

## Education



# Litterless Lunches



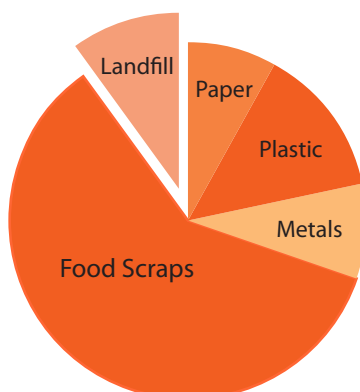
*As nature intended: nude food.*

## Waste Audits

Sustainability Trust run Waste Audits to help schools, businesses better manage their waste outputs.

This chart shows what we found when we analysed the contents of one local school's rubbish bins: more than three quarters could have been recycled or composted.

Contact us if you'd like to book Waste Audit for your home, school or business.



Children need nutritious and interesting lunches, but lunches are also a key contributor to school waste. With some thought and planning, you and your school could be saving serious money - and helping the environment too.

## What's the problem with lunch?

Food and food packaging make up to two thirds of all the rubbish most schools send to landfill. This means that parents are paying for uneaten groceries, and schools are paying to send those same groceries (and their packaging) to the landfill. Waimataitai School in Timaru has acted to minimise unnecessary waste by replacing all their rubbish bins with worm farms!

You can see a photo below of food salvaged from a Wellington school rubbish bin, and on the left is the same school's waste profile - before becoming a Litterless Lunch School. How much do you think you and your child's school are spending on creating and disposing of unnecessary waste?

## Reduce, reuse, recycle

A litterless lunch takes only a little planning, and creating a few easy habits. The idea centres around reducing food waste and packaging, while ensuring that anything not eaten is reused or recycled. It's easier than it sounds.

*Food and recycling from a single day, recovered from a school rubbish bin*





Biodegradable packaging, and kind to people too

### Online Resources

Lots of info & resources:

[www.wastefreelunches.org](http://www.wastefreelunches.org)

Sustainable lunch recipes

<http://munchnz.co.nz/lunchboxes/>

DIY re-useable sandwich-wraps:

<http://www.mommyotamus.com/diy-reusable-food-wrap/>

Common Unity Project:

[www.commonunityproject.org.nz/](http://www.commonunityproject.org.nz/)

### Five easy ideas for food waste reduction

1. Give your children enough for lunch - but not too much.
2. Cook a little extra at dinner for tomorrow's lunches. Burritos, pizza, fritters, and sushi make great leftovers.
3. Encourage your children to bring scraps home, so you can find out what's not being eaten, and why.
4. Compost uneaten food to save money, and reduce waste to landfill.
5. Bake and freeze a batch of mini-muffins or biscuits at the weekend. A frozen muffin will thaw in a lunch box and be fresh by midday.

### Five easy ideas for packaging reduction

1. If you're going to buy packaged foods, buy in bulk. Raisins, yoghurt, cheese, and lots more can be found in bulk bins or family-size packs.
2. Use a drink bottle - water is waste-free, healthy and costs nothing.
3. Ditch the cling-film and foil. Neither are recyclable. Instead wrap food in paper or cloth (Nifty sandwich wraps are available online).
4. Choose a lunch box that is well made, and has lots of small compartments for neatly fitting in snacks and sandwiches.
5. Look for alternatives to packaged items. Homemade yoghurt, muesli bars and biscuits are yummiier and just as cheap.



Brooklyn Kindy students with their litterless lunches

**TIP**  
Use snaplock container or a tackle box for lunches. They store food better, and last longer.

### Lots of easy ideas for involving your kids

There are lots of fun ways to involve your children in making litterless lunches. Even young children love to help in the garden, kitchen and supermarket. Growing herbs, fruit and veges, helping with meals and baking, finding the right items in the supermarket, and feeding the worm farm - are all child-friendly activities where lessons can be practical and fun. Check out the Common Unity Project at Epuni School.

[www.sustaintrust.org.nz](http://www.sustaintrust.org.nz)

Phone: 0508 78 78 24 Fax: 04 385 0501 Email: [advice@sustaintrust.org.nz](mailto:advice@sustaintrust.org.nz)

2 Forrester Lane, Te Aro, Wellington 6011



Many schools now run gardening clubs for kids.