CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE 2027

Competition Overview

Agenda

- About Campus Race to Zero Waste (CR2ZW)
- Categories
- Reporting
- Planning Steps
- Resources
- Timeline
- More opportunities beyond the competition

Amherst College

CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE

Poll Question

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Has your school participated in the Campus Race to Zero Waste before?

Campus Race to Zero Waste Mission

Using fair and friendly competition to provide tools and opportunities that inspire, empower and mobilize colleges and universities to benchmark and improve their efforts to reduce and eliminate waste.

Central Michigan University

CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE

What is the Campus Race to Zero Waste?

- 8 week competition to reduce waste and increase diversion from landfill
- Takes place February-March
- Campuses have several category choices
  - 8-week, weekly reporting categories
  - 1-time reporting categories
- Campuses begin planning in the fall

CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE

Emerson College

Campus Race to Zero Waste 2026

100+

colleges and universities participated

1.4 Million

students, faculty and staff reached

35

states in the U.S., District of Columbia & Canada represented

15.7 Million

pounds of waste donated, composted and recycled

14,592

metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO2E) prevented

equivalent to preventing the annual emissions from **3,072 cars**

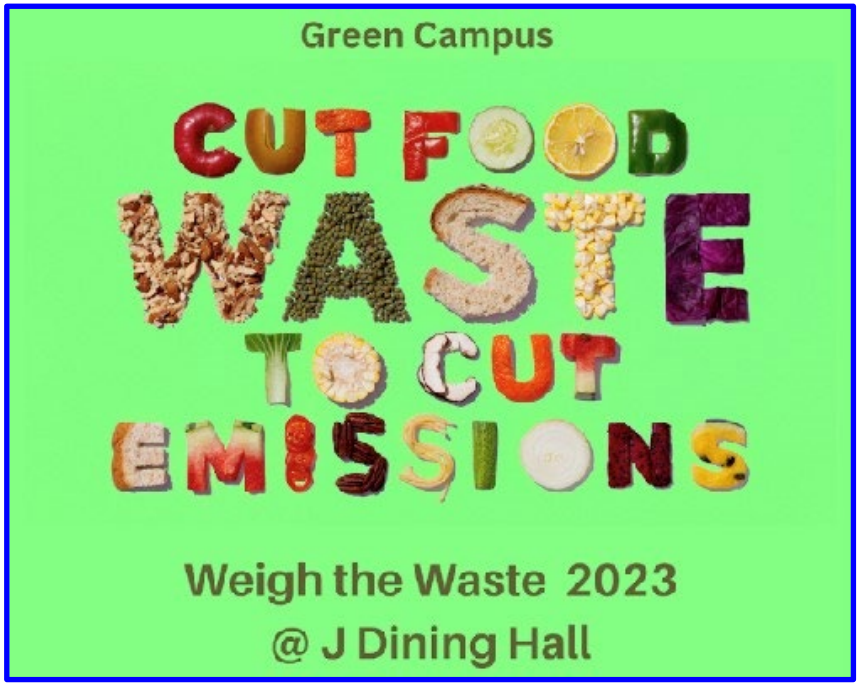
CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE

Customize the Competition

- Choose categories to participate in
- Plan extensive or minimal outreach
- **Benchmark** current efforts or expand waste reduction and recycling programs
- Set challenge that resonates on your campus:
  - Focus on national, local or other
  - Benchmark against past years or week to week
  - Internal competition

Choose Your Categories

- **8-week, weekly reporting categories (February-March)**
  - Diversion
  - Per Capita
  - Food



Cal Poly Humboldt

- **Special Categories – One time reporting**
  - Electronics (one month tracking)
  - GameDay Basketball (one home game tracking)
  - Case Study competition (submission due in June)

CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE

Recognition Highlight for Main Categories

Recognize 3 winners per each main category:

- Diversion
- Per Capita Recycling
- Reduce Food Loss by Rescuing Food
- Diverting Food Waste from Landfills/Incineration

According to Carnegie Classification:

- Small/Very Small
- Medium
- Large/Very Large

Benefits/Impacts:

- Opportunity to recognize more campuses
- Level the playing field

Diversion Category

Awards the school with the highest waste diversion percentage.

