



AUGUST NEWSLETTER

The Zero Waste Schools newsletter will help you get your school on a path toward generating zero waste through waste prevention, recycling, composting, and food recovery. You'll also find resources that connect zero waste to healthy eating, school gardens, and environmental education and action.

Share the newsletter with friends, colleagues, and students interested in zero waste.

[Sign up for ZWS news](#)

Recap and recording of our July 27 webinar

Greta Kringle, a chemistry and environmental science teacher at [Solorio Academy High School](#), a Chicago Public School, makes sure her students learn more about waste than they probably ever thought they would want to know. Her goal is to make science relevant to her students' everyday lives, and when she gets to the unit on food waste, the lessons become hands-on.

"Students are always super shocked and engaged right away in the issue and anticipating the rest of the unit," she said. When the kids get into the lunchroom and start observing food waste in action and help sort waste for composting, the magnitude of the problem becomes clear.

Kringle was joined by **Lauren Roberts**, a School Relationship Manager for [Gourmet Gorilla](#), **Melissa Pflugh Prescott**, Assistant Professor of School/Childhood Foods and Nutrition at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and SGA's **Susan Casey** and **Becky Brodsky** in speaking at our July 27th webinar on the *Food Waste Reduction Toolkit for Illinois Schools*. Nearly 200 people from across the country registered to learn more about it.

Read the full story [HERE](#). Watch the webinar recording [HERE](#).

Download a pdf of the Toolkit [HERE](#). The Toolkit is a project of the [Wasted Food Action Alliance](#) and SGA's [Zero Waste Schools program](#).



Back-to-school with less waste

Start your school year off right with SGA's [Back to School Supplies: A Zero Waste Guide](#). Get ideas for reusing supplies, tips for purchasing eco-friendly supplies, and how to pack a zero waste lunch. Teachers will also find helpful



hints on how to promote sustainability in the classroom.

Teachers, check out [Tips for a Healthy, Waste-Free Classroom](#). This tip sheet will help you reduce, reuse, and recycle in your classroom, as well as create a clean and healthy classroom environment.

Share this [flyer](#) with families to promote packing zero waste lunches from home.

Photo by [Kelly Sikkema](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Time to register for the Great Apple Crunch

Oct. 14

From the northern border to the southern tip, over 1,200 schools, daycares, offices, hospitals, and residential programs across the state of Illinois will celebrate National Farm to School Month with a Crunch.

The Illinois Great Apple Crunch is an annual celebration of fresh, local apples on the second

Thursday of October, during National Farm to School Month and is part of the Great Lakes Great Apple Crunch, which is also celebrated in the neighboring states of Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

In total, over 588,000 Illinois participants- and over 1.3 million people across the region- took part in local Crunch events in 2019. All K-12 schools, early childhood sites, boarding facilities, groups at home and on local farms, community programs, along with businesses and organizations across Illinois can join us to celebrate the 2021 Crunch.

Register for the Great Lakes Great Apple Crunch [HERE!](#)



Reopen with Reuse



Throughout the pandemic, single-use plastics have been falsely promoted as a way to avoid COVID transmission in restaurants. As restaurants and other food service venues start to open with relaxed COVID restrictions, the nonprofit [Upstream](#) is working to spread the message about the safety of reusables.

Learn more about the safety of reusables and support their [campaign](#) to:

- Influence the Centers for Disease Control to change their foodservice business reopening guidance to be more reusable-friendly
- Give businesses and consumers greater confidence in the safety of reusables as more restaurants reopen
- Encourage restaurants / events / national parks and potentially any establishment that serves food to reopen with non-toxic reusable foodware

Start a conversation with your school about transitioning to reusable foodware in the cafeteria. Not only are reusables better for the planet, they create a better dining experience and are often more cost-effective than disposables.

The [2021-22 Illinois Green Schools Project](#) registration is now open. The Illinois Green Alliance's Illinois Green Schools Project is a project-based challenge for K-12 schools to devise and implement creative no- to low-cost energy, water, and waste initiatives in schools. This year's optional theme will focus on energy and environmental justice.



