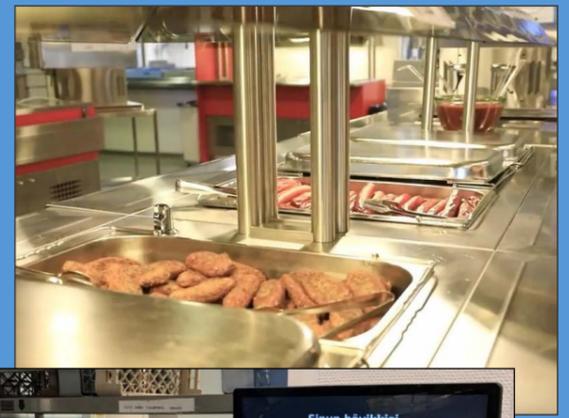


Improving the quality of (vegetarian) FOOD

SAMKE UPPER SECONDARY



Resources

HUMAN



TIME



COSTS



What was the intervention about?

This intervention aimed to improve the sustainability and quality of food served at the school canteen. The students and teachers had found especially the quality of vegetarian food poor, which led to students not choosing the vegetarian option, and an unnecessarily large amount of biowaste. They wanted to decrease the amount of leftover food, decrease the environmental impact of the food, and foster positive attitudes towards (more sustainable) vegetarian food, especially among students.

- » Zero biowaste days for the whole school- info slides from the student team on info screens
- » Query about food
- » Meetings with students, teachers, municipality administration, and food service company
- » Measuring the amount of Biowaste from the school: acquiring a password from the recycling company for getting the statistics about the changes in amount (kg) during the project

- » Experiment on taking trays away from the lunches, because washing the trays uses lots of water and energy every day. During the experiment, it was noted, that with such a big school and many students in the canteen same time, the trays are very important.
- » The new practice: the students and teachers and other staff can buy leftover food from kitchen at the end of the day, so it won't go to biowaste
- » The purchase of the biowaste scale <https://biovaaka.fi/en/>
- » A tasting day for student team to comment on new vegetarian dishes, organised by the lunch service company

Challenges

- » Hectic school life, lack of time for extra activities, planning interesting meetings for students, not too much talk, but concrete action, and integrating activities that improve social relations within the students' teams.
- » Communication issues, how to inform about the campaigns.

Sustainability competences in place in the intervention



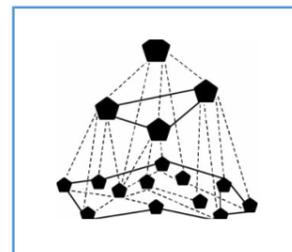
Engagement

- » The quality of food served at school is important for students and their well-being, so they had the motivation to engage in sustainability efforts concerning lunch.
- » The CO₂ emissions of food served at schools are a relevant and remarkable issue in municipality CO₂ calculations, and the municipality is engaged in decreasing the emissions from the food served at schools.
- » The engagement of the municipality with quality food shows when the lunch service company is obliged to consider students' feedback.
- » The engagement of students to think about the sustainability of food is poor on average: the atmosphere in a school devoted to sports has other priorities, like having enough calories and the right share of nutrients in the food.



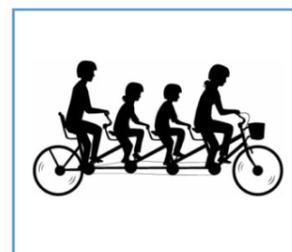
Change

- » The hope was that the quality of school food would slightly improve, the feedback system from students to the lunch service company would improve, and people would learn how they could influence and collaborate for a more sustainable food system at school.
- » The student and teacher teams tried different innovative ways to make the lunch system more sustainable.
- » The meetings (including SCTs and SCCs) to consider the possibilities and plan action were crucial in promoting the activities.



Connections

- » Most of the issues related to school food are not controlled by the school or its own canteen personnel, as production and decisions are centralised.
- » The poor national budget and the budget of the municipality are connected to the quality of food, because lunches are free for students, which comes under the legislation of Finland.



Action

- » Meetings of the students' team and the teachers' team have been crucial in taking action, and the positive, resilient attitudes of the team members.
- » When people regard this as important, they prioritise the collaboration, and time is easier to find.
- » Limited time resources of students and teachers have been an obstacle.
- » The purchase of the biowaste scale wouldn't be possible without the ECF4CLIM project.
- » It has an annual cost, and there is a preliminary decision that the school will pay the scale even in the future, without the help of any project.

Analytical framework

Individual Competences

- » The collaboration and argumentation skills of all the people involved
- » Systems understanding: what really matters, being able to understand all the connected and interfering issues.
- » Skills for choosing sustainable nutrition and food
- » Understanding the meaning of vegetarian food
- » Skills of cooking by restaurant and food service company members
- » Realising the personal amount of leftover food with the bio scale

Collective Competences

- » Finding time and space for meetings
- » Structures for cooperation with the lunch service company, the principals, teachers and students
- » Affecting the norms of the whole municipality by negotiating with the common lunch service company
- » Trying to have an impact on increasing the resources for sustainable nutrition and food
- » Collective understanding of the amount of leftover food on different days and with different dishes
- » New practice: You can buy leftover food from the kitchen at the end of the day
- » Background: existing strategy of the lunch service company
- » Background: existing sustainability strategy of the municipality, stating increasing the vegetarian food as a goal

Technical-material Competences

- » Possibilities for information: a big screen in the canteen
- » Biowaste scale to measure the amount of wasted food, individual feedback and figures from the statistics on different days

