

Green Gazette



TIPPECANOE COUNTY
Recycling & Solid Waste



TIPPECANOE COUNTY
PARTNERSHIP FOR WATER QUALITY™

Fall 2021



Waste less at lunchtime

Did you know that, on average, each student throws away about 67 pounds of lunch waste per year? That might be more than you weigh! This total includes uneaten food and food scraps, as well as single-serving packages, wrappers, lunch sacks, plastic utensils, and throw-away drink containers. How many students are in your class? Multiply that number by 67 pounds to find out

how many pounds of lunchroom waste students in your class are throwing away. It's probably a pretty big number! In

fact, it might be close to 1 ton (1 ton = 2,000 pounds). That's as much as a large horse weighs!

Now is a good time for you and your classmates to plan to make less lunchtime waste this year. Here are some tips that will help you get started:

- ◆ If you buy lunch at school, take foods that you'll eat and eat what you've taken. If your school has a food-share table, drop off unopened, unused lunch items at the table before returning your tray.
- ◆ If you bring lunch from home:
 - Choose a reusable bag or lunch box.
 - Place foods into washable, reusable containers. You can buy containers, or you can wash and reuse tubs that once held deli salads, salsa, dip, or cream cheese.
 - Bring a drink in a reusable or recyclable bottle. If the bottle is reusable, take it home to wash and refill. If the bottle is recyclable, put it into the correct bin at school or take it home for recycling.
 - Bring forks or spoons from home. If your school doesn't allow metal silverware, choose heavy-duty plastic or bamboo that can be washed and reused many times.
 - If you purchase single-serving containers, look for recyclable containers, such as steel cans. Take your empty cans home for recycling or place them into the recycling bin at school, if available.
 - Only bring what you will eat. If you have leftovers, put them back into your reusable containers and take them home to eat later.



courtesy: E+ | Getty Images

Go green and save money by wasting less food

How much food do Americans throw away? The short answer is "too much" — or almost one-third of what they buy. Did you know that an average family of four could save up to \$1,500 a year just by not wasting food? Wouldn't that be nice?

Most Americans throw out food when it starts to look or smell bad. Milk products, fruits, vegetables, and meats are the most commonly tossed items because they spoil the most quickly. Throwing away food wastes not only hard-earned money but also valuable resources, such as water, fuel, and supplies used to make the food in the first place. In addition, almost another one-third of the food we grow is wasted either in the growing, processing, transporting, or selling phase. As a result, unused food is the single most common type of waste in landfills.

Instead of feeding people, nutritious food is sitting in landfills and adding to pollution. We can do better.

The Environmental Protection Agency and United States Department of Agriculture have tools to help you and your parents learn what to do with the leftover food in your community. Learn more at www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/food-too-good-waste-implementation-guide-and-toolkit. To help you learn how to stop wasting food at home, download the USDA Foodkeeper App

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Credit: fizkes | iStock | Getty Images Plus

Puzzling Clues

The students in Miss Garcia's class are selling worm compost (vermicompost) as a school fundraiser. Use the clues to figure out how many bags of vermicompost each student sold.

Clues:

- A. Lucy sold five bags more than Jamal.
- B. Jamal sold twice as many bags as Santiago.
- C. Sara sold five bags fewer than Santiago.
- D. Jamal sold four times as many bags as Sara.
- E. Santiago sold ten bags.

Questions:

1. Which clue did you use first? _____
2. Was there any clue you didn't need? _____
3. Who sold the most bags? _____
4. Who sold the least bags? _____
5. How many bags did each person sell? _____



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for Android and Apple phones or use the website www.foodsafety.gov/keep-food-safe/foodkeeper-app. Start saving food today by following these simple tips:

- ◆ Buy only the food you need. This includes ordering in restaurants.
- ◆ Learn how to store food correctly. Food lasts longer than you think.
- ◆ Know the difference between the “sell by,” “use by,” and “best by” dates posted on products.
- ◆ Be creative in meal planning and using leftovers to create new meals.
- ◆ Don’t be afraid to offer extra food items to neighbors, friends, or food pantries.
- ◆ For kitchen waste that is compostable, consider backyard composting or dropping off used food waste so that it can be used to make both fertilizer and electricity! To learn more, visit www.westlafayette.in.gov/street and click on the “Food Waste” icon.

Got worms?

Want to learn about the wonderful work of decomposers and red worms? We would love to talk to you about worms, the work they do, their life cycles, anatomy, locomotion, and recycling abilities. Using



worms to help break down yard waste and food scraps to make compost is called vermicomposting. We love worms! We have lots of worms that love to travel and visit classrooms.

We are happy to provide both composting and vermicomposting lessons to groups of all ages. Worms and composting not your thing? The Solid Waste District also has lessons in recycling, waste reduction, climate change, and reducing food waste. Ask your club leader, principal, or teacher to contact Amy at akrztonpresson@tippecanoe.in.gov for more information. Monica at the

Partnership for Water Quality also offers presentations on conserving natural resources and water quality. Contact Monica at mchristopher@tippecanoe.in.gov.

America Recycles. I recycle. Do you?

