

Food waste reduction

GSFD – May 2025

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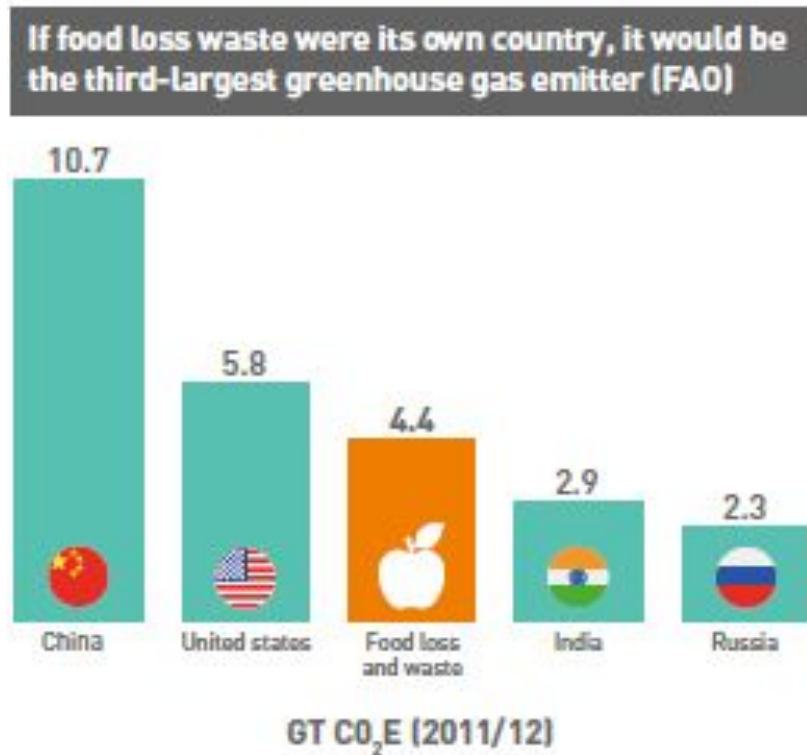
Impact of **Food waste**

- **Increase awareness of the food waste impact to hospitality professionals**
- **Highlight the financial and environmental benefits of food waste reduction**
- **Provide guidance on measuring & monitoring waste**
- **Improve the food waste data from the sector through resources, measurement challenges, and research**
- **Tools and interventions to reduce waste**
- **Pilot projects and case studies to further support the sector**

The logo for Zero Waste Scotland is located in the top right corner. It consists of a blue circle with a white border, containing the text "ZERO WASTE SCOTLAND" in white capital letters. A smaller teal circle is partially visible behind it.

**ZERO
WASTE
SCOTLAND**

Impact of Food waste



Estimates indicate that if it were a country, food loss and waste would be the third-largest greenhouse gas emitter behind China and the United States.

(United Nations, 2016).



The **VALUE** of Food



UK food prices soar by fastest rate on record as cost of living crisis bites



Food price inflation hits record 14.7% with 'no peak in sight'

