Iowa RECESS before lunch

Neil Armstrong Elementary
Bettendorf CSD

Iowa Department of Education Team Nutrition Program partnered with ISU Extension and Outreach and the Midwest Dairy Council to conduct a recess before lunch pilot in three select elementary buildings during the 2013-14 school year. It included an assessment of food and milk waste, photo estimation, and school staff interviews and surveys. Four site visits occurred at each building, providing a snapshot of food consumption in school meals when recess was after lunch and when recess was before lunch.

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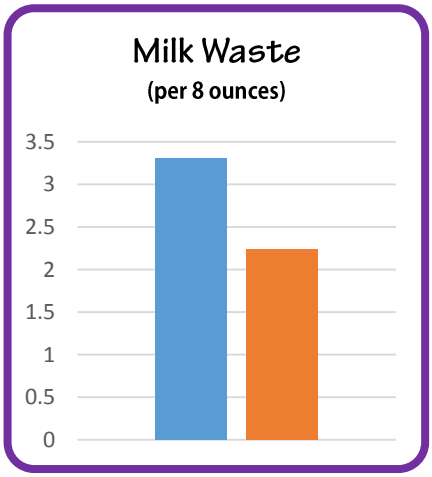
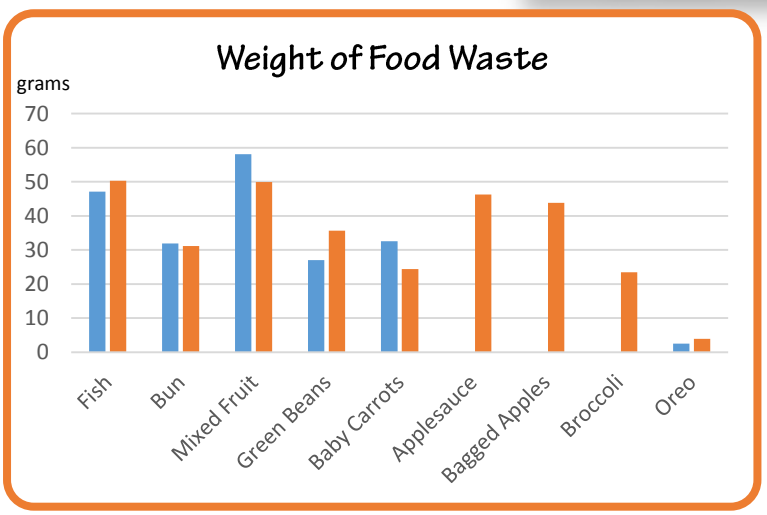
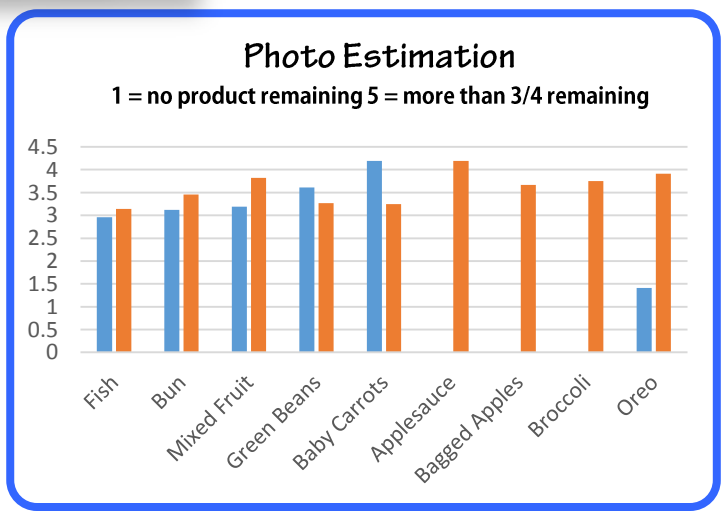
■ Recess After Lunch ■ Recess Before Lunch

Milk waste ⇩ by 13% when recess was before lunch.

Food waste ⇧ by 6% when recess was before lunch, however additional fruit and vegetable options were available, which allowed students to take more food.







The Data (Average weight of food waste and food remaining observed through estimation of photos)

Recess After Lunch (RAL)											
Food Item	Fish	Bun	Mixed Fruit	Green Beans	Baby Carrots	Applesauce	Bagged Apples	Broccoli	Oreo	Totals	Milk
Photo	2.96	3.12	3.19	3.61	4.19				1.41		
Weight of Food waste	47.13	31.90/59	58.09/115.5	27/79.9	32.53/60				2.52/24.3	199.17/439 56%	3.31/8 oz.
Recess Before Lunch (RBL)											
Photo	3.14	3.46	3.82	3.27	3.25	4.19	3.67	3.75	3.91		
Weight of food waste	50.3/97.5	31.19/55	49.98/97.5	35.67/67	24.44/55.2	46.29/125	43.81/65	23.5/25	3.91/24.2	309.11/612 50%	2.24/8 oz.
Difference of food waste RAL - RBL	47.13-50.32= 3.19/99	31.9-31.19= 0.71/57	58.09-49.98= 8.11/106.5	27-35.67 = 8.67/73.7	32.53-24.44 = 8.09-57.71	Only served RBL	Only served RBL	Only served RBL	2.52-3.91= 1.39/24.3		3.31-2.24 = 1.07
	3% ⇧ waste	**1.2% ⇩ waste**	**7.6%⇩ waste**	**12% ⇧ waste**	**14% ⇩ waste**					**6% ⇧ waste**	**13%⇩ waste**

Interviews and Surveys

The principal, foodservice personnel, nurse, 3rd grade teachers, lunchroom monitors, and recess monitors were interviewed and surveyed pre and post. Below is the summary of responses:

	Pre-Interview & Survey Reponses	Post-Interview & Survey Reponses
	Overall, staff anticipated that moving RBL would:	Overall, staff determined that moving RBL:
Impact on Eating	Increase milk and food consumption	Created less time for students to eat because they were talking more
Impact on Physical Activity	Increase physical activity	Caused students to be excited for recess, some students were less active due to cold temperatures
Impact on Behavior in Cafeteria	Cause students to be rowdy coming into lunch, but more calm and settled after seated	Caused some students to be quieter and others to be louder
Impact on Behavior in Classroom	Cause no change or decline behavior in the classroom	Created fewer problems or no change
Challenges	Create challenges around schedule changes, hall transitions, and dealing with winter gear	Created challenges around overcrowding at recess, scheduling of staff, and hand sanitation Overcame challenges with proper planning, communication and realizing that adjustment takes time