Every day, people across America recycle. We hope that you are one of those people. Did you recycle yesterday? Have you recycled yet today? If not, now is a fantastic time to start!

Each year, recycling keeps more than one-third of our nation’s trash out of landfills. When we recycle, we save energy, conserve natural resources, and create jobs. When we landfill, we waste a lot of good resources.

When you and your family recycle, you make a simple choice that makes a big difference. For example, recycling just one aluminum can saves enough electricity to power a flat-screen TV for three hours.

This fall, we’ll celebrate America Recycles Day on November 15.

America Recycles Day is all about celebrating everything good about recycling while encouraging people to:

- ◆ Reduce the amount of waste produced
- ◆ Recycle at home, work, school, and on the go
- ◆ Buy products made from recycled materials (recycled-content)
- ◆ Educate and inspire friends, family, and neighbors to take the #BeRecycled Pledge

What will you do this America Recycles Day? Will you learn exactly what can be recycled where you live? Will you recycle at school? Will you talk to your



parents and neighbors about recycling? How might you creatively promote recycling in your neighborhood or on social media? It’s simple to start the conversation — just say, “I recycle. Do you?”

If you need information about local recycling programs, we can help. We’ll be doing recycling activities at Cole Elementary. Maybe we could visit your school, too! Visit our website, www.tippecanoe.in.gov/recycle, for details.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency also teaches about reducing, reusing, and recycling at www.epa.gov/recycle. Take the #BeRecycled Pledge at www.AmericaRecyclesDay.org.

De-Trash the Wabash

Thanks to our volunteers, the Wabash River is a lot cleaner (see spring results in box). De-Trash the Wabash is sponsored twice a year by the Tippecanoe County Partnership for Water Quality (TCPWQ), Wabash River Enhancement Corporation (WREC), Tippecanoe County Solid Waste District, and Wabash River Keepers. Our next De-Trash event will be next spring. Check the Partnership for Water Quality’s website for updates and announcements at www.tippecanoe.in.gov/1029/Wabash-River-Clean-Up.

Follow us @tippecanoeountywaste and on the Tippecanoe County Solid Waste District Facebook page for updates.



Volunteers	25
Miles of River cleaned	9
Trash collected	1.15 tons (That’s 2,300 pounds!)



Recycle this...



Mixed paper and paperboard



Metal food and drink cans



Plastic bottles and jugs



Flattened cardboard



Glass bottles and jars

Not that!



Tubs

Clamshells



Bins

Cups



Toys

Plastic Bags

Recycling is easy as 1-2-3!

- 1 Keep your recyclables loose and un-bagged.** Our recyclables are sorted by machines and bagged materials will not make it through the system.
- 2 All materials should be empty, clean, and dry!** Food and liquids attract pests and can ruin recyclable paper and cardboard that share the bin space.
- 3 Be sure to know what to throw.** Visit our website for a list of what is recyclable. The less trash in the bin, the more room for good recyclables!

“Re-leaf” is in sight!

After school, the air is crisp and cool. Autumn leaves are turning yellow, orange, and red. You know what that means — the chores are about to begin! Talk to your parents about reusing your autumn leaves instead of bagging them right away. Here are some “re-leaf” ideas:

- ◆ Make a pile and jump into it with your friends. Remember to record your good memories by taking pictures or videos.
- ◆ Save some of the most colorful leaves and press them between sheets of paper (waxed paper or parchment paper from the kitchen work well) between heavy books or bricks.
- ◆ Using a mulching mower, shred leaves and let them stay on the grass. The shredded leaves will provide a winter cover to protect grass roots and soil and will decay by spring. If you have a lot of leaves, you’ll need to mow often during the weeks when the most leaves fall.
- ◆ Use your family’s mower to create leaf mulch. Simply attach the bagger and collect the leaves. Your mower will shred the leaves as it picks them up, creating a great mulch. Put the leaf mulch on your garden or flower beds, around trees, or on paths. Leaf mulch will help keep moisture in the soil where plants will be able to use it next spring. Leaves also provide a shelter for pollinators and other wildlife to live in through the winter.
- ◆ Pick up shredded leaves with the mower or rake up whole leaves and add them to your compost bin.
- ◆ After you’ve mulched and composted your leaves, you might have a few bags left over. R&R Topsoil offers free composting of leaves and grass clippings (no twigs or branches). Please call ahead before dropping off yard waste; visit www.rrtopsoil.com/#contact for address and phone number. Residents can deliver leaves, grass clippings, and limbs to the transfer station at 2770 N. 9th Street in Lafayette. They charge by the ton: \$54/ton, minimum of \$22.50 for less than half a ton. Ask your parents to contact your waste hauler for details on curbside pickup of leaves and other yard waste.



Credit: SerrNovik | iStock | Getty Images Plus



Credit: FatCamera | E+ | Getty Images

Buried Treasure

The experiment below will help you understand how trash can decompose, or break down, in different places. To complete this experiment, you will need four apple cores, two plastic bags, three colanders (strainers), three bricks or heavy objects, a shovel or digging tool, gloves, and an outdoor area with soil.

