

# Quick Service Restaurants: Taking Action on Waste

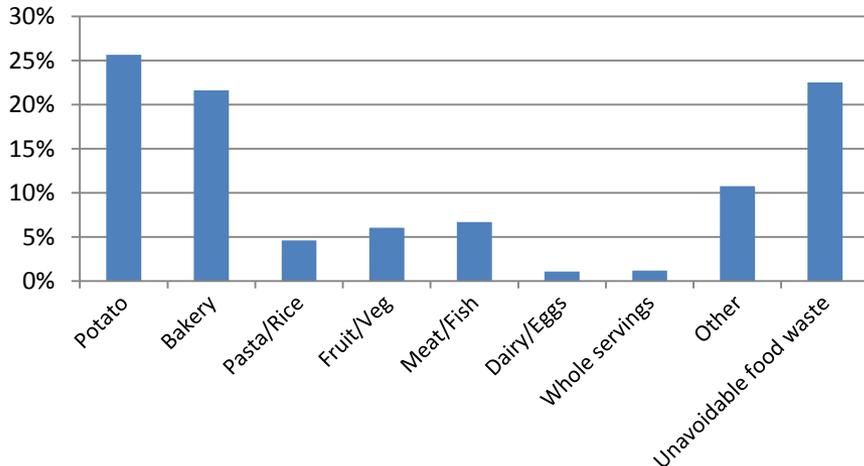


## The Quick Service Restaurant (QSR) Sector

Waste is a key issue for QSRs. Food waste represents a cost to the QSR Sector alone of **£277 million** each year including food procurement, labour, utilities and waste management costs, or **£3,500** per tonne.

This information sheet outlines where waste arises as well as showing how to reduce this waste and save money.

### QSRs: The Composition of Food Waste



## Financial Implications for Business

- The average cost of avoidable food waste to business is £0.14 per meal.

### Estimated annual statistics show that UK QSRs:

- serve **25%** of all meals eaten out in the UK each year, equivalent to **1,977 million** meals;
- produce **163,400 tonnes** of waste each year in the UK, including **76,000 tonnes** of food waste; and
- produce **8.3%** of the total food waste across the Hospitality and Food Service sector in the UK.

### Estimated Recycling Rates of QSRs

- Overall, **40%** of all waste is recycled. This is made up of:
  - **33%** of food waste composted or sent to anaerobic digestion (AD).
  - **46%** of packaging and other wastes recycled.

### Why Take Action?

Applying a cost to food waste demonstrates the true value of what is wasted and the potential savings that can be made. By taking a few simple steps to waste less and recycle more, businesses can reap financial as well as environmental benefits. Read on and find out more.

## The Quick Service Restaurant Sector

**Step 1**  
Measure and monitor

**Step 2**  
Develop an action plan;  
Ways to waste less

**Step 2 (cont.)**  
Develop an action plan;  
Ways to recycle more

**Steps 3 and 4**  
Review progress and share your good work

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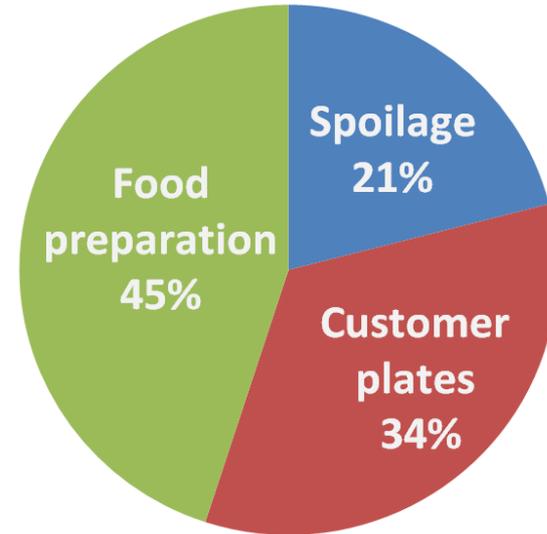
**Step 1: measure and monitor** food that goes in the bin for a trial period, e.g. a week, to understand where and why this waste arises. Repeat this at least twice a year to measure your progress. This will enable the cost of food waste to be identified and for progress to be tracked over time.

