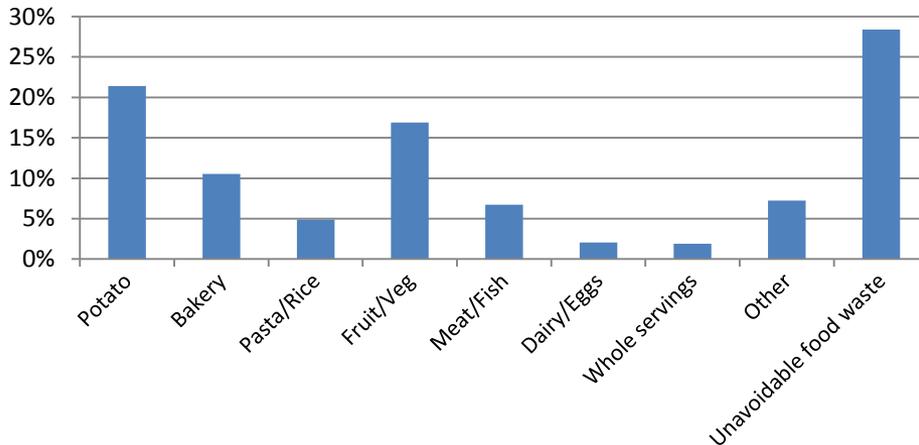


The Restaurant Sector

Waste is a key issue for restaurants. Food waste represents a cost to the Restaurant Sector alone of **£682 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.

UK Restaurants: The Composition of Food Waste



Financial Implications for Business

- The average cost of avoidable food waste to business is £0.97 per meal.

Estimated annual statistics show that UK Restaurants:

- serve **9%** of all meals eaten out in the UK each year, equivalent to **704 million meals**;
- produce **915,400 tonnes** of waste each year in the UK, including **199,100 tonnes** of food waste; and
- produce **22%** of the total food waste across the Hospitality and Food Service sector in the UK.

Estimated Recycling Rates of UK Restaurants

- Overall, **51%** of all waste is recycled. This is made up of:
 - **65%** of packaging and other wastes are recycled.
 - Rates of food waste going to composting or to anaerobic digestion (AD) are very low.

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 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

Restaurants: Taking Action on Waste

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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 so that you can 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 have ended up in the sink disposal unit.
- **Calculate the amount of 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, as outlined below.

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 customers more choice. For example:
 - offer customers the choice of different portion sizes e.g. for smaller portions you could offer a refill/second helping; and
 - consider offering customers options for side dishes so that they can order what they prefer and will not leave food on the plate.
- **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.
- **Offer doggy bags/boxes** to consumers, where appropriate. Check out the Love Food Hate Waste [resource pack](#) for further advice.

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 manage packaging, for example by:

- using returnable and re-usable transit packaging e.g. for fruit and vegetables;
- 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 serving drinks on tap, e.g. refillable drinks bottles, wine in carafes; and
- optimising packaging, e.g. lighter weight bottles.

Useful Tools

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

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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 the 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 to procure food waste and recycling collections, where appropriate. There may be 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
- Visit 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>

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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. Keep-up-to date on all the good practice being carried out by other businesses by looking online e.g. the WRAP websites. Regularly update the action plan with anything you learn.

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
- 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

Wahaca: Reducing Waste to Limit Environmental Impact

The Wahaca Mexican restaurant group operates a zero waste to landfill policy by monitoring all waste produced and minimising this wherever possible.

The company is addressing food waste by undertaking an analysis of the type and amount of food being returned “post meal” to the kitchen. Wahaca hopes that through gaining a greater understanding of this plate waste, they will be able to use this information to reduce food waste and improve their customer’s experience.

Wahaca has also introduced a “Green Wahaco Charter” throughout all of the company’s restaurants to encourage all employees to engage in the company’s environmental policies. Staff are encouraged to access a simple software programme to see how much electricity, gas and water is being used on a monthly basis at their site. They are then encouraged to actively reduce this by minimising the unnecessary use of utilities which in turn contributes to lessening the total carbon footprint for each site.



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

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