and tools needed for spreading compost. We would also like money for printing signs to put on the special trash cans for collecting fruits and vegetables letting students know what can and can not go in them. Additionally, we would like help from experts on how to compost effectively. Ultimately, we are hoping we can receive assistance from your team to help us carry out a plan for helping better the environment around our school.

