



THE FOOD MATTERS ACTION KIT

Inspiring Youth Across North America to Prevent
Food Waste and Help Save our Planet

Approximately 168,000,000 tonnes of food is lost and wasted each year



The Commission for Environmental Cooperation created the **Food Matters Action Kit** to educate children and youth about the growing problem of food waste and inspire them to help prevent it.



Food Matters

Food loss and waste is one of the biggest environmental issues in North America



What is the Food Matters Action Kit?

A digital activity book featuring twenty educational activities about food waste, and ideas for dozens more!

For kids
and youth
aged
5-25



Available as a **free download** in English, French and Spanish at www.cec.org/flwy

Getting started is easy!

Just head to the website: www.cec.org/flwy



Read background
information



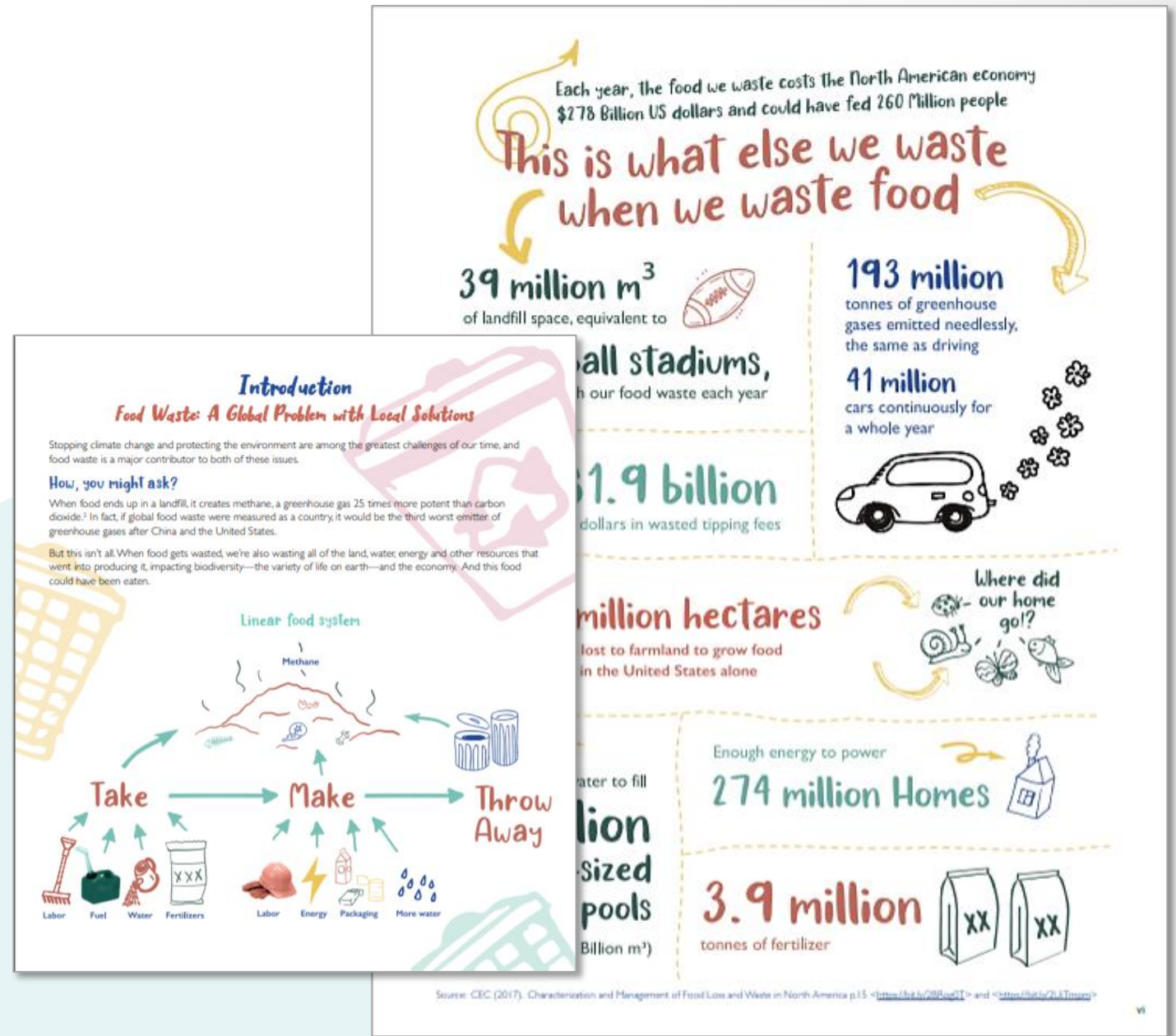
Download the
PDF



Next, start learning

The Food Matters Action Kit kicks off with a short introductory lesson about food loss and waste

The lesson uses infographics and “big picture” facts to educate youth about the environmental and socioeconomic impacts of food waste



