



Project Instructions

Salad Bar Serving Size

What is a ½ cup serving?

Did you know that on average, every school in our district throws away approximately 15 pounds of uneaten fruits and vegetables each day? That's enough to fill a 5-gallon bucket every single day and adds up to about **24,000** pounds of wasted food per year! Most of those fruits and vegetables are from the school salad bar.



One way to reduce school food waste is to encourage students only to take what they are going to eat. This gets a little tricky because students are required to take a certain amount, specifically a ½ cup, of fruits OR vegetables when they buy lunch. It can be confusing to figure out.

This activity will help familiarize students with what a ½ cup serving looks like. Students will be able to breeze through the lunch line without taking too much food, which may end up in the trash.

FUN FACT:

Students are allowed to make as many trips as they want to the salad bar.

Activity

1. Gather materials: Data sheet, ½ cup measuring cup.
2. Ask your child to list the items they commonly take from the school's salad bar when they purchase lunch. If they do not buy lunch, ask them to list some favorite fruits and vegetables.
3. Have students look for these food items at home. On the activity sheet provided, have students estimate how many fruit or vegetable items will fill up a ½ cup measuring cup.
4. After the sheet is filled out, ask your child to actually fill up the ½ cup measuring cup with the fruit or vegetable. How close were the predictions?
5. Let's say you want to take carrots AND tomatoes from the salad bar. How many of each would you take to make up a ½ cup serving?



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Data Sheet

| Fruit or Vegetable Name | Estimate: How many make up $\frac{1}{2}$ cup? | Actual: How many actually make up $\frac{1}{2}$ cup? |
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| Sample Strawberries | 8 berries | 4 berries |
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Now that you know how much a serving is, how can you help reduce food waste when you buy lunch at school?

What about when you bring lunch from home?

How can you share what you learned about food waste with other students when you go back to school?

How can learning about serving sizes for your school lunch help you reduce food waste at home?

Design a sign you might want to see in the lunch area to help others understand the $\frac{1}{2}$ cup serving size.