WAR ON WASTE

How to reduce waste in hospitality to help protect the future of food and our planet.

Brought to you by the Sustainable Restaurant Association in partnership with Arla Pro.

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A great meal is about more than just good food; and a good restaurant is more than a great meal.

At the start of 2020, one in five meals was sourced, prepared and served out of home in the UK, supporting the livelihoods of the three million people working in hospitality.¹²

And then the world stopped. Venues shut their doors to diners. Over half a million jobs have been lost.³ Whole businesses have closed. And as the sector contracts, so too does our shared experience, our shared culture.

We are at a crossroads as an industry and as a planet, now’s the time to build resilience: to source ingredients sustainably, reduce our waste and truly serve the needs of our community. It’s what diners want and it’s what we all need.

This is an opportunity to build back better.

We can take small steps that lead to big change - and changing our habits to stop wasting food is one of the most impactful things a restaurant can do to tackle climate change head on.

Now really is the time to join the War on Waste.

WHAT THE ‘WAR ON WASTE’ MEANS TO ARLA PRO.

Fighting food waste is a team effort that Arla Pro are a passionate part of. Reducing our waste takes dedication all the way from cow to consumer – and everything in between.

- From optimising production in our dairies through intelligent technology, to collaborations with food banks, our goal is to lead by example when it comes to fighting the war on food waste.

- For several years Arla has worked with FEBA – the European Food Banks Federation – which brings together 326 food banks in 23 countries. In 2018 we provided more than 1,200 tonnes of dairy products to those in need through FEBA – enough to make 2,800,000 meals.
FIVE REASONS WHY HOSPITALITY SHOULD JOIN THE WAR ON WASTE:

1. **One in six** restaurant meals are wasted in the UK.
   - **4.7 Million** people live in severe food insecurity in the UK.
   - **75%** of restaurant food waste is ‘avoidable’.
   - **23%** of diners expect restaurants to be tackling food waste.
   - **18%** of food purchased ends up as waste, on average **£10k per site**.

WHAT’S FOOD WASTE GOT TO DO WITH THE ENVIRONMENT?

There are two main reasons why food waste is an environmental catastrophe.

**Firstly,** the land, water and energy which are used to produce ingredients, are also wasted when food ends up in the bin. **28% of the world’s farmland is used to produce food which ends up as waste.**

Secondly, the majority of food waste ends up at landfill across the world where it emits unnecessary methane, which is a harmful greenhouse gas. In fact, **if food waste were a country it would be the third largest emitter of greenhouse gas emissions after the US and China.**

This means reducing food waste is one of the most powerful things restaurants can do to combat climate change.

WHAT’S FOOD WASTE GOT TO DO WITH PEOPLE?

Food should feed bellies, not bins

WHAT’S FOOD WASTE GOT TO DO WITH MONEY?

With every dish that goes in the bin, money goes down the drain.

It’s not just the cost of the ingredients. Think about the manpower, water and energy costs involved in preparing them, not to mention the additional cost of bin bags and waste contractors to remove any waste.

1/3 of the world’s children are undernourished.

1/3 of the world’s population are overweight.

Yet 1/3 of the world’s food is wasted.

Clearly, we are facing a challenge with the distribution of nutritious food. All food produced but never eaten would be sufficient to feed two billion undernourished people.

By preventing food waste restaurants are contributing to a fairer distribution of this food.

WHAT’S FOOD WASTE GOT TO DO WITH MONEY?

Food waste costs the sector £3.2bn a year; on average £10k per hospitality site.

Using WRAP’s Guardians of Grub calculator allows you to estimate how much money your business could save from tackling your waste. The good news is that for every £1 invested in reducing food waste, £7 is saved in the long term.

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WHERE DOES HOSPITALITY FOOD WASTE COME FROM?

Food waste can occur at every stage of a restaurant’s operations; on farms, in transportation and storage, then as spoilage or preparation once ingredients hit the kitchen, and finally as diner plate waste.22

Food that is damaged or out of date such as spoilt vegetables.
Food that is thrown away during preparation, such as offcuts.
Food that is left on customers’ plates such as chips and garnishes.

HOW TO PRIORITISE ACTION ON FOOD WASTE24

There is a hierarchy for how to deal with your waste, with the key message being that restaurants should reduce food waste, before looking at ways to redistribute or recycle it.

Prevent surplus and waste in your business

Redistribute surplus food

Make animal feed from former food

Recycle your food waste - anaerobic digestion

Recycle your food waste - composting

Recycle your food waste – land spreading

Incinerate to generate energy

Incinerate without generating energy

Send to landfill or sewer

TIP: Use different bins or buckets to identify how much waste you’re generating from each of these sources.
THE STEPS TO SUCCESS: HOW CAN HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES REDUCE THEIR FOOD WASTE?

1. UNDERSTAND THE BASELINE
To begin reducing food waste, you need to know what you’re dealing with. Getting to grips with where your food waste comes from allows you to understand what parts of your operation will deliver the biggest wins.

First, ensure you’re separating all of your food waste from other general waste and recycling streams, so you can get an accurate picture of how much you are wasting.

