

Plate Waste Summary- May 2019

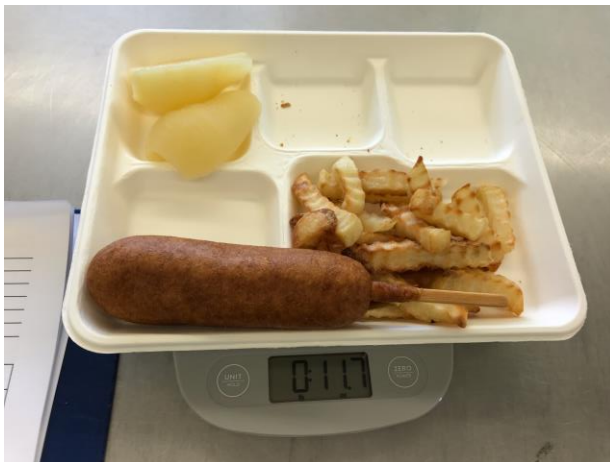
Plymouth Elementary School, Amador County

OVERVIEW

In partnership with Plymouth Elementary School and Dairy Council of California, the Central Sierra CalFresh Healthy Living team conducted a plate waste assessment of all uneaten food from school-provided lunches on four days in May, 2019. On average, 108 K-6 students received school lunches daily during this time. This assessment will be repeated at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year after a schedule change moves student recess before lunch as part of the Amador County Unified School District Wellness Policy. Comparing the two assessments will provide a snapshot of food waste before and after the schedule change and indicate whether there are any major differences, as have been found in other schools, although this assessment cannot account for many other factors that might influence food waste.

PROCESS

Before collecting food waste, one serving of each item on the lunch tray for the day was weighed and used to estimate the total amount of each item served that day. Students were asked to bring their lunch trays to program staff at a single collection point, and any uneaten food was collected in buckets designated for each item. Trash cans were blocked so that students could not accidentally 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 any food packaging (including banana peels) was subtracted from the totals. A salad bar was available to students, but the amount of salad students served themselves was not able to be measured in this assessment; only the total weight of salad waste was assessed, not the percentage of salad served. Food waste from lunches brought from home was not included in this assessment.



KEY FINDINGS:

- 92.16 lbs. of milk was wasted over all four days.
- The average for salad bar waste was low at 2.62 lbs.
- Canned, packaged, and whole fruits appeared to be wasted more than sliced fruits, with an average of 14.27 lbs. of non-sliced fruit wasted over three days.

RESULTS

Monday, May 20: 110 students served

- 4.72 lbs. plain milk waste (52%)
 - 19.00 lbs. chocolate milk waste (38%)
 - 6.53 lbs. corn dog waste (20%)
 - 14.63 lbs. canned pear waste (55%)
 - 8.34 lbs. French fry waste (29%)
 - 3.92 lbs. salad waste
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Tuesday, May 21: 108 students served

- 6.24 lbs. plain milk waste (61%)
 - 19.78 lbs. chocolate milk waste (41%)
 - 17.24 lbs. sloppy joe waste (59%)
 - 14.74 lbs. fruit waste (bananas + apples)
 - 3.66 lbs. potato waste (30%)
 - 2.63 lbs. salad waste
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Wednesday, May 22: 106 students served

- 2.68 lbs. plain milk waste (42%)
 - 15.73 lbs. chocolate milk waste (31%)
 - 7.08 lbs. taco waste, including salsa and sour cream (18%)
 - Sliced oranges – no significant waste found
 - 1.31 lbs. salad waste
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Thursday, May 23: 108 students served

- 5.92 lbs. plain milk waste (73%)
 - 18.06 lbs. chocolate milk waste (36%)
 - 8.79 lbs. fish stick waste (35%)
 - 10.94 lbs. green bean waste (41%)
 - 13.45 lbs. frozen strawberry waste (44%)
 - 2.62 lbs. salad waste
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Totals for all four days:

- 208.04 lbs. of food waste
 - 92.16 lbs. of milk waste
 - 115.88 lbs. of solid food waste
- Average of 52.01 lbs. of waste each day, or 0.48 lbs. of waste per lunch

