

Ontario Schools Don't Let Their Lunches Go to Waste

TORONTO, ON (Jan. 27, 2014) As part of Waste Reduction Week in Canada, elementary schoolchildren across the province committed to reducing, reusing, and recycling for lunch and made a significant contribution to Ontario's waste diversion efforts.

Sponsored by the Carton Council of Canada, the annual Waste-Free Lunch Challenge helps schools decrease the amount of garbage they generate, and educates students, teachers, and parents about smart consumption and waste reduction. In 2013, approximately 700 classrooms or schools from 56 school boards took an active role in waste minimization by utilizing reusable, refillable, and recyclable containers for lunch.

In doing so, participating schools kept nearly 16,000 kg of lunch material from entering landfill—equivalent to 35 grand pianos—over the course of a week. Schools sorted, weighed, and recorded their lunchtime waste generation before Waste Reduction Week to establish a baseline, and then again during Waste Reduction Week to measure the difference.

"These students have proven themselves to be the next generation of environmental stewards' says Jo-Anne St. Godard, Executive Director, Recycling Council of Ontario. "They have also demonstrated that making conscious and simple changes to everyday activities, like packing a waste-free lunch, will help solve future waste problems."

"Initiatives like these demonstrate the impact individuals can have when they translate ideas into action," says Elisabeth Comere, Vice President Government Affairs, the Carton Council of Canada. "Every student who took part in the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge should be proud of their remarkable actions and efforts to minimize waste by reducing, reusing and recycling."

2013 Waste-Free Lunch Challenge winning schools:

Bluewater District School Board

- Meaford Community School
- Hillcrest Central School

Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board

- Corpus Christi School

Durham District School Board

- Lord Elgin Public School

Halton Catholic District School Board

- Our Lady of Peace School
- St. Catherine of Alexandria

Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board

- Immaculate Conception
- St. Marguerite d'Youville

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

- Fessenden School

Peel District School Board

- David Leeder Middle School
- Castlemore Public School

Toronto Catholic District School Board

- St. Richard Catholic School
- St. Ambrose Catholic School
- St. Jude Catholic School
- St. Anselm Catholic School

Toronto District School Board

- Golf Road Junior Public School

Upper Grand District School Board

- Primrose Elementary School

York Region District School Board

- Ellen Fairclough Public School
- Beverley Acres Public School



Through the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge, schools across Ontario also demonstrate a commitment to environmentalism and prove that waste minimization is an achievable goal. Select winners receive an environmental grant for use in school-based environmental projects.

About the Waste-Free Lunch Challenge

Recycling Council of Ontario's (RCO) Waste-Free Lunch Challenge is an environmental education program that aims to support educators and students to reduce waste generated from school lunches. Since 2010, over 525,000 children across the province have participated in the program. For more, visit www.wastefreelunch.com.

About Recycling Council of Ontario

Recycling Council of Ontario (RCO) is a not-for-profit membership-based organization committed to minimizing society's impact on the environment by eliminating waste. RCO's mission is to inform and educate all members of society about the avoidance of waste, efficient use of resources, and the benefits and/or consequences of these activities. For more, visit www.rco.on.ca.

About the Carton Council of Canada

The Carton Council of Canada (CCC) is a proud partner supporting the 2013 Waste Free Lunch Challenge. The Council endeavours to advance sustainable recycling solutions in Canada by promoting both recycling technology and local collection programs to divert cartons from landfills. It represents the leading carton manufacturing companies in Canada, including Elopak, Evergreen Packaging, SIG Combibloc and Tetra Pak. These companies manufacture and market processing and packaging systems that are convenient, safe and environmentally sound. The Carton Council of Canada is a part of Carton Council North America. For more information, please visit www.RecycleCartons.ca.

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