Then, you want to work out how much of this food waste comes from each of the three main sources: Spoilage, Preparation or Plate, adding other buckets appropriate to your business, such as ‘buffet’ or ‘overproduction’. The simplest way to do this is by having three buckets or bins, one for each category.

At the end of each shift you then record the weight of these bins, and the amount of covers you served. After a week or two you will have a ‘food waste baseline’.

2. ANALYSE THE WASTE
Once you’ve weighed your food waste into Spoilage, Preparation and Plate for a week or two, you can work out where your waste is coming from; is the culprit a specific category, ingredient, or menu sub-section? You should re-audit your biggest impact area, breaking it down by your most common ingredients to identify the problem areas.

3. BUILDING AN ACTION PLAN
Once you’ve worked out your focus area, it’s time to build a reduction plan.

The good news is that implementing a food waste reduction strategy can help the bottom line. UN research showed 76% of restaurants recoup their investment in food waste reduction within a year and in our experience can save anything up to £20,000 per site.25

AUDIT TOP TIPS:
• Place multiple bins around the kitchen for each food waste category
• Ensure the team are clear on what food goes into Spoilage, Preparation and Plate
• Clearly label, colour code and use relevant languages for your busy team
• Ensure the responsibility is clear for weighing the bins per shift
• If you have multiple sites, conduct across all sites to see fluctuations

Check out WRAP’s Guardians of Grub tools to record your weights during an audit.25
REDUCTION IDEAS

SPOILAGE
• Ensure clear accountability of monitoring use-by dates per shift
• Use staff meals to consume ingredients nearing best before
• Ensure everyone understands best practice storage per ingredient
• Increase freezer capacity for ingredients nearing best before
• Use a ‘daily special’ to push dishes more likely to spoil
• Ensure FOH are promoting the dishes likely to spoil
• Increase supplier deliveries to minimise over ordering
• Check fridge temperatures regularly

PREPARATION
• Design zero-waste dishes at menu development stage
• Use peels and bones to make in-house stock
• Explore pickling and fermentation to add flavour to common offcuts
• Update menu specs to keep vegetable peels on
• Incorporate stalks and stems into purées, soups and stews
• Provide staff with knife skills training to maximise ingredients’ value
• Provide the BOH team with their own Preparation buckets to monitor waste
• Communicate with customers that you may sell out of dishes

PLATE
• Reduce portion sizes based on food items frequently wasted
• Explore the size and design of serving dishes
• Allow FOH to offer diners additional portions for free, on request
• Make regularly wasted sides an add-on rather than part of dish
• Switch or ditch the garnish that’s never eaten
• Train FOH staff not to encourage over ordering
• Communicate food waste ethos with customers via menu
• Provide attractive takeaway boxes, training staff to offer them to diners

4. MONITORING ACTION
Monitoring your reduction progress is key to understanding it’s success.
This can be done by repeating an audit, or by monitoring recycling reports provided by your waste contractor. Remember to always compare waste data to the amount of covers you served, and focus on your target to continually check you’re on track.

5. KEEPING IT UP
Food waste reduction is a continual journey, so the team must keep inspired to find creative food waste solutions.

TOP TIPS TO KEEP UP THE FOOD WASTE AGENDA:
• Build progress on food waste initiatives into weekly or monthly meetings
• Routinely schedule Spoilage, Preparation, Plate audits, or conduct with every new menu
• Recruit a team of Green Champions to bring about new ideas
• Incentivise staff to minimise waste in the kitchen
• Get your culinary team visit suppliers to engage with the value of food
• Ensure new team members are clear on their role in minimising food waste
• Get diners involved by using social media to detail your food waste initiatives
USING REDISTRIBUTION AS A FOOD WASTE SOLUTION

As much as you may try to eliminate food waste from your operations, surplus food is sometimes a reality. Organisations such as Olio or Too Good To Go can help distribute this food to people within your local community.

FOOD WASTE RECYCLING OPTIONS

Food waste should be clearly separated from all other recycling streams. It should then be sent for compost or recycling to maximise its value and to ensure it doesn’t enter landfill.

The UK Food Waste Hierarchy prioritises food waste recycling in the following order:

1. Anaerobic Digestion treats food waste without the use of oxygen, producing a ‘digestate’ or fertiliser, and a biogas to generate electricity and heat.
2. Home Composting organic matter which has decomposed.

Talk to your current waste contractor to know where your food waste goes and what service they can offer you. It’s crucial no food goes to landfill.

Using this Surplus Food Redistribution tool by WRAP helps identify organisations working to redistribute food near your site, ensuring your food feeds bellies not bins - and you can sometimes earn a return on it too.