Instructions:

1. Place two of the apple cores inside plastic bags (one per bag). Make sure the bags are sealed tightly so that no air can get in or out.
2. Place one bag inside where it can be easily observed.
3. Take the other bag outside and bury it under an inch or two of soil.
4. Place a colander over the buried bag to prevent animals from getting to the apple. Place a brick or heavy object on top of the colander.
5. Take the remaining two apple cores outside as well.
6. Bury one core an inch or two under the ground and leave the other sitting on top of the soil.
7. Place a colander and heavy object over each apple without a bag to keep animals out.
8. Wait for a week or two, then uncover and observe the apples. Be sure to use gloves when picking up or handling the apples.
9. Answer these questions in your log: How much did each apple decompose (rot or break down)? Did some apples decompose more than others? If so, which ones?



Credit: MichaelLay | iStock | Getty Images Plus

Questions:

1. Which of the apple cores do you think would be most like how a bag of trash would break down in a landfill? Why? _____

2. Did the apple core that is most like a bag of trash in a landfill break down faster or slower than the other apple cores? _____

3. What does this tell you about landfills? _____

4. Which apple core broke down the fastest? Why? _____

5. What environmentally friendly method for getting rid of trash does this seem like? _____



Caution! Burning leaves can make people sick!

Smell burning leaves? Are your eyes watering? Are you coughing? Leaf burning releases harmful pollutants into the air. In fact, smoke from just five pounds of burning leaves creates a full pound of pollution. Leaf burning can create health hazards for children, the elderly, and people with breathing difficulties, such as asthma. A burning leaf pile can also start a larger fire, putting nearby properties at risk. Be a good neighbor — don’t burn your leaves!



*Leo and Layla
having some fun
in the garden*

Meet Helping Ninjas Leo and Layla

Twelve-year-old Leo Berry and his little sister Layla from Carmel, Indiana, love to show other kids how to make compost. Compost is made from rotting plant-based materials that have been broken down naturally by insects, bacteria, and other microorganisms. Composting can take all the garbage that comes from plants — like leaves, banana peels, leftover peas, and even paper — and recycle it to improve soil and help feed new plants.

Leo, Layla, and a group of their friends formed a group called the Helping Ninjas about four years ago. According to Leo, Helping Ninjas are “highly skilled at helping,” and they do all sorts of projects that help people and the environment. Over the years, they have planted organic gardens and donated the vegetables they grew to a nearby food pantry, they have planted pollinator gardens, they have taught students about composting, and more.

Leo and Layla first started composting in 2018, when the Helping Ninjas applied for a Carmel Green Teen grant to pay for seeds and supplies to plant a garden and teach other kids in the local elementary schools how and why to compost. This was one of Leo’s favorite projects. The students worked with their school cafeteria manager to start composting cafeteria scraps (like apple cores, leftover carrots, and potato peels) by using a school worm composting bin that could also be used by teachers as a fun, educational tool. Leo noted that composting with worms is called vermicomposting.

“I think it is important that all kids learn how to help the Earth by composting,” says Layla. The Helping Ninjas have been busy doing their part, teaching over 150 kids in after-school programs throughout Central Indiana how composting works by having them make take-home, mini compost bins in glass jars.

Leo, Layla, and the Helping Ninjas continue teaching kids and adults to compost. Composting is easy and inexpensive because you just use what gets thrown away anyway! In America, food scraps and yard waste together make up about one-third of what we throw away, so composting at home and at school can keep a lot of garbage out of landfills. Compost can be used to create healthier soil and feed lawns, flowers, gardens, and other plants.

Layla adds, “Whether you are a kid who likes composting, planting flowers for pollinators, or recycling, every little bit helps.” Find your inner ninja and try composting today!

To learn about the Helping Ninjas or to start a group of your own, visit www.helpingninjas.com.

Supplying the Demand

In economics (the study of buying and selling goods and services), there is a connection between supply and demand. Supply is how much of an item is available to sell. Demand is how much of that item people want to buy. The price of an item is often linked to the supply and demand for it.

Use the examples below to think about how and why supply and demand are related to each other. Decide whether the item has a **“high demand and low supply”** or **“low demand and high supply”**. Circle the correct answer.

- At the secondhand store, children’s costumes increase in price before Halloween. Why?
 - High demand and low supply
 - Low demand and high supply
- In the winter at the secondhand store, flip-flops go on sale for half the price they were sold for in the summer. Why?
 - High demand and low supply
 - Low demand and high supply
- During the pandemic, many people ordered items online that arrived in corrugated cardboard boxes. Some people didn’t recycle these boxes. Factories had to increase production of boxes but had trouble getting enough used boxes. Why?
 - High demand and low supply
 - Low demand and high supply
- A manufacturing facility that makes recycled plastic lumber closes for several months to install new equipment. The nearby recycling center ends up with unsold plastic milk jugs, typically used to make plastic lumber. Why?
 - High demand and low supply
 - Low demand and high supply
- If something is in high demand and low supply, the price goes:
 - Up
 - Down
- If an item is in low demand and high supply, the price goes:
 - Up
 - Down



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