Diversion is determined by the percentage of the total weight of recyclables, rescued food, food waste composted/anaerobic digestion generated diverted from total waste generated. To be ranked in this category, schools must provide their trash, paper, cardboard and cans and bottles weights. Results are calculated using the following equation:

- Weight of Recyclables + Rescued Food + Food Waste Composted + Anaerobic Digestion Generated x 100
  ---------- = XX%
  Weight of Recyclables, Food + Weight of Trash

Per Capita Category

In this category schools compete to see which can collect the largest combined amount of paper, cardboard and bottles and cans on a per person basis. Results are calculated by dividing recycling weight figures with the full time equivalent (FTE) student and staff population of the school.

This is a great category for schools just getting started!

Results are calculated using the following equation:

- Weight of Recyclables
  ---------- = XX.XX lbs.
  Campus Population

Named in honor of Steve Gaski of Miami University, an early supporter of RecycleMania in its first years.

Food Categories

- **Reduce Food Loss By Rescuing Food**
- **Diverting Food Waste from Landfills/Incineration**

<u>Prerequisite to participate in the food waste categories:</u>
Participating college/university is doing ***<u>at least one</u>*** *of the following actions on campus to address food overage.*

- Portion control techniques (trayless/small plates/pay-per serving instead of all you can eat)
- Measures and reduces food waste in back-of-house food preparation.
- Follows campus policy addressing minimizing food preparation overage each day.

Auburn University

Category: Reduce Food Loss by Rescuing Food

This category is designed for schools to take a closer look at what happens to viable food (food overage) after services are done and then prioritizes rescuing/redirecting the food that is commonly lost to the practices of compost and anaerobic digestion. Food should be first redirected to feed people, and repurposed to feed livestock.

<u>Schools will report weekly during the competition</u>:
+ total lbs of food rescued & redirected to feed other people
+ total lbs of food repurposed to feed livestock

Divided by:
+ total lbs of food waste composted + anaerobic digestion
+ total lbs of food rescued & redirected to feed other people
+ total lbs of food repurposed to feed livestock

X 100 = %

Winner is the school with the highest percent from the equation.

Category: Diverting Food Waste from Landfills/Incineration

Schools will report on food loss (i.e., was not captured to feed people, or feed livestock) but was *diverted* away from landfills / incineration through the practices of food waste composting and anaerobic digestion.

<u>Schools will report weekly during the competition</u>:
+ total lbs of food waste composted
+ total lbs of food waste processed by anaerobic digestion
Divided by:
+ total lbs of material sent to the landfill / incineration
+ total lbs of food waste composted
+ total lbs of food waste processed by anaerobic digestion
X 100 = %

Winner is the school with the highest number from the equation.

8 Week Reporting Categories

Accepted

Materials discarded by individuals

- Cans, Bottles, Containers (metal & plastic)
- Paper = All sources
- Cardboard
- Food waste

View full list online: Participate/ Rules

Not Accepted

- Appliances
- Scrap metals
- Yard waste
- Construction waste
- Medical waste
- Waste-to-energy
- Electronics*

*Only counted for special category

8 Week Reporting Schedule

Hope College

Weekly Reporting Schedule

- Track Sunday through Saturday
- Reports due by following Wednesday

- Results posted every Friday
- Full reporting schedule at www.CampusRacetoZeroWaste.org

Special Categories *One Time Reporting*

- **Electronics -** One month tracking, community is welcome to participate, Per Capita & Total Amount recognized.
- **GameDay Basketball** – Report on one home game, Diversion, Per Capita Recycling, Rescuing Food to Reduce Food Loss and Diverting Food Waste from Landfills/Incineration.
- **Case Study Competition –** Share best practices, **due late-June**, judged by panel, featured on website.

Temple University

CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE

Electronics – Report by end of competition

All e-waste: computers, printers, TV's, consumer electronics, media, etc.

- One month collection period
- All sources: institutional, drop off events, etc.
- Ranking: Per capita and total amount recycled
- Community welcome to participate

Southwestern College, Electronics

Campus participants in this category must use recycling service providers that are certified by R2 or e-Stewards for appropriate environmental practices.

CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE

GameDay Basketball

- Select one home game
- Recycling, trash and food
- organics
- Report weights after game
- Ranking by:
  - Per Capita Recycling
  - Diversion Rate
  - Food Rescued
  - Food Waste Diverted from landfill/incineration

The Ohio State University

CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE

Case Study Competition

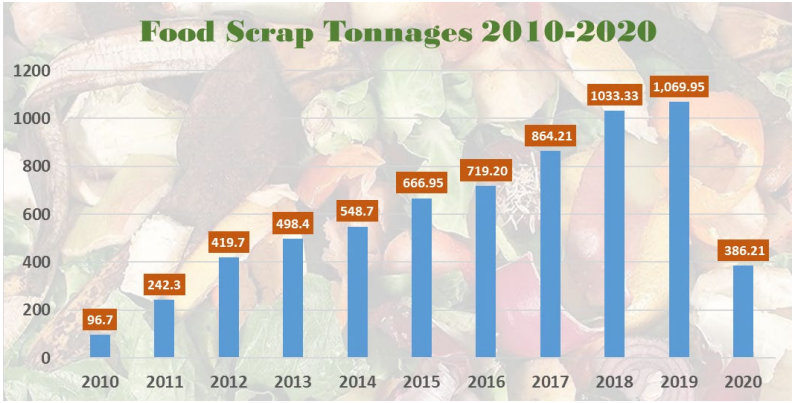
- Share best practices and strategies
- Describe goal, planning steps, timeline, implementation and results
- Winners will be recognized in four categories
  - Waste diversion
  - Zero waste
  - Food waste reduction
  - Education and awareness
- All case studies will be featured on website, shared via email and social media
- **Case studies due in June**
- **Winners announced in August**

Towson University

CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE

Data Tracking Logistics

- Who has data?
- All sources for campus
- What form does it come in?
  - Actual Weight
  - Volume to weight
- How frequently can they provide it?
- Take advantage of Pre-season weeks

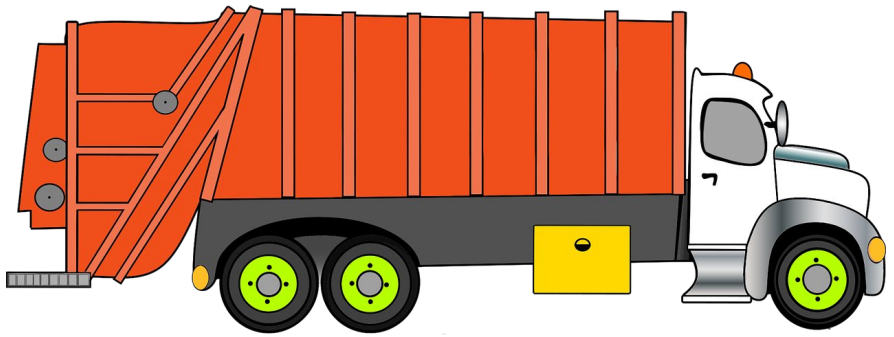


University of California Irvine

Tracking Weights

Applies to schools displayed in published national results

- **Actual Weights - reports from your hauler**
  - Weekly, bi-weekly, monthly
- **Estimates (options):**
  - Weigh sample bins to get an average weight of half and full bins
  - Weigh several bags of waste and get an average weight per bag
  - Use EPA Volume-to-Weight Conversion (available on website)



EPA Volume to Weight Conversions

The goal of this update is to identify more current secondary data measurements of the various products. Of particular interest are products known to have been source reduced through light weighting since the early nineties such as plastic, glass and metal packaging. Some factors included on the original table are excluded from the revised table due to lack of updated data. Primary data collection was not performed.

The original Appendix B table included 12 materials categories; the updated table provides factors for 15 material categories, including the following.

- Appliances
- Automotive
- Carpeting
- Commingled Recyclables
- Electronics
- Food
- Glass
- Metals
- Municipal Solid Waste
- Paper
- Plastic
- Textiles
- Wood
- Yard Trimmings
- Construction & Demolition Debris (C&D)

CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE

EPA Volume to Weight Conversions

Category	Recyclable Materials	Volume	Estimated Weight (lbs)	Source
Commingled Recyclable Material	*Single family Recyclables*	cubic yard	126	2
	Containers (Food/beverage, Glass) Corrugated Containers and Paper- No glass			
	Campus Recyclables	cubic yard	139	2
	Commercial Recyclables	cubic yard	155	2
Electronics	Computer Equipment			
	Desktop			
	Laptop			
	Monitor			
	CRT			
	15"			
	17"			
	21"			
	Flat Pan			
	Mixed M			
	Televisions			
	CRT < 19			
	CRT ≥ 19			
	Flat Pan			
	Mixed T			
	Whole	cubic yard	136	7
Paper	Newsprint			
	Loose	cubic yard	360-800	1
	Baled	cubic yard	750-1,000	10
	Books - paperback, loose	cubic yard	428	23
	Old Corrugated Containers			
	Flattened	cubic yard	106	4
	Baled	cubic yard	700-1,100	10
	Old Corrugated Containers and Chip Board			
	Uncompacted	cubic yard	74.54	4
	Office Paper			
	Computer Paper			
	Loose	cubic yard	375-465	1
	Compacted/Baled	cubic yard	755-925	1
	Mixed			
	Loose	cubic yard	110-380	1
	Loose	cubic yard	323	4
	Compacted	cubic yard	610-755	1
	Shredded	cubic yard	128	4
	Mixed Baled	cubic yard	1,000-1,200	10
	Miscellaneous			
	Cartons (milk and juice) uncrushed	cubic yard	50	7
Plastic	PET			
	PET Bottles - baled	30"x42"x 48"	525-630	12

CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE

8 Week Categories - Tracking Rules

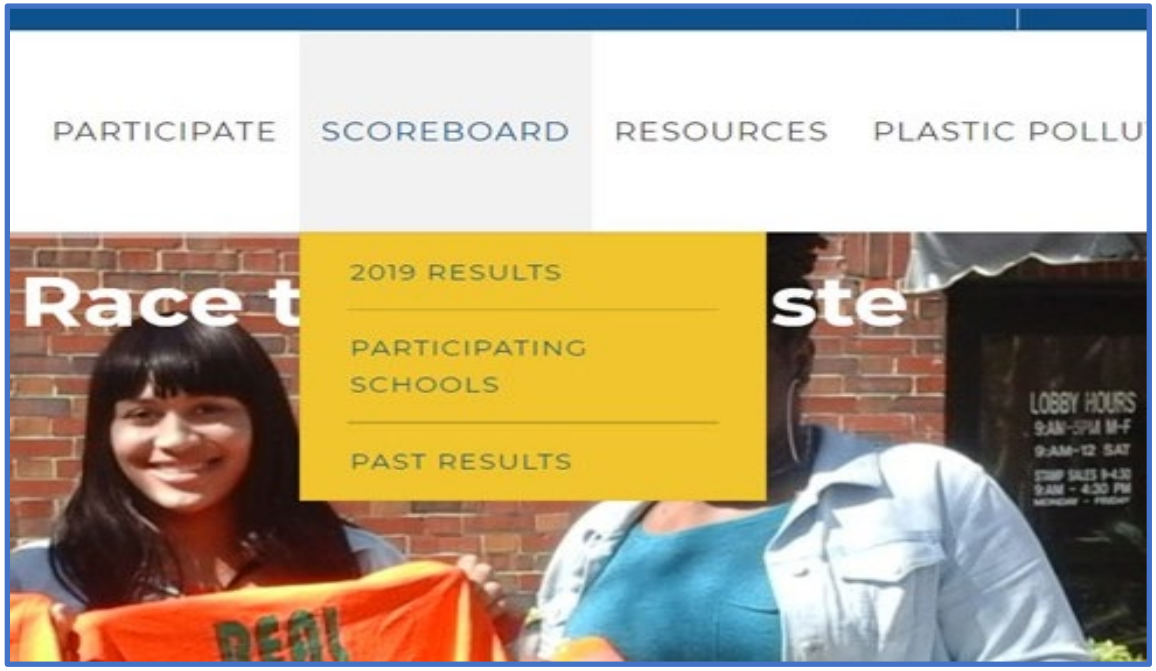
- Pre-season vs. Official competition
- Materials generated for entire campus
- No institutional stockpiling - “Normal” purges are OK
- Good faith representation of campus waste generation
- **Enter current students and staff FTE during registration**
  - Other resource - Federal IPEDS database*