UK food inflation continues to break records

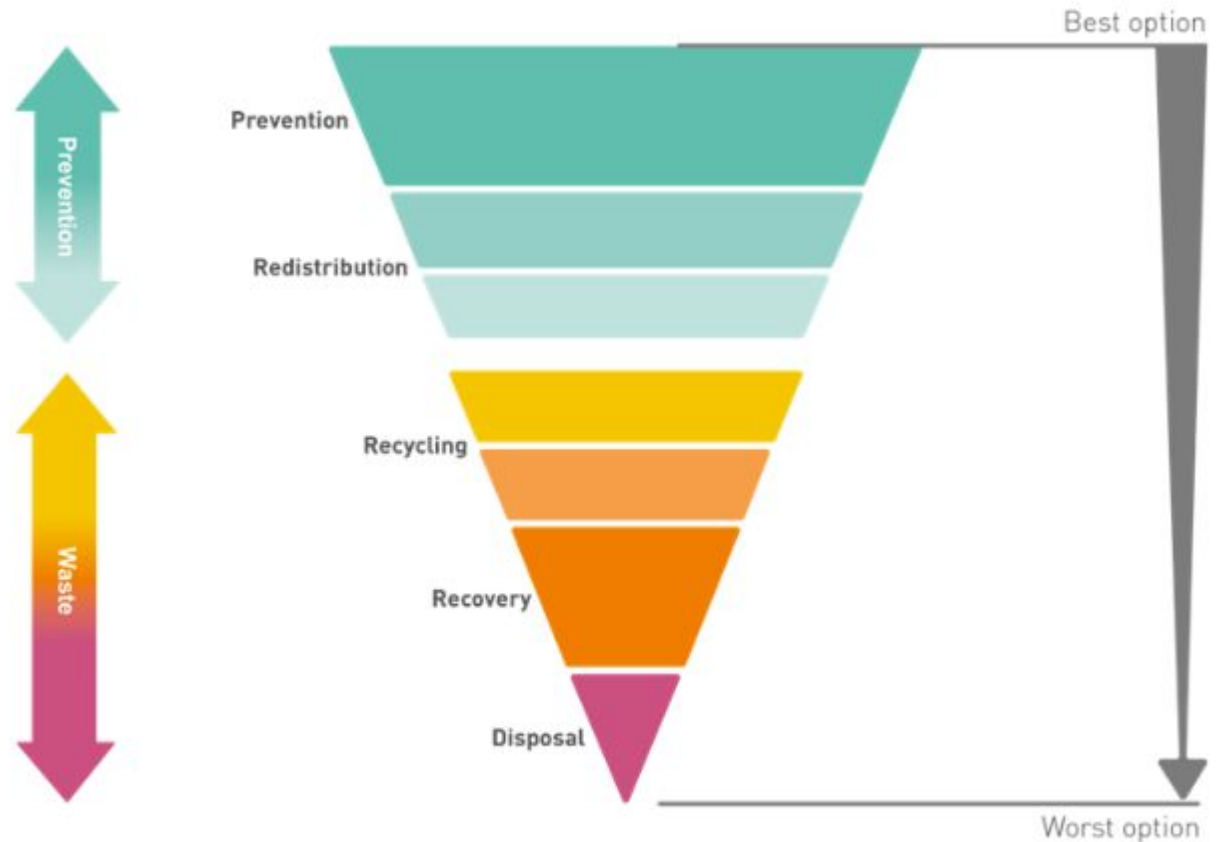
The **VALUE** of Food

The Food Waste **Hierarchy**

The food waste hierarchy represents a continuum from excellent to poor practices.

The higher up the hierarchy you are, the more you are doing to save money **AND** the environment.

