

# Food Waste

Good Hygiene Practice  
Guide No 18

Document Name	<b>GHP Guide - Food Waste</b>	Document No	<b>FS/GHP/018</b>
Document Owner	<b>Food Safety</b>	Date of Issue	<b>February 2022</b>
Classification	<b>Internal Use</b>	Version No	<b>02</b>



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HACCP Chart Reference

All Stages

## Background

Did you know:

- 25-30% of total food produced is lost or wasted. (WRAP).
- Food waste is estimated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to contribute 8-10% of the total man-made greenhouse gas emissions.
- If food waste were a country, it would have the third-biggest carbon footprint after the USA and China (WRAP).

Let's put that into context:

- Aviation is responsible for 2.5% of global GHG emissions.
- Plastics are responsible for 3.8% of global GHG emissions.
- Deforestation is responsible for 2.2% of global GHG emissions (Too Good To Go).

Impact:

WRAP estimates that food waste costs the hospitality & food service (HaFS) sector £3.2 billion every year; an average of £10,000 per outlet per year.

## Definition

Food waste is classified as 'Any food or ingredient removed from the food supply chain to be disposed of'.

Where food is wasted:



**Spoilage:** Food that is damaged, or exceeded its 'use by' shelf life date and is no longer fit for human consumption, possibly as a result of over purchasing or incorrect storage.



**Trimming:** Food waste that is generated from preparing food on site, such as offcuts, bones, skins, fruit and vegetable peelings, and egg shells.



**Cooking error:** Food that is wasted due to errors in handling, such as burning it, mistakes in the cooking method, or dropping it on the floor.



**Over-production:** Food that is cooked or prepared but not sold during service that ends up as waste.



**Plate waste:** Food that is served but not eaten - It's left on the customer's plate and ends up in the bin.

We have identified a 3-pronged approach to minimise food waste:

1. **Prevention** - To reduce the amount of food waste that goes unsold/uneaten.
2. **Recovery** - To donate surplus food to people in need.
3. **Recycling** - To divert food waste from sewer and landfill.

Employees are not permitted to take surplus food or food waste home. This will be viewed as theft and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

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## Prevention

The unit manager is responsible for looking for opportunities to reduce food waste. Food waste can occur as a result of poor menu planning, over-purchasing, incorrect storage, food preparation, no portion control, over-production / unsold food, and uneaten plate waste.

### 1. Tracking Food Waste

“You can’t manage what you don’t measure”

Units will get great value from tracking their food waste. It will help you understand how much food you’re wasting and how much it’s costing your unit, and get your teams thinking about where food is being wasted and why. Then you can start creating ideas to reduce the amount of food that ends up being thrown away.

There are many different ways to track food waste, from manual recording to cloud-based smart technology. Please use the tracking system that has been prescribed by your sector.

### 2. Menu Planning

As a rule, the more ingredients you have to buy, the more food waste is created.

- Only use Source approved recipes which indicate the correct ingredients and quantities to be used for each dish made to avoid over-production.
- Review your menu regularly to help identify and remove slower moving dishes.
- External factors could affect menus. Check the weather forecast and keep a diary of national/local events and adjust orders accordingly.
- Check use-by dates when stock is delivered. Frozen or dried ingredients have the longest shelf life and can help reduce spoilage.
- ‘Specials’ or a ‘Dish of the Day’ are a good way to use up stock approaching its use-by date.
- Consider what food is prepared/made on-site and what can be bought in prepared/ready-made. This can reduce labour and waste.
- Use seasonal and local ingredients where possible -They will be fresher and will help reduce your environmental impact.





### 3. Food Storage

#### Shelf life:

- Organise your food storage areas such that the shortest shelf life stock is used first before newly received stock which will have a longer shelf life.
- Carry out the daily Closing Checklist to ensure that all food is within date and suitable for use the following day.
- Apply a shelf life of 3 days (72hrs) including day of production to any in unit made food in order that it can be safely used during a later service period.
- Apply a shelf life of 2 days (48hrs) including day of production to any in unit made sandwiches or rolls.
- Check all ambient jars / bottles of sauces, condiments or foodstuffs and apply the correct storage & shelf life as per manufacturer's instructions. Some items will require refrigerated storage once opened and may have different shelf life.

#### Temperature control:

Ensure food is kept at the correct temperature in order to best preserve the food during its shelf life:

- Ambient food should ideally be kept in a clean, dry and well-ventilated place.
- Ready to eat food must be kept at 5°C or below.
- Frozen food should be kept between -18°C and -23°C.

#### Decanting:

- Keep food in its original packaging where possible if it's in good condition and durable.
- If decanting foods always use a food grade container with firmly fitted lids and ensure the Allergen information and shelf life dates are transferred onto the new container from the original packaging.
- The transfer of dry goods, particularly grains and powders into plastic lidded containers can help to preserve the food once opened and avoid spillages.
- Sufficient durable and cleanable food waste containers should be provided to accommodate the quantity of food waste produced.