Learn more about the program and how you can participate during these upcoming information sessions:

- [Aug. 11, noon](#) - for educators, school staff, and parents
- [Aug. 19, noon](#) - for green building professional mentors

Registration ends **Sept. 13**. Contact [Liz Wimmer](#) with questions or for more information.

Nature's Farm Camp Female Teen Food Leadership Summit

Oct. 15-17, Angelic Organics Learning Center, Caledonia, IL



Announcing [Nature's Farm Camp Female Teen Food Leadership Summit](#) for Chicago-area female-identifying teens (ages 16-19). This 2-day summit is for teens who care about food and want to make a positive impact on their communities. Each participant receives a \$300 stipend for participating. **Deadline: Aug. 12.**

Resources for reducing food waste & composting



FoodPrint's [The ABCs of Reducing Food Waste](#) shares tips, recipes, and resources for reducing food waste at home in this interactive visual guide.



The [Institute for Local Self Reliance](#) created [Compost for a Better Planet](#) infographics to demonstrate how composting cuts waste, enhances soil, protects the climate, builds community, and creates jobs.

Grants and other opportunities

[Beyond Plastic Pollution online class](#): Registration is now open for the fall session of this environmental policy class offered by Bennington College. The course is **open to the public, high school age and up**. Class meets every Wednesday on Zoom, Sept. 1 - Oct. 13, 2021, 7-9 pm. The fee to audit the class is \$100; the cost is \$400 to receive credit.

[CHS Foundation Classroom Grant](#): CHS Foundation provides \$500 grants each year to PreK-12 teachers who have classroom projects that use agricultural concepts to teach

reading, writing, math, science, social studies, and more. **Deadline: Sept.15.**

Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom offers two grants:

- Teacher Project Grants provide up to \$300 to PreK-12th grade teachers for projects that promote agricultural literacy in the classroom. **Deadline: Oct. 15.**
- Teacher Book Grants provide up to \$250 in books from a pre-selected list of titles to help teachers integrate agriculture into a variety of curriculum areas.

Deadline: Oct. 15.

Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant: Applicants must use native Illinois plants in their wildlife habitat area and be prepared to maintain and commit resources to the project for at least five years. Projects need to be implemented on school grounds or another public place. **Preliminary deadline: Oct. 31.**

Events

Chicago Conservation Corps Sustainability Leadership Training Series

Online or in-person orientations: Aug. 17, 19, 23, 24, or 25

Online Course: Sept. 21-Nov. 9

Learn about the unique urban environmental challenges Chicago confronts from community and environmental leaders and lead a sustainability service project in your community with support and resources from the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum. To participate in the training course, you must be an adult Chicago resident, attend an orientation, and submit an application.

Zero Waste Buildings Webinar

Aug. 18, noon

Join Illinois Green Alliance for this webinar that will cover zero waste case studies, tips on how to start going zero waste, and the TRUE zero waste certification process. Zero waste experts, including SGA's own Jen Nelson, will share how to engage stakeholders, design zero waste programs, and create strategic plans that include zero waste.

What in the World is a Circular Economy?

Aug. 18, noon

Join the Forest Preserves of Cook County and Plant Chicago to learn about circular economies and practices that can be incorporated into your daily life like local shopping and sourcing, composting, waste diversion, and conducting waste audits.

Zora's Zucchini Webinar with Katherine Pryor

Aug. 18, noon

Join Big Green at Home for a live webinar focusing on utilizing literacy connections to teach in the garden and connect kids to healthy food. Featuring children's book author Katherine Pryor, Big Green Program Manager Marie Dennon, and Michéal Newman-Brooks, Program Manager of School Gardens for Chicago Public Schools.

September Adopt-a-Beach

Sept. 18

Join thousands of volunteers for September Adopt-a-Beach as they work together to clean up the Great Lakes beaches and shorelines. Participate in a clean up near you, or plan one of your own.

Seven Generations Ahead | [Email](#) | [Website](#)



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