- **For the trial, start collecting food waste in separate bins**, where appropriate. Weigh them so that the amount of food waste can be compared to other wastes. Alternatively, if separate food waste collections are in place, your waste contractor may be able to provide this data.
- **For the trial use three separate bins** (one each for preparation, spoilage and plate waste), where appropriate. Weigh them daily to find out where the most food waste is being generated. This should include food that would otherwise have ended up in the sink disposal unit.
- **Calculate the amount of food waste produced each year** from the data collected. Multiply this figure by the cost per tonne (£3,500) to find out how much this is costing your business each year.

**Useful Tools**

- WRAP's Online Resource Centre, which includes downloadable tracking sheets: <http://www.wrap.org.uk/resource-centre>
- The Unilever Food Solution mobile app for chefs, Wise up on Waste: <http://www.unileverfoodsolutions.co.uk/our-services/your-kitchen/wise-waste-app>

**Where Does Food Waste Come From?**



These ratios are general estimates from hospitality and food service research. They can vary according to different kitchen operations and how much food is brought in pre-prepared.



## Step 2: develop an action plan, with targets, timescales and responsibilities. Involve your staff. Build in time to measure progress and track how much money is being saved. There are lots of opportunities.

### Ways to Waste Less

- **Review stock management and food delivery processes** for food items with a short shelf life. This can be a simple way to reduce spoilage waste.
- **Run your own 'chef master classes'** to reduce food wasted during preparation.
- **Look at ways to improve menu planning** as well as giving consumers more choice. Try offering consumers the choice of different portion sizes, for example.
- **Redistribute surplus food to charities**, where possible. Work with charities such as [Plan Zheroes](#) and [FareShare](#). Note: donations must comply with food safety legislation.
- **Train staff** so that they are aware of what they can do to help reduce food waste.

### Useful Tools

- WRAP's consumer-facing Love Food Hate Waste campaign has a [resource pack](#) which can be used to help reduce plate waste [www.wrap.org.uk/content/less-food-waste-saves-money](http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/less-food-waste-saves-money)

### Meeting Consumer Expectations

Use plate waste information to help with menu planning and portion sizes. A recent consumer survey showed that:

- 41% of those surveyed blamed oversized portions for leaving food.
- The main dish and sides are most likely to be left behind, with chips are the most commonly left food (32%).
- Participants were asked about their ideas on how to reduce food waste when eating out. The most popular response concerned the provision of different portion sizes (38%).

### Get the Packaging Right

Packaging plays a vital role in protecting and preserving food and drink throughout the supply chain. Suppliers may be able to help you to manage your packaging by:

- using returnable and re-usable transit packaging e.g. for fruit and vegetable;
- using catering packs which can result in less packaging per unit of product, but only if this is not going to create food waste because product is not used before it goes out of date;
- using re-usable packaging and/or serve drinks on tap; and
- optimising packaging, e.g. lighter weight bottles.

### Step 2

Develop an action plan;  
Ways to waste less

### Step 2 (cont.)

Develop an action plan;  
Ways to recycle more

### Steps 3 and 4

Review progress and share your good work

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Step 1  
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## Step 2 (cont.): ways to recycle more

- **Get the bins right.** Incorrect types and numbers of bins can lead to the wrong waste going in the wrong bin, such as recycling going in with general waste. Adjusting the size of bins or frequency that they are collected can also save money.
- **Ask the waste management contractor for your data.** Having data on how much waste is going to landfill, being recycled or going to anaerobic digestion will help to understand current levels of recycling. This information can then be used to identify further opportunities. Monitor how this changes on a regular basis.
- **Do the sums.** Recycling waste doesn't attract landfill tax and may cost less. If you are already recycling packaging, it's worth speaking to the waste contractor about other services including food waste collections.
- **Get staff on your side.** Engage staff to recycle more by helping them to understand which waste goes in which bin. It is key for staff to 'buy in' to initiatives so that they see the benefits. This will encourage participation and help increase recycling rates.
- **Work together.** Consider working with neighbouring businesses, where appropriate, to procure food waste and recycling collections, where appropriate. There maybe efficiencies/economies of scale to be made by working together.

