



Single-Use Plastic Lunch Survey

Three Objectives

1. To count and record single-use plastics from school lunch at campaign launch (the baseline)
2. To count and record single-use plastics from lunch on a "Day of Action" of your choice and compare to the baseline count
3. To discuss ways to reduce plastic in school lunches, promote action at school and share ideas for reducing single use plastic with your Members of Parliament and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change

Time

4-8 hours for planning, preparation and activity

Supplies

- **CARDBOARD BOXES** to collect and sort single-use plastic items
- Reusable **GLOVES** for participants
- **TONGS** to handle items (optional)
- **TARP** or dark coloured sheet to protect the floor and take photos
- **MARKER & PAPER** to make **SIGNS** for cardboard boxes
- **SURVEY DATA SHEET**
- **CLIPBOARDS PENS** or **PENCILS** to **RECORD DATA**
- **CAMERA** or **PHONE** to **RECORD DATA** and take **PHOTOS** or a **VIDEO**

Summary of Survey Steps:

1. **COLLECT** single-use plastics before disposal
2. **SORT** during or after **COLLECTION**
3. **COUNT** total items & items in each category
4. **COLLECTION DATA**
 - a. TALLY **AMOUNTS** on your **DATA SHEET**
 - b. Take **PHOTOS**
5. **TAKE ACTION** by writing to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and your Member of Parliament about banning single-use plastics
6. **SHARE** your **DATA** and **PHOTOS**

Baseline Survey:

Preparation

1. **START** with a walk about the class or lunch room(s) before the survey day to **OBSERVE** and think about any **PREPARATION NEEDED**
2. **MEET** with teacher, principal, or custodians to **GET APPROVAL** for the project and **SET A DATE**
3. Plan a **SORTING STATION** to collect **SINGLE-USE PLASTICS** (ask students to deposit only single-use plastics in COLLECTION box)
4. **MONITOR STUDENT(S)** can help students decide what goes in the COLLECTION box

Survey Day

Before Lunch	During Lunch	After Lunch
5. Set up SORTING STATION with labelled boxes	6. Monitor students can guide students to the sorting station before they leave the room	7. Lay out the tarp on the floor and re-sort items into categories and subcategories 8. Record counts on the Data Sheet (On Page 5)

Take Photos! 📷

9. **GROUP** the items by category
10. **PHOTOGRAPH** categories first (e.g. straws, milk cartons, yogurt cups, etc.), then photograph the entire **COLLECTION**
 - Note the **PHOTO ANGLE** (shoot photo from above)
11. Turn products to show **BRAND LOGOS**



Clean Up

12. **PICK UP** all items and put them in the appropriate waste, recycling or compost bins
13. **REMOVE** the tarp and clean the floor
14. Check with the **CUSTODIANS** to ensure **CLEAN UP** is finished
15. **THANK** your custodians



Activities Between the Two Surveys:

Classroom Activities:

1. **Discuss** plastic-pollution-related topics.
2. **Watch** educational videos.

Suggested Examples:

- [Microplastic Madness movie by Cafeteria Culture](https://www.cafeteriaculture.org/microplastic-madness.html)
(<https://www.cafeteriaculture.org/microplastic-madness.html>)
- [PLASTIK: A Short Film to End Plastic Pollution in South-East Asia](https://www.meshminds.com/plastik)
(<https://www.meshminds.com/plastik>)
- [The Recycling Myth: What actually happens to our plastic](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXpzWWv0b0U)
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXpzWWv0b0U>)

3. **Create** your own plastic-pollution-related poster.

Suggested Examples:

- [Poster 1](#)
- [Poster 2](#)

Day of Action Survey:

Repeat Survey during the Day of Action Against Single-use Plastics:

1. **REPEAT** the **SURVEY** steps
2. **COMPARE** with baseline **DATA** from first survey
3. **SUBMIT** your data via [our online form](#)
4. Use your **PHOTOS** and **DATA** to prepare a report for students, teachers and the local **PRESS MEDIA**



Take Action with your School Community

5. Discuss how to permanently eliminate these single-use plastic items
6. Compare the number of single-use plastics items from each survey. (The **Baseline Survey** and The **Day of Action Survey**)
7. Share **before** and **after** numbers with your school community to inspire school-wide change
8. Make a poster with drawings, photos, and compelling data
9. Make a short video
10. Present data and outcomes in morning announcements or school assembly

11. Prepare a letter to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and your Member of Parliament, including photos from Survey Action and your poster
 - Ask other students to sign the letter too
12. **Share** a copy of your letter, poster and video with **Friends of the Earth Canada** (foe@foecanada.org)

Terminology

- ★ **Single-use plastic:** a plastic item or packaging that is used once and then thrown away
- ★ **Survey:** a collection of facts
- ★ **Baseline data:** data or a count that is collected before the Day of Action in order to consider the change in behaviour during Day of Action
- ★ **Data sheet:** paper or electronic form to gather your counts and descriptions



This survey has been adapted from Cafeteria Culture, with thanks!



Friends of the Earth
Les Ami(e)s de la Terre



Single-Use Plastic Lunch Survey Data Sheet

School:	Teacher/Grade:	
Lunch Period(s):	Number of Students:	
Date of Baseline Survey:	Date of Day of Action Survey:	
What single-use plastics are in your lunch?	Baseline Survey	Day of Action Survey
1. # of plastic bags (baggies, ziplocks, store bags, other)		
2. # of plastic packets (soy, mayo, ketchup, jam, honey)		
3. # of plastic drinking cups		
4. # of plastic utensils (spoon, fork, spork, knife) <i>*count wrappers separately</i>		
5. # of plastic straws <i>*count wrappers separately</i>		
6. # of plastic wrappers (utensils, straw, other wrapper)		
7. # of plastic milk cartons (single serve)		
8. # of plastic juice boxes or pouches <i>*count straws and wrappers separately</i>		
9. # of plastic drink bottles (water, soda, sport drink, other)		
10. # of plastic lids and caps		
11. # of plastic prefilled food cups (pudding, applesauce, fruit, yogurt, jello, other)		
12. # of plastic squeeze pouches		
13. # of chips, snack bags, candy wrappers		
14. # of plastic snack packs (cheese sticks, cheese or crackers, other)		
15. #		
16. #		
17. #		
TOTAL # of SINGLE-USE PLASTIC ITEMS		