

REDUCING THE WASTE FOOTPRINT IN YOUR SCHOOL TUCKSHOP

SIMPLE STEPS WITH BIG IMPACTS

Interested in doing more to manage waste in your school tuckshop?

Did you know that about one-third of all food produced for human consumption around the world goes to waste*? The impact of food waste is immense, so it's vital to focus on managing our food waste using sustainable practices.

As soon as you start throwing away fewer resources, particularly food, you're making strides to reduce your carbon footprint. Reducing food waste can also save you money and reduce the amount of garbage your tuckshop produces.

Your school community can benefit greatly from sustainable practices you implement, helping build lifelong food waste avoidance and reduction behaviours for students and their families.

There are many ways that tuckshops produce waste, but the good news is that *you* can do a lot to reduce yours. Here's some simple ideas to get you started.

1 Identify your **coalition of the willing**: all it takes is a few like-minded people with a shared passion to drive sustainable changes from the tuckshop across the whole school.

2 **Placement of bins** around the school is important for effective composting and recycling.

3 Find out if your school has **student leaders** who can help with sustainability practices in the tuckshop: from taking the compost bin to the heap, to monitoring food waste, these students can be your allies.

4 Where possible, **prioritise cooking from scratch**. Not only is it healthier, but you'll use less packaging than buying in pre-prepared, packaged meals/items.

5 Recruit staff members to help **spread the message** about reducing waste around the school. Think about ALL food waste, including lunchbox food scraps and leftovers from tuckshop meals.

6 Need some **funds to get started**? Local and State Government offer grants periodically throughout the year. They are advertised widely when they open, or you can check in with the Queensland Government [website](#).

*Source: <https://wwf.org.au/>

FOOD WASTE

REDUCING FOOD WASTE CAN BE A COMPLEX CHALLENGE. BUT YOU CAN START TO FIGHT FOOD WASTE IN THE TUCKSHOP BY MAKING SIMPLE BUT POSITIVE CHANGES.

COMPOSTING

Making positive changes to the way you manage organic tuckshop waste can be simple.

As a first step, find out whether your school already has a composting program in place and where the bins are located. If there isn't one, consider applying for a grant (with the support of your school or parent body) to get started.

Start by looking at common tuckshop scraps that can easily be composted (such as fruit and vegetable peelings), and work your way up to things like paper and packaging. You may be surprised to find just how much you can prevent from going into landfill.

SCHOOL GARDENS

A school garden offers a place to enrich teaching efforts with powerful hands-on experiences that make learning come alive. They are also a great tool for encouraging children to eat more vegetables.

If your school has a food garden, consider how it will work with the composting system, and how you can use the fresh produce in your tuckshop. If there isn't one, consider applying for a grant to create one. The Queensland Government's [Organics Waste Smart Schools Program](#) or your local hardware stores or garden centres are good places to start.

Visit the [Stephanie Alexander School Garden Foundation website](#) for more information on how to get started.

USEFUL RESOURCES FOR TUCKSHOP CONVENORS

Take a look at these free printable resources for [Reducing Waste in Schools](#) including:

- [What goes in the rubbish bin](#)
- [Recycling signs](#)

This [Preventing food waste from school lunchboxes blog](#) also provides some great tips.

Pick of the Crop

This whole-school healthy eating initiative aims to increase opportunities for Queensland primary school children to learn about and eat more vegetables and fruit.

State schools in specific regions of Queensland are invited to participate in [Pick of the Crop](#) through local Regional Coordinators.

Podcast

Listen to the [Talking Healthier Tuckshops podcast](#) episode on Sustainability in action in tuckshops for inspiration on getting started.

WHAT TO COMPOST

HERE ARE SOME COMMON TUCKSHOP SCRAPS THAT CAN, AND CAN'T BE, COMPOSTED.

YES!

VEGETABLE PEELS & SKINS



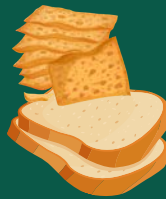
MOST FRUIT PEELS,
SEEDS & SKINS

COFFEE GROUNDS



EGGSHELLS (CRUSHED)

BREAD, BISCUITS
& CRACKERS



POPCORN

CERTIFIED HOME COMPOSTABLE
PACKAGING PRODUCTS &
CUTLERY



NO!



MEAT SCRAPS

MEAT FAT



DAIRY PRODUCTS
(E.G. CHEESE)

COOKING OIL
OR FAT



CITRUS PEELS

TEA BAGS



COOKED RICE

PACKAGING WASTE

SWITCHING TO SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING WILL HELP REDUCE YOUR TUCKSHOP'S WASTE FOOTPRINT.

PACKAGING OPTIONS

If you have the storage space, buying ingredients and packaging in bulk will save you money AND cut down on your packaging wastage.

Since the introduction of the Queensland Government's ban on the supply of single-use plastics in 2021, sustainable packaging options have improved greatly.

To keep on top of current and future bans, check out [Queensland's five-year roadmap for action on single-use plastic items](#).



CUTLERY OPTIONS

- \$ Wooden (home and industrial compostable).
- \$\$ Sugarcane plant fibre pulp (home compostable).
- \$ BioPlastic (industrial compostable). NB: subject to single-use plastic bans nationwide but still available in Queensland at this stage. Consider other sustainable cutlery options first before using BioPlastic.

\$ and \$\$ denotes cost of product.
\$ = less expensive item
\$\$ = more expensive item

PACKAGING OPTIONS

- \$ Cardboard (recyclable).
- \$\$ Biodegradable boxes & lids – sugarcane product.
- \$ Rigid plastic takeaway containers & lids – recyclable in standard recycling bin.

Takeaway coffee cups are sometimes accepted for recycling – check with local Council. Plastic lids are always recyclable, so can be thrown in the recycling bin.

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