- **Choose the most appropriate waste management solution for your needs.** When entering into a contract for food waste recycling, or other waste collections, make sure that the service meets your requirements and won't incur additional costs. Ask questions such as:
  - What type of containers will be provided?
  - What can and can't they recycle?
  - What are the charges; are there any separate charges e.g. for bin rental or over-filled bins?
  - What is the process for changing and/or renewing the contract?

### Useful Links

- Information and practical advice on food waste recycling collections, including posters, bin labels, and case studies: [www.wrap.org.uk/recyclingfood](http://www.wrap.org.uk/recyclingfood)
- Visit [www.recyclenowpartners.org.uk](http://www.recyclenowpartners.org.uk) to find lots of useful information about recycling, such as signage.
- Online waste management course from Nestlé Professional: <http://www.nestleprofessional.com/uk/en/Courses/Pages/Default.aspx>

### Waste Regulations in Scotland

- Legislation for the disposal of food and packaging waste is changing in Scotland from 2014, including a ban on food waste being disposed of to landfill and to sewer, and a requirement to separate food waste and certain packaging wastes for recycling: <http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/content/waste-scotland-regulations>

### Step 2 (cont.)

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**Step 3: review progress** on the plan each month, including speaking to staff and get their feedback on the progress being made. This will keep people involved and motivated. Measure the amount of waste produced regularly and work out how much money is being saved.

**Step 4: share your good work** with staff, consumers and industry. Also, keep up-to-date on all the good practice being carried out by other businesses by looking online e.g. the WRAP websites. Apply anything you learn to the plan which should be updated regularly.

#### Useful Links

- Free tools are available to help with measuring and reducing waste. Access all of these tools and more at [www.wrap.org.uk/hospitality](http://www.wrap.org.uk/hospitality)
- Help for organisations across Scotland to save money by using resources more efficiently: <http://www.resourceefficientscotland.com/>

#### Take Action on Waste

- To find out more about the Hospitality and Food Service Agreement, which is helping industry to take action on reducing waste and increasing recycling rates, visit: [www.wrap.org.uk/hafsagreement](http://www.wrap.org.uk/hafsagreement)

#### Domino's Pizza Prevent Spoilage

A simple way to minimise spoilage is to manage stock taking and deliveries of more perishable items. Domino's Pizza outlets operate a simple system for canned goods whereby tins are rolled in one end and taken out at the other. This ensures the shortest-date tins are always the next in line to be used.

#### SUBWAY: Improving Packaging

In September 2013 SUBWAY introduced a series of improvements to the sustainability of its packaging and operational procedure. This announcement followed the brand's move to sign up to the WRAP Hospitality and Food Service Agreement (HaFSA), pledging to cut food and associated packaging waste and increase recycling. The improvements include the following:

- Hot drinks are served in a double-wall hot cup, replacing the triple-wall hot cup. This is estimated by the company to save 30 tonnes of pulp per year across Europe and takes approximately 25% less energy to produce.
- Pouches used for the flatbread are fully recyclable and contain 50% recycled material.
- Sugar stick size has been reduced from 97-82mm which the company estimates brings about a 15% reduction in paper.
- Franchisees are encouraged to serve customers with a reusable basket which reduces Sub Wrap usage by up to 20-30% in stores.
- Reduced bag usage - stores now have the option of using a sticker to individually wrapped Subs for takeaway and bags are provided for takeaway purchases on request.



In association  
with:



This information sheet provides a summary of research data from WRAP.  
To view the full reports visit [www.wrap.org.uk/wasteinhafs](http://www.wrap.org.uk/wasteinhafs)

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