



## Waste Free Lunch Challenge

We challenge all schools having their lunch in the Botanic Garden to try and leave no waste behind. For example, bananas have their own packaging that can be composted back at school, and if you don't have a compost heap why not start one and reuse all that lovely goodness for your school's growing area?

The challenge is for teachers and pupils to bring a Waste Free packed lunch and for anything left to be reused, or recycled, back at school or at home. This helps us to keep the Garden looking beautiful and helps to reduce OUR waste output too!

Teachers, parents and students - here are some tips for your group to help you make your lunch a **Waste Free Lunch!**

### ***How can it be done?***

#### 1 Packaging – Re-use it

- You can bring your lunch in a packed lunch box that can be washed and reused. It stays fresher this way too.
- Bring your drink in a re usable flask or plastic bottle
- If you bring a carrier bag, don't bin it - use it again.
- If you need to use a spoon (for a yoghurt perhaps), use one that can be washed and used again.
- Instead of buying separate individual servings of snacks (eg. raisins), buy one large bag and then put a serving each day in a smaller re-useable container - it's much cheaper to do this so you'll save money too.

#### 2 Recycling – Waste not – Want not

- Instead of a lunch box use a recycled brown paper bag and then put it in the compost, or use it again.
- Although drinks cans and small glass bottle can be recycled we ask that you bring a re-useable drinks container instead.
- Wrap sandwiches in tin foil and recycle it in your home recycling bin.

#### 3 Quantity – no need to be a squirrel!

- Make sure you only bring as much food as you need so you don't waste any. If you do have any left over fruit or veg you can compost it back at school or at home.



#### 4 Composting – your waste is a meal for a plant!

- Compost all of your fruit and vegetable waste.
- Shredded paper makes excellent compost. If you don't have a paper bag wrap your sandwiches in grease-proof paper and shred it when you are finished.
- *The only things that you shouldn't put in the compost are cooked food and meat.*

#### 5 Try to avoid the bad stuff!

- Plastic non-reusable containers and bags, such as sandwich bags. These cannot always be recycled.
- The dreaded crisp packet! It's impossible to turn it into compost!
- Pre-packaged food.

#### **How will you know if you've been successful?**

After all that, if you have anything left that you can't take back with you we will weigh the remaining waste from your collective lunch that cannot be recycled, composted or used again. The weight will be divided, by the number of people having lunch in your group, and this will give us the amount of waste per person generated by your group.

#### **Reduce, reuse, recycle - why bother?**

Big landfill sites are filling up with our rubbish more quickly than ever before. We need to try and reduce the amount of waste we create by buying less, reuse what we buy as much as possible and recycle when we can't do the other two! Looking at your packed lunch is a good way to see how just much waste is created by one person for one meal, for one day. You can make a start by ensuring your lunch is as waste free as possible, but what else do you think you could do at home or at school?

### ***“Once is great but twice is nice”***

Now you've got the hang of it, have a Waste Free Lunch Day once a week at school. The class or school team that wins could get extra merit points! Maybe you could do girls v boys, just to see who is the most wasteful – perhaps the winners could be champions for the week!

# Waste - Some Interesting Facts

The UK produces over 400 million tonnes of waste annually; a quarter comes from households and businesses, the rest comes from construction and demolition, sewage sludge, farm waste and spoils from mines and dredging of rivers. The following figures were reported a few years ago and are said to be improving - but by how much?

## Food

As a result of the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy, British farmers once had to throw away 30,000 tons of vegetables in ten months so that farmers from other EU countries could sell their vegetables instead

We waste 500,000 tons of food per year worth £400 million and disposal costs another £50 million - only a fraction is handed to Charitable Organisations which could use it

Nearly 50% of household waste could be saved from landfill by making compost from kitchen and garden waste

## Paper

Each year, the average British family throws away six trees worth of paper  
About one fifth of the contents of household dustbins is paper and card (of which half is newspapers and magazines) - equivalent to over 4kg of waste paper per household each week

Recycling one tonne of paper saves upto 70% energy used in manufacturing from virgin materials and requires 40% less water to produce

Each tonne of paper recycled saves fifteen average trees and helps surrounding habitat and wildlife

Reclaimed waste papers represent around 63% of the fibre used to produce paper and board in the UK

## Cans

The UK uses about 12 billion cans each year; placed end to end, they would stretch to the moon and back!

£36 million worth of aluminum is sent to landfill sites each year

Recycling aluminium cans saves up to 95% of the energy needed to make just one from aluminium ore

## Glass

Recycling one glass bottle saves enough energy to light a 15-watt energy efficient bulb (equivalent to 100-watt normal bulb) for 24 hours!

Five out of six used glass bottles are thrown straight into the dustbin!

Up to 90% of new glass can be made from reclaimed scrap glass - saving energy and raw materials

The Campaign to Protect Rural England estimates that around 4000 jobs could be created by bringing back the bottle deposit scheme, whereby people can earn money from every bottle they return to a shop

<http://www.cpre.org.uk/>

### Foil

About 20,000 tonnes of aluminium foil packaging (worth £8 million) is wasted each year; only 3,000 tonnes are recycled (worth £1.2 million)

### Packaging

It costs about £130 million each year to dispose of the UK's waste packaging

Packaging is about 25% of household waste

### Oil

1 litre of oil can pollute 1 million litres of fresh drinking water

Waste oil from nearly 3 million car oil changes is not collected; if collected safely this could meet the annual energy needs of 1.5 million people!

### General

Each person in England and Wales produces an average of 300 kg of household waste each year

On average, each person throws away seven times their body weight in rubbish every year

If UK domestic waste recycling was increased to 40%, up to 10,000 new jobs would be created

9% of the UK's waste comes from households - 30 million tonnes per year:  
81% is landfilled; 11% recycled/composted; 8% incinerated

Transporting a year's worth of UK waste would require five times the world's fleet of supertankers or a nose-to-tail queue of juggernauts stretching six times around the globe!