

Project Guide

Food Waste Journal Activity



This activity will explore the environmental impacts of food waste and how much food you waste each day. As you already learned, food waste leads to wasted water, energy, land, money, labor, and love. Every 3 bites of food are wasted in the United States. The food that is thrown away is equal to more than \$130 billion dollars wasted each year!

Part 1: Food Waste Journal Activity

In order to understand how much food we waste at home, please keep track of food you throw out at each meal and snack for 3 days. Only keep track of your meals and snacks, not those of other members of your family. Make sure you are only counting the edible parts of the food, not peels, seeds, cores, and other things that can't be eaten.

Example: A banana peel is not something that is eaten, so do not count that as food thrown away. Only count the actual banana that is left uneaten.

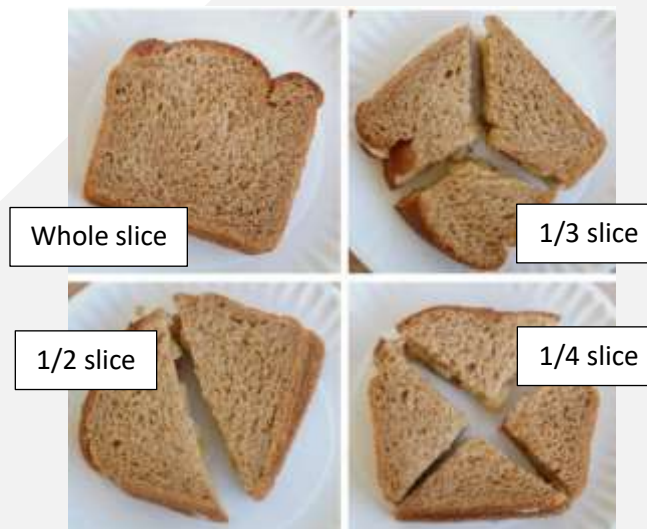
Estimate how much is thrown away.

Example 1:



Whole apple $\frac{1}{2}$ apple $\frac{1}{3}$ apple $\frac{1}{4}$ apple

Example 2:



Day _____

What did you throw away?

Meal?	What?	How much?	Why?
Example: Breakfast	Example: Cereal	Example: ½ a bowl	Example: Didn't like it

If you didn't throw away any food today, tell us why:

- Ate everything
- Will save for later
- Gave to another family member

Other _____

Part 2: Water Waste Estimator

Here is a table showing how much water it takes to produce one serving of a variety of common foods.

Food	Gallons of water per serving
Beef	617
Chocolate	258
Pork	240
Chicken	173
Cheese	48
Rice	37
Pasta	28
Bread	16
Pizza	41
Apple	25
Banana	24
Potatoes	11
Milk	67
Egg	52
Tomato	9

Working with your food waste diary, estimate how much water was wasted based on the food you threw away for one day of your diary. Pick one day out of the three days you kept a diary.

For each food that was thrown away, calculate how much water was wasted using the table above.

Example

If you threw out half a banana and a quarter of a bowl of pasta, you would make this calculation:

Banana = $0.5 \times 24 = 12$ gallons of water

Pasta = $0.25 \times 28 = 7$ gallons of water

19 gallons of water wasted that day

If you do not see a food on the list, just use the water number for the food closest to it based on food type (vegetable, fruit, meat, etc.)

Part 3: **Display your data**

Now that you have all your data, create a fun easy to understand poster that:

- 1) Explains the problem of food waste
- 2) Shows how much food waste you found, TIP: use pictures to explain how much food was wasted
- 3) Show what the environmental impacts of your food waste was.

Send in your poster by email to EPAAe@njaes.rutgers.edu