Then, start doing

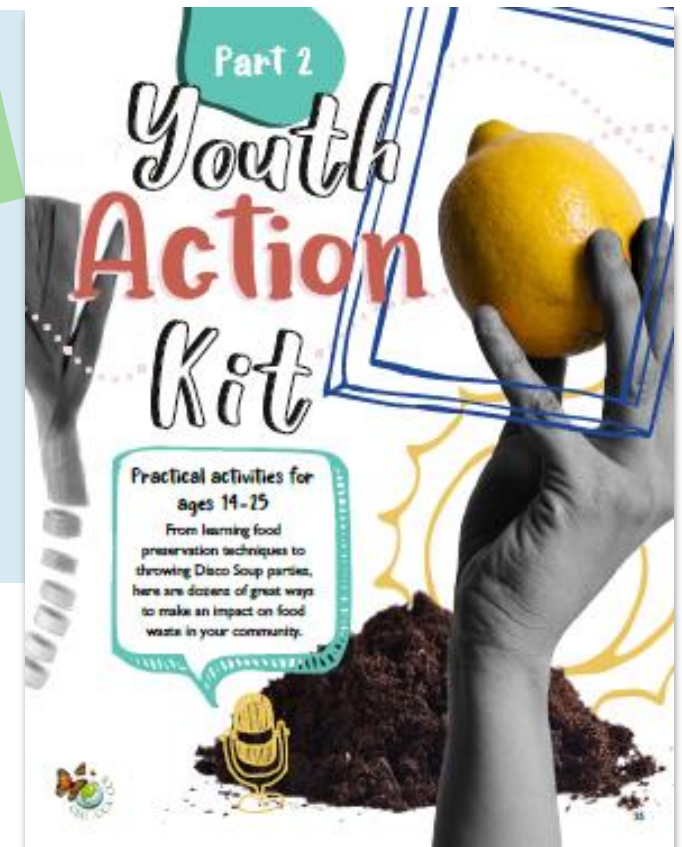
Choose which activity is right for your group!



Part I
Kids Action Kit
(ages 5-13)



Part II
Youth Action Kit
(ages 14-25)



For Teachers

School teachers can consult the online **Activity Guide** to help choose suitable activities that meet grade level curriculums

http://www3.cec.org/flwy/activity_guide/



9 Where does it all go?



Activities	Duration (30 mins to 1 day or Multi-day)	Designed For ages: (kids, youth, all ages)	Art	Language	Social studies, history & geography	Math	Science & technology	Health	Environment	Claim this many points	Counts towards any of these badges:
Kids' Action Kit Study existing bins		All ages	Share results creatively	Use language to articulate findings	Study human behavior to solve a problem		Use observation to study a problem			5	
Design your own green bins and labels		All ages	Use creativity to design a better bin				Translate findings into workable solutions		Help improve diversion	5	
Conduct before-and- after waste audits		All ages				Measure and sort waste	Study waste to understand behavior and impact of design		Test your impact	10	
Share this activity with a pen pal		All ages	Use photography or drawings to share designs	Write with pen pals, possibly in another language	Explore other places, discover different in designs		Learn how design influences behavior			5	
Share your bin designs on social media		All ages	Use photography or drawings to share designs	Use language to articulate your design thinking and impact					Promote good environmental design	5	
Youth Action Kit Map out your local waste system					Develop research, interview, and mapping skills					10	
Do the math						Research, calculate, and estimate quantities of waste managed in various facilities				5	
Create an infographic			Use art and design to express systems in a clear and impactful way						Promote understanding of local waste systems	5	
Develop system improvements and present recommendations					Use research, design, and presentation skills, influence decision- makers				Improve sustainability in your local waste system	10	
Zero waste challenge		All ages			Use self- reflection and analysis				Grow sustainable habits	10	



What are the activities like?

The activities in the Food Matters Action Kit range in complexity and are suitable for a variety of ages and abilities. Each activity has an easy-to-follow layout with the following components:



Brief lesson

Why the topic or activity is important/ background facts



Estimated Time

How long it will take to complete the activity



You'll need

What tools/items are needed to complete the activity



Making it Happen

Instructions on how to complete the activity



Want to do more?

A list of ideas for related activities



Claim points

How many points to claim for completing the activity



Kid's Activity #8

Tackle Food Waste with Worms

Nourishing the soil with vermicomposting

There are hundreds of ways to prevent food waste in your home and community. But no matter how good we are at not wasting food, there will always be food scraps that can't be eaten—at least not by us! However, worms love to eat apple cores, pea shells, pepper stems and all kinds of organic material that we don't like to eat.

Composting with worms is called vermicomposting. And what the worms poop out is called worm castings, which make fresh, nutrient-rich soil. Worms are a sign of healthy soil so pay attention whenever you dig.

WORMS!





Understanding avoidable and unavoidable food waste

The first step to vermicomposting is knowing which foods can be eaten and which can be composted. To prevent food waste, it is important to know what foods can still be eaten and what should be composted.