*National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE

How to View National Results

8-week categories



Special Categories

- Displayed at end of competition

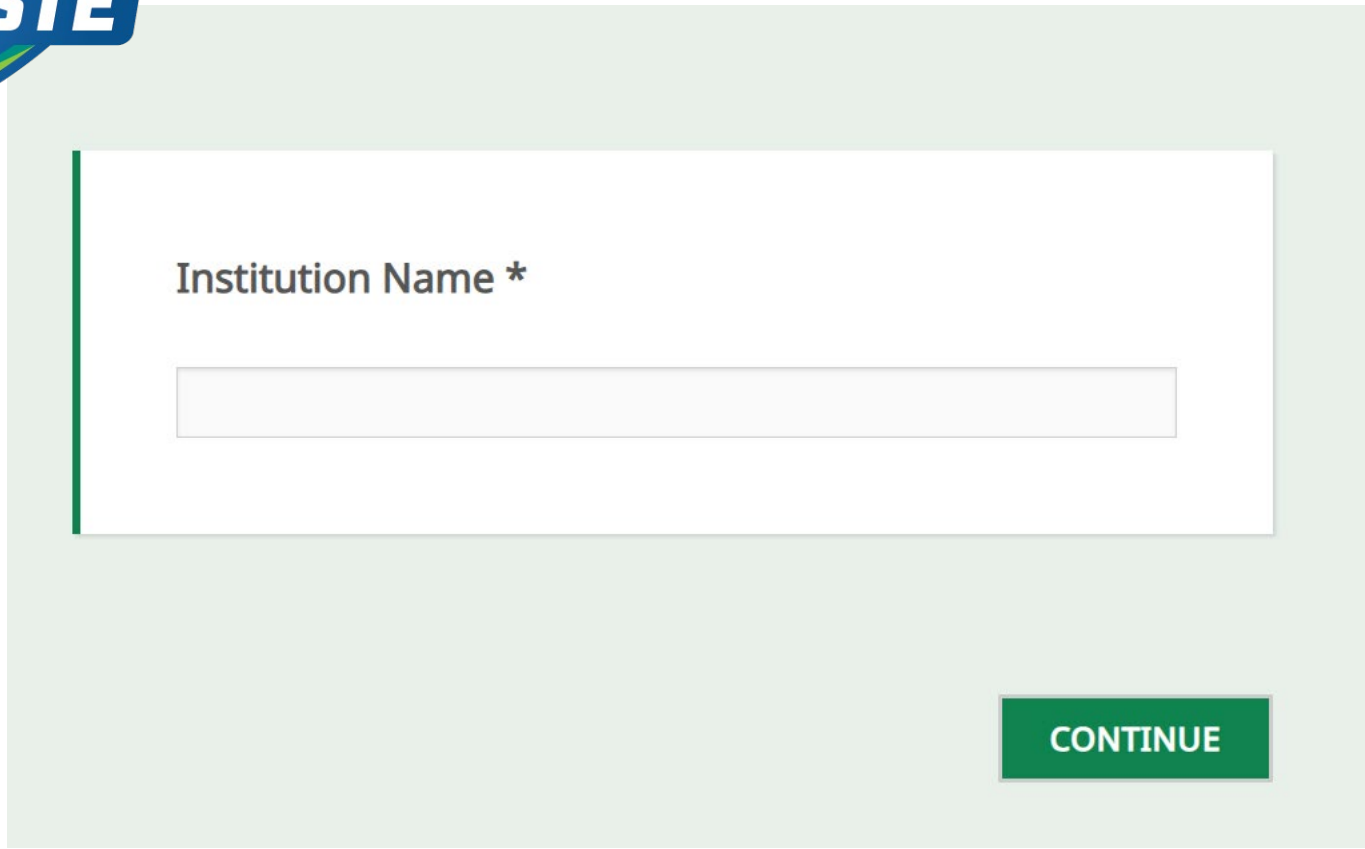
Steps To Get Ready

1. Register! Set goals & level of participation
2. Assemble team
3. Determine resources
4. Plan outreach activities
5. Data tracking logistics

University of Southern California

CAMPUS RACE TO ZERO WASTE

One Step Registration Process: Crowdsignal Platform



2026-2027 Key Dates

Oct 15	Registration Open
Jan 17-30	Pre-season weeks (two weeks)
Jan 31	Competition begins
Feb 9	Deadline to register
Mar 27	Last day of competition
April 23	Unofficial results posted
April 29	Final results announced

Web & Engagement Resources

- Planning checklist
- Rules
- Download logo, files
- Activity Ideas
- Case studies (Learn from your peers)
- Best practice spotlights: **Outreach & Engaging the Campus Community** (featured on Webinar page)
- **Mentor Opportunities**
- Guide: *Activity Guide for Students*

www.campusracetozerowaste.org

Questions?

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