

# Plate Waste Summary – May 2019

## Toyon Middle School, Calaveras County

### OVERVIEW

In partnership with Toyon Middle School, the Central Sierra CalFresh Healthy Living team conducted a plate waste assessment of all uneaten food from school-provided lunches on Monday, May 13, 2019. 304 6th-8th grade students received school lunches on this day. This assessment will be repeated during the 2019-2020 school year after implementing Smarter Lunchrooms Movement changes to strengthen the school food environment. As part of the Calaveras Unified School District Wellness Policy, plate waste studies will be conducted over the course of the 2019-2020 school year to inform programming and encourage healthy eating throughout the district.

### PROCESS

Before collecting food waste, one serving of each item on the menu for the day was weighed and used to estimate the total amount of each item served that day. Students had the choice of six different entrée items. There was no salad bar available, and all items served were pre-packaged. Twenty-five interested students from two Leadership classes were involved in planning and conducting the assessment.

On the day of the assessment, all students were asked to bring their lunch trays to Leadership class students at multiple collection points around the school, as many students eat outside the cafeteria. Any uneaten food was collected in buckets designated for each item, and trash cans were blocked so that students could not discard food before it was weighed. The resulting food waste was weighed at the end of both daily lunch periods, and the weight of buckets and food packaging was subtracted from the totals. Food waste from lunches brought from home was not included in this assessment.



### KEY FINDINGS:

- Compared to similar Plate Waste Assessments, findings suggest that students may waste less food when more options are available.
- White milk waste was 62% compared to chocolate milk at 14%. White milk was the most wasted item.
- Sliced oranges were the number one fresh fruit taken, and had more waste at 62% than any other fruit or vegetable.

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## RESULTS

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**304 students** served

**14 items** offered

**2.41 lbs.** diverted from trash to a share table

### Item Waste Totals:

- Plain Milk – 14.83 lbs. (62%)
- Chocolate Milk – 12.08 lbs. (14%)
- Nut Butter – 0.45 lbs. (86%)
- Sliced Oranges – 8.84 lbs. (62%)
- Sliced Peaches – 6.40 lbs. (30%)
- Cucumbers – 5.08 lbs. (36%)
- Baby Carrots – 2.47 lbs. (47%)
- Chips – 0 lbs. (0%)
- Hamburgers – 4.24 lbs. (84%)
- Cheeseburgers – 3.70 lbs. (17%)
- Cheeseburger Sliders – 1.58 lbs. (20%)
- Pastrami & Cheese Deli – 2.44 lbs. (14%)
- Rib-B-Q Sandwich – 2.48 lbs. (9%)
- Stuffed Pizza – 2.73 lbs. (12%)

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### School Total:

- 66.89 lbs. of food waste
  - 26.91 lbs. of milk waste
  - 39.98 lbs. of solid food waste
- Average 0.22 lbs. of waste per lunch