Edible and Inedible Food Waste

Which items can be eaten and which are for compost?

Eat!

- wrinkly tomato
- 1/2 eaten sandwich
- broccoli stalks
- leftovers
- corn with a few soft spots
- 1/2 eaten apple
- melon rind
- 1/2 eaten melon
- banana peel
- apple core
- onion skins
- corn cob

Compost

Wait! There are some tricks... broccoli stalks³⁹, watermelon rinds⁴⁰, onion skins⁴¹ and corn cobs⁴² can all be made into delicious and nutritious meals. In Activity #6, learn all about preparing commonly tossed food parts like orange peels.





Vermicomposting Making Compost With the Help of Worms

Estimated time: 2 hours

You'll Need:

- A plastic tub with a screen or air holes in the lid
- Newspaper
- Coffee grounds, apple cores or other food scraps
- Red wiggler worms (*Eisenia fetida*). You can order these worms online or ask someone with a vermicompost bin to share theirs with you. They will reproduce, but the more you start with, the more food scraps they'll eat right away.




Making it Happen:

- Shred newspaper and spray it with water to make a soft, moist environment for your worms.
- Feed your worms small pieces of inedible food waste. They like banana peels, carrot tops, avocado skins and most kinds of raw food scraps. They don't like acidic foods like oranges and lemons or strong-smelling foods like onions and chili peppers.
- Feed your worms daily, and keep newspaper moist by spraying with water.

Want to do More?

- Learn more about vermicomposting and fun projects to do with your worms.⁴³
- Are you ready to take your composting to the next level? See Activity #18 to learn how to build an outdoor composter—it can compost much more food than your vermicompost bin.

Did you know?
Worms eat half their body weight daily. A bin containing 500 grams of worms will eat 250 grams of food scraps every day.⁴⁴

Part I Sample Activity: Tackle Food Waste with Worms

Kid's Activity #8: for kids aged 5-13 (grades K-7)



Register on the website!



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Food Matters Action Kit website. The header is dark green with the CEC logo on the left and navigation links in the center: "ABOUT THIS ACTION KIT", "FOOD WASTE, THE ENVIRONMENT + CLIMATE CHANGE", "YOUNG FOOD HEROES", "ACTIVITY GUIDE", and "JOIN THE YOUTH MOVEMENT". On the right, there are "REGISTER" and "SIGN IN" buttons. A pink starburst graphic is placed over the "REGISTER" button. The main content area features a tomato character on the left and a corn character on the right. Between them, text states: "Each year, the food we waste costs the North American economy \$278 Billion US dollars and could have fed 260 million people!" followed by "This is what else we waste when we waste food: 39 million m of landfill space, equivalent to 13 football stad gets used up with our food waste each". Below this, a quote in a handwritten font says: "There are dozens of fun and impactful ways you can make a difference".



www.cec.org/flwy

Groups or individuals using the *Food Matters Action Kit* can register online at the **Join the Youth Movement** page of the Action Kit's website.



Registration is simple!

Create a
profile

Join the Youth Movement

These youth groups are all taking action on food waste. Check out their initiatives!

Join the youth movement! Register as an individual or as part of a club, organization, class, team, group of friends.

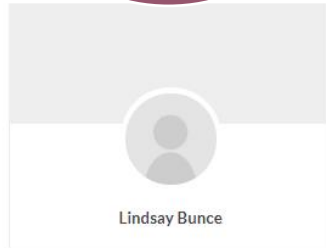
REGISTER YOUR ORGANIZATION

Upload photos
or
descriptions of
completed
activities



World Wildlife Fund

Country: United States



Lindsay Bunce



Redeem
points to
unlock Food
Waste Hero
Badges



See other organizations who have
registered and view their initiatives!



Why use the Food Matters Action Kit?

Educating children and youth about food waste can encourage them to live sustainably and shape their habits into adulthood.



Foster Change!



Knowledge is Power



Shift Behavior



Spread the Word



Who helped create the Action Kit?



The CEC and its consultant team developed the Food Matters Action Kit along with:

A **steering committee** comprised of federal government subject matter experts from Canada, Mexico and the United States

A **Youth Advisory Committee (YAC)** comprised of 10 individuals representing leading youth-based community associations, academic and educational institutions, nongovernmental organizations, the charitable sector and Indigenous groups

The YAC represented the following organizations:

C A N A D A

Arrell Food Institute/University of Guelph

Ontario EcoSchools

Recycling Council of Ontario

4-H



M E X I C O

Mexican Foodbanking Network
(Bancos de Alimentos de México)

Global Youth Biodiversity Network
Zero Hunger Dialogues Diálogos
Hambre Cero

Indigenous Youth Caucus

U N I T E D S T A T E S

World Wildlife Fund

Food Rescue



For more information

Please visit www.cec.org/flwy

Or Email info@cec.org

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Thank you!

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