What is a Pulper?

- In 2016, Luther installed a WasteXpress System in the cafeteria dish room. Before, students were responsible for scraping their own compost and trash before placing dishes on the carousel.
- Now, the scraping happens behind the scenes in the dish room. The pulper pulverizes consumer plate waste and removes 90% of the moisture. This process makes the finished product much easier to break down in the college compost pile, reduces the volume needing to be transported to the college farm, and makes the compost cleaner with no silverware, plastics or other contaminants.
- Overall, the pulper will help Luther College reach the goal reducing organics sent to landfill by 90%.

Campus Impact

The student Union houses three out of the four campus dining locations, including the cafeteria. Waste audit results show the impact of the pulper on contents of the Union dumpster.

Before the Pulper: 70% organics
After the Pulper: 12% organics

“True trash” can be defined as any item that can not be recycled, reused, or composted through our current infrastructure. The goal is to be close to 100% true trash.

Solid Waste Reduction

- 40% reduction from baseline
- 24% reduction since streamlining waste infrastructure

Move-Out Efforts

Luther’s move-out process is the most engaging sustainability education initiative that occurs during the year.

Through signage and one-on-one education, students are encouraged to donate usable items to the donation collection room in their residence halls and to recycle all paper, plastic, metal and cardboard.

Last move-out there were...
- 10 total donation rooms conveniently located around campus
- 37 Luther students that volunteered their time or helped through work study
- 400 total hours of help towards on campus move-out efforts

Students donated...
- 11 full 18’ trucks of clothing, furniture and other materials for local thrift stores
- 300 pounds of toiletries and laundry soap
- 1,600 pounds of food to the food pantry

Volunteers were in charge of ensuring that only “true trash” lands in the dumpsters. They organized donation rooms, loaded donation trucks, dumpster dived for items that should be recycled or donated, and answered any questions students may have had.

Outcomes

- 40% reduction in move-out waste over the past 5 years
- Zero Waste Goal: Reduce dining services food waste (% of organics in the dumpster) by 90% by May 2018.
- Zero Waste Goal: 50% reduction in campus waste by May 2018, 70% by 2020, and 90% by 2025.
- Zero Waste Goal: Reduce move-out waste 50% by May 2018.

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