### 4. Preparation & Cooking

- Ensure food trimmings are kept to a minimum - only removing the necessary inedible parts of the food item. Consider possible re-use of trimmings in stocks & sauces, where it is safe to do so.
- Cook certain meals in small batches to minimise waste and allow unused batches to be cooled and refrigerated / frozen for re-use at a later point.
- Consider cooking to order for certain high value foods - e.g. steaks or other meat / fish / poultry items.

### 5. Food Service & Display

- Ready to eat food under refrigerated display conditions (5°C or below) may be re-used if it is still within its shelf life date and unopened / uncontaminated.
- Ready to eat foods NOT under refrigerated display conditions may only be displayed for service up to 4hrs and then must be disposed of.
- Hot food may only be displayed out of temperature control for one period of no more than 2 hours whereupon it must be re-heated (once only) to above 63°C or disposed of.

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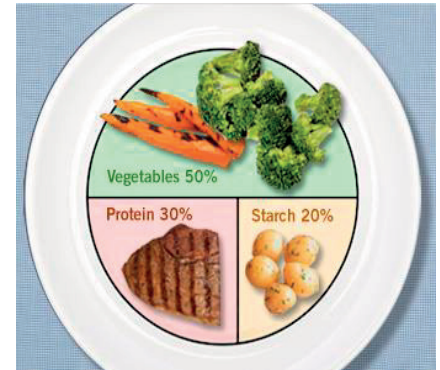


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## 6. Portion Control

- Keep portion sizes consistent: Train your teams to use portion spoons or 'Spoodles' to serve accurate portions.
- Standardise portions where possible: Use ramekins or serving bowls to prepare and serve average portions of vegetables, sides or toppings.
- Offer a range of plate sizes: This could be particularly useful for children.
- Weigh and pay: Introduce weigh and pay systems so that the customer pays for the amount they take.
- Raise awareness: For self-service, put up friendly posters to remind customers to only take what they can eat.
- Offer doggy bags: Allow customers to take home their leftovers.



## 7. Over-Production

Over-production waste is food that is cooked or prepared but not served or sold, which ends up as waste. **It's the leading cause of food waste in foodservice and hospitality.**

It is acknowledged that an element of waste will be generated to maximise sales, but there are ways to improve operational efficiency without compromising on customer satisfaction or menu choice:

- Track how much food is produced verses how much is served/sold - The difference is waste. Adjust production volumes to meet demand, taking into account promotions, weather and events.
- Switch from bulk production to cooking in smaller batches or cook to order to ensure it all gets eaten.
- Ask your kitchen porter to alert the chef of items that regularly come back to the kitchen. Ask your serving and waiting staff to feed back to the chef on issues with menu items.
- Help your clients/customers make the link between service expectations and the impacts of food waste (financial, environmental and social). Agree to reduce service at quieter periods.

## 7. Plate Waste

- Monitor what customers are leaving behind on their plates and adjust your menu accordingly.
- Look at portion sizes and instruct staff on serving sizes.
- Try using smaller plates to reduce or prevent unnecessary plate waste.
- Try removing trays for self-service to reduce multiple plates per serving.
- Include information about your portion sizes on menus, posters and table talkers.







## Recovery

### Surplus Food Donations

Over 8 million people in the UK are struggling to afford to eat (FareShare). Yet WRAP estimates that over 2 million tonnes of the food that goes to waste each year is still edible, that's enough for 1.3 billion meals.

Where surplus food cannot be avoided, we should seek to redistribute that food whenever possible to help feed people in need. Surplus food can arise for a number of reasons, including:

- Short-dated food (e.g. expiring over the weekend when your unit is closed).
- Seasonal stock.
- Lines no longer being retailed.
- Packaging damage.
- Incorrect ordering or forecasting.

Surplus food doesn't always have to end up in the bin. We can safely donate the following food categories as long as they are packaged, sealed and labelled:



Ambient food



Fruit and vegetables



Pre-packed chilled food



Packaged frozen food



Bakery items



Packaged meat, fish, eggs and dairy

You can donate surplus food as long as:

- It has been protected from any risk of contamination.
- It has been stored at the correct temperatures:
  - Chilled foods: 0°C to +5°C.
  - Frozen foods: -18°C to -23°C.
  - Ambient foods: No specific temperature range. Keep dry goods in cool, dry and well-ventilated conditions.
- It is packaged, sealed and labelled.
- 'Use by' or 'best before' dates are clearly marked.
- Allergens are clearly marked (in line with the Food Information Regulations).
- Chilled/frozen items will be consumed within 4 hours from when they are first removed from a refrigerator/freezer (unless kept in a cool bag).

To find a local charity and set up donations, please go to the HSE Website > Environment > Food Waste section and download the **Surplus Food Donations Guide** and **Disclaimer**.

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## Recycling

### 1. Switch off macerators

There are approximately 200,000 sewer blockages in the UK every year - many as a result of catering establishments with poor food waste management. The cost of clean-up is approximately £15 million per year which is being passed on to our businesses through water bills.



