



Waste-free school lunch boxes

Waste-free, litter free food is generally healthier for you and the kids.

At Woombye State School our goal for 2013 is that we are trying to reduce our waste to landfill and make our school grounds litter free. This will result in more money being utilised for resources, not waste collection expenses, and in the long term our school grounds will be more inviting and cleanly and our children will be aware of making healthy choices with their daily lunches.

We aim to take away **all rubbish bins** within the school eating areas, and giving the children the responsibility to take home any of their waste left over from their lunchboxes.

The idea with this is to **not use** throw-away wrapping like cling wrap and foil, yet minimise the use of paper wrappers as well, essentially pack "nude food".

To create a litter free lunch there are multiple options to package your child healthy meals. There are many inexpensive re-useable options such as; plastic/metal containers or plastic-backed fabric lunch sacks to avoid squashed food or messy bags.

Instead of buying single serve packaged items, which come with their own disposable packaging, **buy foods in bulk packs**. Get the kids to **repack the contents into mini-serves**. You will need stacks of re-useable plastic/metal containers, so recycle and use the empty plastic food jars from peanut butter, preserved fruit, sauces bottles... Yoghurt, canned fruit, dried fruit, custard, air popped corn, pretzels, dry breakfast cereals, olives etc.

Avoid single serve juice packs and water bottles. Get a **leak-proof refillable bottle**. Fill with water. Freeze if possible to add extra chill to the lunch box.

Finally ask the **consumers (the kids)** to **bring home the scraps** to feed to the chickens, worms or compost heap. You can keep an eagle eye out for uneaten/half eaten stuff. All in all, a litter-free lunch means there are fewer wrappers and less trash to throw in the rubbish bin.

Some Ideas of what to include in a litter-free lunch box:

1. **'Cute' vegetables** - cherry tomatoes, baby cucumbers (grocers and supermarkets sometimes have early picked, mini-produce such as baby capsicum and baby cues), baby corn, raw green beans, snow peas, raw asparagus spears, mushrooms, and blanched broccoli and cauliflower tips.
2. **Edible wraps** – salad wraps, sushi, mini chicken Caesar salads wrapped in a cabbage or lettuce leaf or shredded vegies tucked up inside a rice paper wrap.

3. **Hunky vegies** – cooked jacket potato, washed raw baby carrot, cooked corn re-wrapped in the original leaves. The vegies can be cooked and cooled the night before ready for the morning lunch box rush.
4. **Obvious fruits** – apples, pears, mandarins, oranges, banana, grapes, cherries, berries, lychees, kiwi fruit.
5. **Protein power-houses** – eggs (pre-boiled and ready-to-go), diced cheese cubes.
6. Now the following are not exactly 'naked' but are included because they are in the spirit of 'rubbish-free' leading to a little less land-fill.

Packing a rubbish-free lunch box takes a little more thought, but no more time than usual if you have enough boxes and tubs with lids that haven't gone missing!

- If your snack-size plastic ware is missing lids, then use a silicon/paper muffin liner as the lid for drier goods (dried fruit, nuts, pop corn) – secure over the container with an elastic band.
- Separate food items within a larger box with silicon cake liners
- Buy some re-useable dividers to keep foods separate in the lunch box
- Protect soft fruits by popping them inside a wet-suit stubby cooler
- Make or buy fabric parcels to create a picnic lunch box full of goodies
- Use patty cake paper cups to separate food items – these can be recycled in the worm farm
- Make a cone out of paper and then twist up the bottom tightly, leaving the top of the cone wide. Fill with sultanas and other dried fruit and then fold or scrunch the top down to seal
- Hide the glad wrap and avoid buying single-serve pre-wrapped foods such as muesli bars, juice boxes, small tubs of custard/yoghurt, and mini-boxes of dried fruit. It is so automatic to reach for these when you are used to using them.

References: The ideas listed above follow [Trudy Williams](#).

http://www.kidsfoodtalk.com.au/contents/en-us/d31_naked-wrapper-free-food.html

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