

## Sample Letter to Parents About Participating in a Waste-Free Lunch Day

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(Insert Date)

Dear Parents:

(Insert School Name) is holding a *Waste-Free Lunch Day* on (Insert Day). This means that if your child brings a lunch from home, he/she is being asked to bring all food/beverage in reusable, washable containers in a reusable bag. The goal is to have little to no packaging.

As a nation, 40% of what is grown, raised and produced collectively is wasted each year at a cost of \$165 billion dollars (*American Wasteland*, by Jonathan Bloom). The US Environmental Protection Agency and the US Department of Agriculture have a goal to reduce food waste 50% by 2030 (epa.gov).

In planning a waste-free lunch, it is important to communicate with your child. Be sure to pack food items that he/she likes and to encourage him/her to eat what they bring. Be mindful to cut up large items if your child is young or missing teeth, or only to pack a ½ sandwich if a whole one is too much for younger tummies. Include an ice pack if food requires refrigeration.

### **Include:**

- Sandwich in a reusable container
- Fruit & snacks in reusable containers
- Cloth napkin
- Beverage in thermos or recyclable container
- Reusable stainless steel straw if needed
- Reusable utensils (fork, spoon, etc.)

### **Don't Include:**

- Individually wrapped items
- Plastic wrap or baggies
- Paper napkin
- Single-serve bottled water
- Plastic straw
- Disposable plastic utensils

Pack lunch the night before and encourage your child to bring home uneaten items, if able, and reuse plastic baggies whenever possible, if must use. **Make each day a waste-free day!**

Please contact (insert your name and email address) if you have any questions. For more information regarding the benefits of waste-free lunch days, visit [www.wastefreelunches.org](http://www.wastefreelunches.org) and [http://www.istc.illinois.edu/tech/zero\\_waste.cfm](http://www.istc.illinois.edu/tech/zero_waste.cfm).

Thank you for your support!

(Name of administrator or teacher - title)