

Food Share Table



In the United States, 40% of our food goes uneaten. Wasted food is a waste of resources, and one of the largest contributors of methane in landfills. Yet, with so much wasted food, over 40 million Americans struggle to put food on the table. In California, 1 in 5 children struggle with hunger.



In September 2017, the state passed SB 557 which now allows schools in California to donate unopened food items to local food banks and charities. The bill was sponsored by LA Unified School District, which sees about \$100,000 worth of food thrown away each day. The passing of this bill exemplifies the motivation by both the state and school districts to reduce food waste and its environmental impacts.

Oxnard School District would like to move forward with this work by encouraging schools to implement share tables in their cafeterias to redirect usable food back to our community. Unopened prepackaged food items, uncut produce and unopened milk cartons (that are kept at the appropriate time temperature) can be left on share tables for students. Items left over after the lunch period can then be donated to a local charity or food bank of your school's choice. OSD hopes that share tables will be the first step in also implementing organic waste recycling in our cafeterias.

Previously, food items that had not been served to students were allowed to be donated. The new law allows for all foods as long as it has not been opened or cut.



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SHARE TABLES are either tables, carts, bins, or baskets where students may leave any unopened or wrapped food items.

Share tables provide the opportunity for students of the same or following lunch periods to take additional food items.

Any food left over after the entire food service period, may be donated locally on a daily basis.

LOCATION

The food share table is most often located near your cafeteria's waste sorting area. Students can then separate their food share items before separating the rest of their trash. If using a basket or bin, do not place directly on the floor.



FOOD SHARE TABLE SIGNAGE AND RULES

Proper signage will help students locate the share table and drop off appropriate food items, understand its purpose and allow for a smooth flow inside the cafeteria.



For example,

- Food items brought from home are not allowed on the food share table

- Students may take more than one milk or fruit, but only one unopened entree

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EDUCATION

Another fundamental aspect towards setting up a successful share table is to educate students on issues surrounding food waste, environmental resources, and community service.

By exposing students to real world issues we allow them to have greater autonomy over projects. They develop solutions that will only help them become greater environmental stewards.

A group consisting of teachers, students, cafeteria staff, custodians, and administrators working collectively will help create a foundation to reinforce new practices .

DONATION SITE

At the school site level, staff will determine which local charity or foodbank they would like to reach out to and ask if they would like to pick up food donations. OSD will not organize the transportation of food donations. It is best if donations could be picked up daily, since some kitchens lack storage space.





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FOOD SAFETY

Room temperature items, such as graham crackers or pieces of fruit can be left on the table and donated afterwards.

Hot and cold items can be out of the Safe Temperature Zone for up to two hours. If items will be left out longer or waiting to be picked up, they must be maintained under proper food holding temperatures. For milk, cafeterias can use ice sheets, fridges, or chest freezers.

	Safe temperature zone (STZ)	Allowable time outside the STZ	Ways to control temperature
Cold food* e.g. milk	41°F or lower	Up to 2 hours below or at 60°F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up a separate area for cold items on the food share table. Use ice buckets or ice sheets.
Hot food e.g. pasta dish	135°F or higher	Up to 2 hours below 135°F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up a separate area for hot items on the food share table.
Room-temp. food e.g. apple, crackers	N/A	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No temperature concern. Ready to serve again after cleaning.

<http://www.stopwaste.org/foodsharetable>

In California Retail Food Code (CalCode) 114079, the use of share tables is permitted only if all of the following conditions are met:

No food or beverage may ever be returned to the food preparation, food service, or food storage areas for use by the food service operation or for any human consumption, except those items permitted in CalCode 114079(b).

Potentially hazardous foods or beverages (as defined in CalCode 113871) on the share table are consumed or discarded within four hours of the food or beverage entering the temperature danger zone (41 degrees Fahrenheit to 135 degrees Fahrenheit).

The share table is supervised by a member of the food service staff to ensure that no food, beverage, or condiment has been contaminated (e.g., opened, partially consumed, etc.), and the original packaging is maintained in sound condition.





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Additional Resources

A guide developed for Alameda County Schools

<http://www.stopwaste.org/foodsharetable>

County of San Diego -Share Table Information

www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/deh/fhd/food/.../schoolsharetables_fp.pdf

State of Washington Guide to a Food Share Program

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/.../washingtonschoolfoodshare5087717_a.pdf

Articles discussing schools who have implemented share tables

In Florida: <http://www.orlandosentinel.com/features/education/school-zone/os-school-lunches-share-table-donations-waste-20171108-story.html>

In Alabama: <http://www.thedailynewsonline.com/bdn01/oakfield-alabama-students-share-food-at-the-table-20171222>

Connecticut: <http://www.myrecordjournal.com/News/Wallingford/Wallingford-News/Wallingford-volunteers-try-to-expand-share-tables.html#gallery-5>

California: <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-edu-school-food-waste-law-20170928-story.html>

Civil Eats: <https://civileats.com/2017/03/27/school-lunch-share-tables-fight-food-waste-and-hunger/>