



KEEP STUDENTS NOURISHED
AND REDUCE WASTE WITH

BULK MILK

• made with **real** milk •



BULK MILK SUCCESS GUIDE



DID YOU KNOW: Milk cartons make up at least half of a school's lunch trash volume! And that's not all. Students waste **30% OF MILK IN CARTONS**. That means about 4 gallons of milk gets tossed into trash cans every day at just one school!*



BULK MILK DISPENSERS are an important service when focusing on sustainability and zero waste. They can reduce food waste and trash, and help boost student milk consumption.



This **BULK MILK SUCCESS GUIDE** is designed to share implementation and logistic best practices, answer FAQs and empower you to add bulk milk dispensers into food service programs.



WHAT MAKES BULK MILK GREAT?

- **YOU CAN SERVE MILK IN REUSABLE CUPS.** Now, students can take how much milk they want. This can reduce carton and milk waste by up to **91%**. Bulk milk bags also cost less on average than individual milk cartons.
- **STUDENTS ENJOY THE FREEDOM OF SELF-SERVICE.** They can get their own milk and mix flavors. This can increase milk consumption up to **52%!***
- **COLD MILK TASTES BETTER!** Students report preferring the taste of fresh cold milk. With bulk dispensers, milk stays cold at a constant temperature instead of being kept in an open cooler like milk cartons.



And of course, bulk milk still provides the same powerful package of **13 ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS** as carton milk.

*Estimated per 200 students.

**Data collected from 4 dairy associations, 2014-2019.



A SEAMLESS TRANSITION

Switching to bulk milk can help you reduce waste and increase student milk consumption. And with a little planning, the transition can happen with ease.

SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER UP FRONT INCLUDE:



WHERE WILL THE MILK DISPENSER BE LOCATED IN THE SERVING LINE?



HOW MANY MILK DISPENSERS AND SPOUTS WILL BE NEEDED?



ARE ADEQUATE ELECTRIC OUTLETS AVAILABLE?



WHERE WILL YOU STORE CUPS?



WILL YOU USE LIDS TO PREVENT SPILLAGE?



HOW MUCH STAFF TIME WILL BE NEEDED TO CLEAN UP SPILLS?

OTHER EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLY NEEDS TO CONSIDER:

SERVING

Reusable 9-ounce cups are recommended, but you can also use disposable or compostable cups.

CLEANING

Reusable cups can be washed by hand, but a dishwasher is recommended. If a dishwashing unit is needed, consider the space and cost.



A WINNING TEAM

Your bulk milk program will have multiple stakeholders. Getting their involvement can secure their buy-in and help make the transition from carton milk smooth.

KEY ROLES TO CONSIDER INCLUDE:

SCHOOL NUTRITION DIRECTOR

- Make the decision to switch to bulk milk
- Gain buy-in from principle and staff
- Manage processes from purchasing to training

PRINCIPAL

- Lead from the top
- Gain buy-in from teachers and staff

SCHOOL NUTRITION SUPERVISORS & MANAGERS

- Oversee the program and monitor its implementation

CAFETERIA STAFF

- Monitor the bulk milk machine and how students use it
- Count and claim milk usage

CUSTODIANS

- Help design procedures for spills and disposal

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDE:

- **LEARN FROM OTHERS.** Visit other districts already operating a bulk milk program to observe best practices and ask for training materials.
- **OFFER A DEMO.** Allow students to test out your new bulk milk machine and become familiar with the new process. Staff can also observe the demo and make any necessary adjustments.
- **UNDERSTAND THE STAFFING IMPACT.** To estimate the number of additional staff hours you will need, start with the number of breakfast meals your staff makes per hour. Plan for an increase in breakfast meals by at least 50%. Also, look at your current schedule and determine if you will need to adjust the staff start time to cover the breakfast program preparation and delivery.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Where do I find milk in bulk?

A. Work with your local processor to find bulk milk and confirm it's available in your area. Different bulk milk sizes and flavors may be available.

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How are USDA requirements met for a reimbursable meal?

A. Students typically have a reimbursable meal by the time they've gone through the service line. Schools may qualify differently for reimbursement based on service options, like "offer versus serve." However, audits in districts using dispensers have indicated no issues. Always check current USDA guidance for the most up-to-date meal pattern requirements and crediting information.

