

# The Better Tomorrow Plan Case study

July 2011

## Environment

**OUR COMMITMENT:** We will reduce organic waste in all the countries where we operate and at client's sites by 2015. We will support initiatives to recover organic waste.



## Food waste statistics

- 25% of food is thrown out in the US
- 31 million tons of wasted food per year



## United States

### "Stop Wasting Food"

Sodexo launched the **Stop Wasting Food** campaign [www.stopwastingfood.org](http://www.stopwastingfood.org) on September 2010 to ask college students to **consider the environmental impact of food waste**. The campaign had one simple goal: **winning student support for cutting food waste to curb climate change**.

### Creating value for our clients

Sodexo first started discussing waste reduction on Earth Day 2008 when called on all 600 college operations to give up trays, a move that reduced waste by 30% on average. To date, more than 50 percent of Sodexo-served campuses have stopped using trays.

### General context

Americans **throw out 25%** of the food they prepare: **31 million tons of wasted food every year**. The waste ends up in a landfill where it creates lots of damage. Food waste creates methane gas, which is at least 21 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Methane wrecks the ozone layer and heats up the planet.

### The "Stop Wasting Food" campaign

**Goal:** To foster continuing support among college students to reduce food waste.

**Key Publics:** College students and college administrators

#### Objectives:

- Engage students in changing their behavior with regard to food waste.
- Reduce pre-consumer food waste by 20 percent.

#### Strategies:

- Launch a pilot program at eight college campuses across the country to analyze and measure our kitchen waste in an effort to better manage it.
- Engage students through social media, traditional media and advertising campaign in colleges.

**The main messages** focused on attitude and behavior change around food waste:

- Thinking before you eat
- Benefit to the environment

## Implementation process

Prior to the launch of the campaign, Sodexo conducted secondary research to **study the level of awareness on sustainability of the 18 to 24-year-old college student demographic**. It appeared that sustainability topics such as locally-sourced food and reducing carbon footprint were already well established among that demographic and that food waste would be impactful. Sodexo also led **expert interviews with government, nonprofit, and industry experts** on the topic of food waste to develop messages and audit other food waste communication efforts.

The campaign was implemented through the following media:

### 1. Social Media Platform

Sodexo established Social media platforms – FaceBook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) – to connect with students and reached out to 5,700 media points and more than 5,400 websites. The online campaign has been estimated to reach over 30 million people.

### 2. Advertising Campaign

Sodexo developed an advertising campaign in selected campus publications, mainly college newspapers, to highlight the commitment to reduce food waste.

Most people focus on sourcing and serving food and don't think about waste.

### 3. Leading Food Waste Expert Blogs

Jonathan Bloom of [www.wastedfood.com](http://www.wastedfood.com) and author of *American Wasteland: How America Throws Away Nearly Half of Its Food (and What We Can Do About It)* was a guest blogger on Sodexo's Better Tomorrow corporate blog. His book on food waste has been made available for book signing events at Sodexo-served campuses.

### 4. News Release

Sodexo reached out to the mainstream media and blogs with its news release, which was distributed to 6,000 media outlets.

### 5. Connecting our Customers through Dining Web Sites

Sodexo manages the dining pages of websites at nearly all of the 650 college campuses it serves and used those sites as a vehicle to engage customers to the [www.stopwastingfood.org](http://www.stopwastingfood.org) social media platform.

## Recognitions

- **Blog TreeHugger:** *Best of green: Food and Health*
- **PR News CSR Award Finalist:** Green PR Campaign Category. Winner: Lockheed Martin; Finalists: Sodexo, Walt Disney and Hormel Foods.



### Key results Dec. 11

- Reduced food waste by 47%
- Reduced food dollars spent by 53%
- Reduced food cost per meal by 4.6%

At the 8 campuses after the 12-week pilot concluded

→ 500,000 strategic web placement impressions

→ Increased Facebook interactions by 90% among 18-24

Results for Sept. 10



## More information

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