Think Globally, Act Locally
Mirano Ota
Middle School Attached to Rakunan High School

One day, I was eating dinner with my family at a local restaurant. A little foreign girl sitting next to us asked, “Mom, do you have a doggie bag?” I thought, “Doggie bag? What on earth is that?” I had never heard of that before.

According to the Internet, “doggie bag” is a bag for food that a customer did not eat at a restaurant. Customers feel embarrassed bringing leftovers home, so they use a doggie bag for their dog’s food as an excuse. So, the girl in the restaurant tried to bring her leftovers home. I’ve never done or even thought about that. Then I realized I’ve been leaving food so carelessly.

Food waste is a global problem. One third of all food – about 13 hundred million tons – is wasted globally every year according to the Food and Agriculture Organization. Can we continue wasting this huge amount of food? Besides, it is Japan that wastes food the most. Half of the food loss in Japan comes from homes.

When I knew the facts, I was totally shocked. Then, one phrase came to mind: “Think globally, act locally.” Food waste is not only a global problem but a local problem. There must be something I can do. Then I thought, “how much wasted food is there in my house?” I checked all the food in my house. I found that my house had too much food loss such as expired canned food and spoiled vegetables in the fridge. I also found that we had too much food. That is why my mother made so many dishes and we could not eat them all.

To reduce food waste, my family started a “No-food-loss Project”. Firstly, we made sure to use up food stock before it went bad. We checked vegetables, dairy products and meat. By paying attention to the best before date, we finished up food. Secondly, we were careful not to leave any food on our plates. My mother does not buy more than she needs, like she used to, even when groceries are discounted. She makes the best use of food in the fridge when cooking. As a result, we don’t have any food waste in my family these days. What’s more, my father lost five centimeters from his waist.

Our “No-food-loss Project” was a great success. What I learned from this project is the importance of cutting down on food waste in shopping, cooking and dining. I think it’s the best and simplest way to reduce food waste. It’s not something that the government can do, but it is something that each family can do.

Now, let’s start YOUR “No-food-loss Project”! The little foreign girl was not only taking leftovers home, but also taking care not to waste food. Her action reminded me that we should not take food for granted. We cannot live without it. How could we waste food so easily? Now, it’s MY turn to remind YOU that we should treasure food for people around the globe as well as us. If each of us doesn’t start, who will? We can make the world better. Why don’t you think globally and act locally with me?