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What type of cup is needed? Where should they be located?

A. Reusable 9-ounce cups are the recommended option. You can also use disposable and/or compostable cups. We recommend placing the cups on a cart or on a serving line just before the milk dispensers if space allows.

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Will switching to bulk milk require additional staff labor?

A. Some schools reported that additional labor may be necessary to clean the dispenser and reusable cups, and to switch out the bags. Other schools reported that additional time to wash cups was minimal.

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How do we avoid spillage?

A. Schools have reported minimal spills after switching to milk dispensers. In fact, some reported fewer spills. Having a larger (>8 oz.) and wider cup helps students handle the trays better. Educating students on the new process prior to implementation and labeling milk options with pictures can be helpful.

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How should we handle leftover milk?

A. Students can pour unfinished milk into a bucket placed by the trash cans or the dish window, then place their cup upside down in a designated dishwashing tray.

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Is it important to track milk taken, consumed, and milk wasted?

A. Yes. We recommend you study milk taken, consumed, and wasted before and after your school's switch to bulk milk. This will help determine how successful the program is and whether you need to make adjustments. We also recommend a pre- and post-switch study on milk packaging waste by volume and weight.



BULK MILK SUCCESS: CASE STUDIES

An elementary school in Virginia saw success incorporating bulk milk into their school meal programs. Find out how bulk milk dispenser machines **INCREASED STUDENT MILK CONSUMPTION AND REDUCED WASTE.**

HARRISONBURG CITY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT - VIRGINIA

41%
INCREASE
IN MILK
TAKEN

52%
INCREASE
IN MILK
CONSUMED

Bluestone Elementary School replaced milk cartons with a bulk milk dispenser in 2019. After implementation, overall milk consumption **INCREASED FROM 71% TO 77% OF ALL MILK TAKEN DAILY!** The response from staff and students has been overwhelmingly positive, and the district is looking for opportunities to offer bulk milk in other schools.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CURBS WASTE WITH BULK MILK MACHINE

89%
TOTAL MILK AND CARTON
WASTE REDUCTION
AFTER SWITCHING TO
BULK MILK.

Milk and carton waste decreased significantly after the switch to bulk milk dispensers. Bluestone Elementary saw an **89% REDUCTION IN WASTE BY WEIGHT** over the course of one school year! That saves over 2,174 pounds of waste from entering landfills. This is especially significant for areas like Harrisonburg where recycling for milk cartons is not available and the community is looking for solutions for waste reduction.

TEACHERS AND SCHOOL STAFF HAVE LOVED THE CHANGE AS WELL

“ THE MILK DISPENSERS HAVE INCREASED MY CLASS’ MILK CONSUMPTION. ”

“ MORE STUDENTS ARE EXCITED ABOUT GETTING MILK FOR LUNCH. MANY WATER DRINKERS HAVE SWITCHED OVER TO DRINKING MILK. ”

“ THE STUDENTS] FREQUENTLY EXPRESS HOW MUCH BETTER THE MILK TASTES. ”

“ IT’S ENCOURAGING TO SEE KIDS SO EXCITED ABOUT HEALTH AND RESPONSIBLE WASTE-RELATED PRACTICES. ”



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

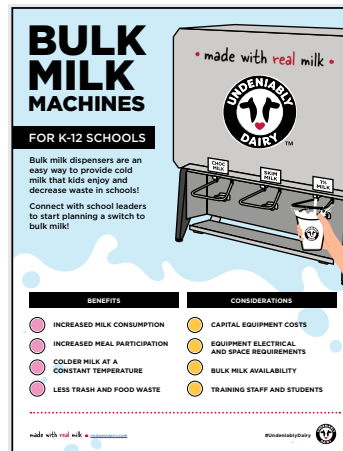
RESOURCES

Hubert Milk Dispensers

[Learn More](#)

Silver King Milk Dispensers

[Learn More](#)



[VIEW FLYER \(8.5" x 11"\)](#)

CHECK OUT THESE OTHER TOOLKITS TO ADD DAIRY INTO OTHER PARTS OF YOUR FOODSERVICE PROGRAM:



[Hot Chocolate Milk](#)



[Smoothie Toolkit](#)



[School Breakfast](#)



[Latte Toolkit](#)

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