



COUNTY OF ANOKA

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

GOVERNMENT CENTER
2100 3RD AVENUE STE 700 • ANOKA, MINNESOTA 55303-5024
(763) 323-5700

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MARTHA WEAVER

Public Information Manager

Direct #763-323-5744

E-mail: martha.weaver@co.anoka.mn.us

Contact: Martha Weaver, Public Information Manager, 763-323-5744, or e-mail: martha.weaver@co.anoka.mn.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

School Lunch Recycling Program Goes Hog Wild

The more than 2000 pigs owned by the Barthold family aren't especially picky about what goes into their trough at feeding time. So they don't much care that each week more than 900 pounds of food waste from the school lunch program at Madison Elementary School in Blaine is collected and specially processed into a snout-smacking slurry, reducing the number of garbage pickups at the school by 20 percent and simultaneously teaching students a valuable lesson about the importance of recycling. See for yourself and watch 'Pigs Aren't Picky' at Anoka County's YouTube channel: <http://tinyurl.com/6rwz4qf>.

The food to hogs program is a collaborative effort of Madison Elementary School, Anoka County's Integrated Waste Department, and Barthold Recycling. With a goal of boosting recycling levels at the school, special sorting stations were placed in the school's lunchroom to separate liquids, leftover food, and napkins, paper, and other garbage. Collection bins were identified with pictures and simple labels help students place items in the proper container.

"This program gives students a great example of how to recycle and reuse resources," said Dorothy M. Olsen, Madison Elementary principal. "Hopefully, they will continue these behaviors into adulthood."

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School Lunch Recycling Program Goes Hog Wild – Add 1

The collected food waste is delivered to one of the Barthold family farms located in Anoka and Isanti counties where it is heated to 212 degrees to kill potentially harmful bacteria and make it safe for the pigs to eat. The lunchroom leftovers provide all the nutrition the hogs need, according to Pete Barthold, who runs the farm.

“Students have been enthusiastic participants in this new recycling effort,” said Anoka County Commissioner Jim Kordiak, chair of the county’s Waste Management and Energy Committee. “This program gives children the opportunity to participate in a concrete, meaningful way in efforts to protect our environment and conserve natural resources.”

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CUTLINE

Students at Madison Elementary School in Blaine are enthusiastic about the new Food to Hogs recycling program. From left: Rajeev Persaud, Anabelle Wylie, Ethan Wiens, Parent Krystal White (holding baby), Commissioner Jim Kordiak, Madison Principal Dorothy Olsen, and Zachary White.

School Lunch Recycling Program Goes Hog Wild – Add 2



CUTLINE

Food waste from the school lunch program at Madison Elementary becomes nutritious food for hogs under a new Anoka County recycling program.

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