Putting food waste down the drain greatly increases the risk of blockages, which can lead to flooding on or around our premises. Macerators (also known as food waste disposal units) are a big contributor to blockages. Some sites have them fitted under a kitchen sink to chop up food waste and then wash it down the drain. This places an extra load on sewerage systems that they were not designed to handle, and can lead to build-up of fatty food waste on the inside of sewer pipes. This can cause blockages, sewer flooding, environmental pollution, odours and rodent infestations.

#### Food Waste Regulations

Macerator and digester bans are being enforced by legislation in some parts of UK and Ireland:

- **Ireland:** Macerators and other similar devices are illegal in Ireland and should not be in use.
- **Scotland:** Macerators and enzymatic digesters are banned in non-rural parts of Scotland and should not be in use.
- **Northern Ireland:** Use of macerators and digesters is prohibited in Northern Ireland.
- **Wales:** Regulations to prohibit the disposal of food waste to sewers from non-domestic properties are now in place.
- **England:** Legislation for mandatory food waste collections is expected in 2023. This is will likely include the restriction of macerators and food waste disposal units.

To maintain a consistent approach across our entire Compass estate, it is advisable to discontinue use of macerators in all UK and Ireland sites. You may need to consult with your client if implementing this.

#### The benefits

There are financial benefits to be realised [by Compass or client - whoever is responsible for the macerator] from switching off macerators:

- **Water savings** - Macerators use copious volumes of water to wash down the food waste; increasing water consumption and water bills.
- **Energy savings** - They are heavy users of electricity, required to turn the blades to chop up the food.
- **Repair cost savings** - High maintenance costs and down time as they are prone to clogging and breaking down.

#### Fats, Oils and Greases

It's important to keep fats, oils and greases out of the drain, because as it cools it congeals and hardens and sticks to the inner lining of drainage pipes, restricting wastewater flow and causing pipes to block. Food residue left on plates, pots, trays and utensils should be scraped into the bin before rinsing or putting them in the dishwasher. Leave liquid food waste to cool and harden before scraping it into the bin. Place a strainer in the plug hole to prevent waste food from going down the drain. Scraps collected in the strainer should be emptied into the bin.



## 2. Separate food waste collections

Food waste sent to landfill releases methane, a harmful greenhouse gas. If collected separately, food waste can be sent for anaerobic digestion (AD), where it is broken down in a controlled way and the methane is converted into biofuel that can be used to generate electricity or fuel. The process also produces a nutrient-rich fertiliser (called digestate) that farmers can use in place of chemical fertilisers.

### Food Waste Regulations

Food waste is a devolved matter in the UK and Ireland, with some parts enforcing food waste collections:

- **Ireland:** All sites in Ireland must separate their food waste for collection.
- **Scotland:** All sites in Scotland producing more than 5kg of food waste per week must present it for separate collection.
- **Northern Ireland:** All sites in Northern Ireland producing more than 5kg of food waste per week must present it for separate collection.
- **Wales:** Regulations for businesses to separately collect food waste for treatment are likely to be made in the near future.
- **England:** Legislation for mandatory food waste collections from 2023 is expected.

To maintain a consistent approach across our entire Compass estate, Compass Policy is for all sites to separate food waste for collection.

### Process

Provision must be made for the regular removal of food waste at the end of each production period from the immediate food preparation area.

It is important to safely and hygienically remove food waste from within the catering environment in order that it may not come into contact with food destined for human consumption, potentially causing cross contamination of bacteria or mould spores.

- Food waste must be deposited in a separate bin. Foot-operated lidded bins are recommended to avoid hand contact when opening the bin (see example below).
- A bin bag should be used to contain the food waste.
- Food waste bins must be clearly labelled - Waste bin signs are available on the HSE website.
- Suitable storage and frequent collection of waste is required in order to reduce the risk of pest infestation.
- Where possible ensure external food waste areas are well lit with a hard-standing solid floor area, enabling periodic cleaning and drainage.







## 3. Used Cooking Oil

Used cooking oil must be stored separately and collected by a licensed waste contractor for recycling.

Please ensure colleagues are trained on how to transfer used cooking oil to your collection point.

For used cooking oil collections, please use one of our approved suppliers:

- UK-wide: Contact Olleco on +44 (0)1604 857 038
- Compass Ireland/NI: contact Frylite on 02871383133

Waste contractor licences and certificates should be kept on file.

Make sure you know which drains could be affected by a spill from your site before choosing a location to store used cooking oil. Do a site walk around/refer to a map to identify them.

Used cooking oil must be stored:

- Separately from other waste streams.
- More than 10 meters away from any drain, water courses, vehicle routes, ignition sources, and protected from extreme weather (preferably indoors).
- In clearly labelled containers.
- In a strong container that will not burst or leak (refill the containers your oil was supplied in and store them in a lockable storage bin).
- On a bund, sump or spill pallet, which:
  - Must sufficiently hold no less than 25% of the total storage capacity.
  - Must have a watertight base and walls.
  - Must not have drainage valves.
  - Must be checked regularly for leaks, damage and accumulated rainwater.



*Bund, sump or spill pallet*

Please make sure you have completed the **Environment Toolkit - Pollution Prevention** section to ensure you are storing used cooking oil correctly and managing your pollution risks.