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FOOD WASTE IN PRACTICE: IMPACT AND INSPIRATION

SPOILAGE

Jake Mills on menu planning
Chef at The Rising Sun
- Always plan around your current stock to ensure nothing gets wasted, using up leftover produce by including those ingredients within your specials menu
- If you find that a particular dish isn’t selling well, talk to your team and put in a staff incentive for upselling the dish
- Go with the seasons when planning your menu, contact your suppliers to see if they have any stock that is due to go off, you might even be met with a discount

PREPARATION

Jason Calcutt on preventing dairy waste back of house
Executive Chef, Arla Pro UK
- With milk and cream, you could always consider swapping to a product that has a longer shelf life, for example Cravendale or UHT
- Spare milk and cream can be made into sauces, ice cream, fermented into yogurt or churned into your own butter
- Excess butter can be clarified, or frozen, spare cheese can be turned into sauces, quiches, tarts and toppings for your dishes

PLATE

Ruth Hansom on buying animals whole
Head Chef at The Princess of Shoreditch
- Making the most of all parts is really easy when you’re working with fish, restaurants do this very often, they break down the fish and use the bones for stock. You can even dehydrate the skin to create crackers that are tasty and decorative
- Buy whole animals and break the animal parts down – for lamb we braise any of the charcuterie cuts and create a little beignet. And with the rump and loin cuts, we pan fry them, slice and serve on the dish, just like that
- Make sure to use all the bones from the animals to create different stocks and sauces

Discover The Chef’s Kitchen: War On Waste from Arla Pro: Low and zero-waste recipes, tips and videos from chefs including Neil Campbell and Jake Mills.

CLICK HERE
**HOW TO FREEZE DAIRY AND SAVE WASTE**

Dairy products often have a fairly short shelf life, but the good news is that they also freeze incredibly well. So if you find yourself with surplus stock, don’t immediately throw it away. We’ve collated these do’s and don’ts on freezing dairy so you can save stock, save money and reduce waste. Our guidance provides clarity on what product categories can and can’t be frozen, the potential impact on quality and steps on how to handle both the freeze and defrost process.

**THE BASICS**

- Visit The Food Standards Agency website for lots of information on how to freeze and defrost food safely.
- When freezing packaging there can be an increased risk of splitting. To help mitigate this, put products into an airtight container. If this isn’t an option, then it is best to freeze products upright where possible and avoid crushing or adding pressure onto packs in freezers.
- Defrosting must always be done in a chilled (<5°C) environment to avoid temperature abuse.
- Products with a Use-By date should be frozen before the last day of shelf life and used within 24 hours of reaching defrost.
- Defrosting times can vary significantly depending on fridge temperatures, airflow and temperature while frozen.

**WHAT CAN I FREEZE?**

- **Fresh Milk:** Fresh Milk can be frozen. Fresh Milk should be frozen before the last day of shelf life, once defrosted should be used within 24 hours.
- **Cream:** Fresh Cream/Fermented Creams (sour cream, Crème Fraiche etc) can be frozen before the last day of shelf life, once defrosted should be used within 24 hours.
- **Yoghurt:** Yoghurt can be frozen before the last day of shelf life, once defrosted should be used within 24 hours.
- **Block Butter:** For the best results cut the butter into small blocks and place in an airtight container. Defrost in the fridge and consume as soon as possible.
- **Blends/Spreads:** Spreads can be frozen, for best results put into an airtight container. Defrost in the fridge and consume as soon as possible.
- **Block Cheese (Cheddar and other Hard Cheeses):** Block cheese can be frozen but for best results grate or cut into small cubes before freezing. Place into an air-tight container or wrap it well in freezer bags. Defrost in the fridge and consume as soon as possible.
- **Grated and Sliced Cheese:** For best results, place into an air-tight container or wrap it well in freezer bags. Defrost in the fridge and consume as soon as possible.

**WHAT SHOULDN’T I FREEZE?**

- **Speciality Cheeses:** We do not recommend freezing Mould Cheeses (Stilton, Brie and other Blue Cheeses) due to potential loss of quality.
- **Soft White Cheese/Cottage Cheese:** We do not recommend freezing Soft Cheese, Cottage Cheese and other processed cheeses due to potential loss of quality.

**DEALING WITH LARGE AMOUNTS OF EXCESS STOCK**

- If there is a need to freeze cases of stock (eg Cardboard cases of cheese) it is recommended to use layer cards/egg-shells to increase airflow both in the freeze and defrost process. It is also recommended to rotate the cases from inside to outside of the pallet to get a more consistent freeze/defrost rate.
- In all cases it is best to freeze a small quantity of stock and defrost as a trial, this is both to understand the freezing/defrost times as well as checking the quality post defrost.
- When defrosting, always do this at a controlled Chilled Temperature, monitor temperature at a regular frequency with a calibrated temperature probe into the middle of a case and ensure product is fully defrosted before use (consider that the internal pallet/case will defrost more slowly than the outer packs/cases).
- Products with a Use by date must not be “overstickered” with a new shelf life and must be frozen before the last day of shelf life and used 24 hours after fully defrosted.
1. **Conduct food waste audits** with every new menu
2. **Use the by-products** of every dish elsewhere on the menu
3. Encourage all team members to **suggest ways to tackle waste**
4. **Build a passion for food waste** within your menu development team
5. **Communicate creative solutions** with customers and industry colleagues
6. **Select suppliers** based on their own anti-waste efforts
7. **Communicate your low waste ethos** with suppliers to help each other reduce
8. Ensure any food waste goes to **anaerobic digestion or composting**
9. Make every effort to **separate food waste** from other waste streams
10. **Set targets** and monitor progress