**ZERO
WASTE
SCOTLAND**



**Food was
Business**

**Filli
bin**

**1 in 6 meals
served ends up going to waste**



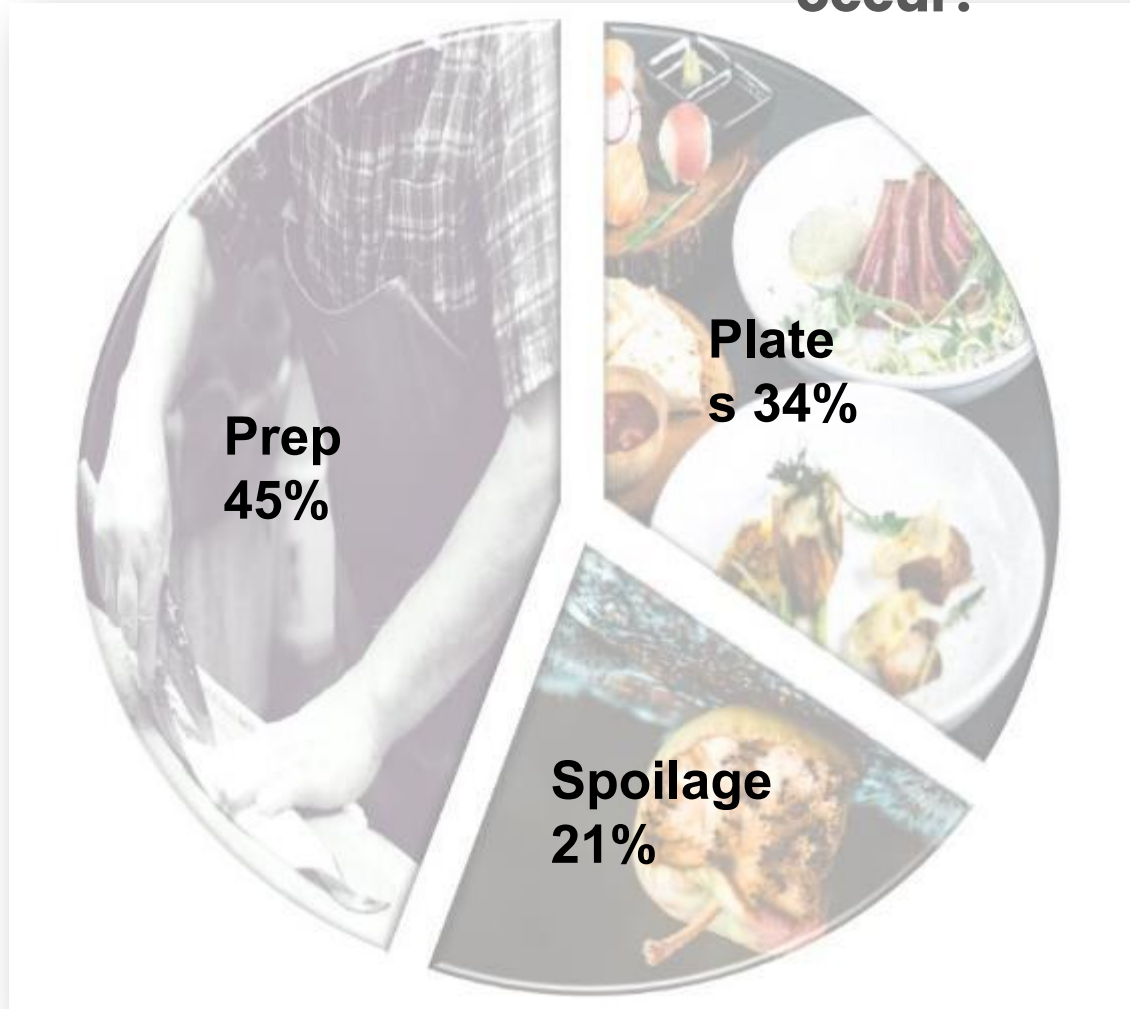
**prepared,
worth of food**

Hospitality & Food Service

Hospitality & Food Service



Where does food waste occur?



Food preparation

Examples are vegetable peelings, excess meat parts, and eggshells. Get creative with trimmings and excess to make pates, soups and stocks.

Customer plates

Although you can't control how much your customers leave behind, you can apply portion control.

Even using smaller plates can help! Or you can start using a doggy bag scheme, encouraging your customers to take home leftovers.

Spoilage

It may seem cost effective to buy in bulk, but perishable items can spoil quickly, costing you (and the environment) more in the long run.

Cross-contamination can also occur as a result of poor storage and preparation practices.

Hospitality & Food Service



Top Tips

- ✓ Actively track what food types are being thrown away at spoilage, preparation and plate stages.
- ✓ Check your specifications (e.g. preparation procedures) and make sure these are met consistently.
- ✓ Prepare and cook in small batches to respond to demand 'on the go'.
- ✓ Make the most of meat, fruit and vegetables through careful trimming (e.g. reducing the end waste on carrots).
- ✓ Use pre-portioned meal elements where possible.
- ✓ Take particular care over portioning of chips, veg and salad garnish.
- ✓ Maximise use of prepared and not served food in daily 'specials' (e.g. soups and curries).
- ✓ Vary portion sizes and offer 'light' versions of main courses.
- ✓ Ask customers if there are items that they don't want that are included in a meal, such as tomatoes with breakfast and steaks.
- ✓ Reduce side dish and buffet plate and bowl sizes, but allow top ups.

Spoilage Actions:

- Stock rotation system FIFO
- Deals before expiry
- Review storage temps
- Talk to your suppliers
- Consider local
- Forecasting demand
- Cook to order

Preparation Actions:

- Skin on ??
- Chopping technique
- Pre-prepared ingredients
- Formalise recipe instructions
- Ingredient cross-over
- Remove less popular dishes from menu
- Food redistribution

Plate Waste Actions:

- Reduce portion sizes
- Advise customers
- Optional garnishes & smaller side options
- Plate size
- Doggy bag scheme



Food Waste Reduction Tools – One Month Challenge

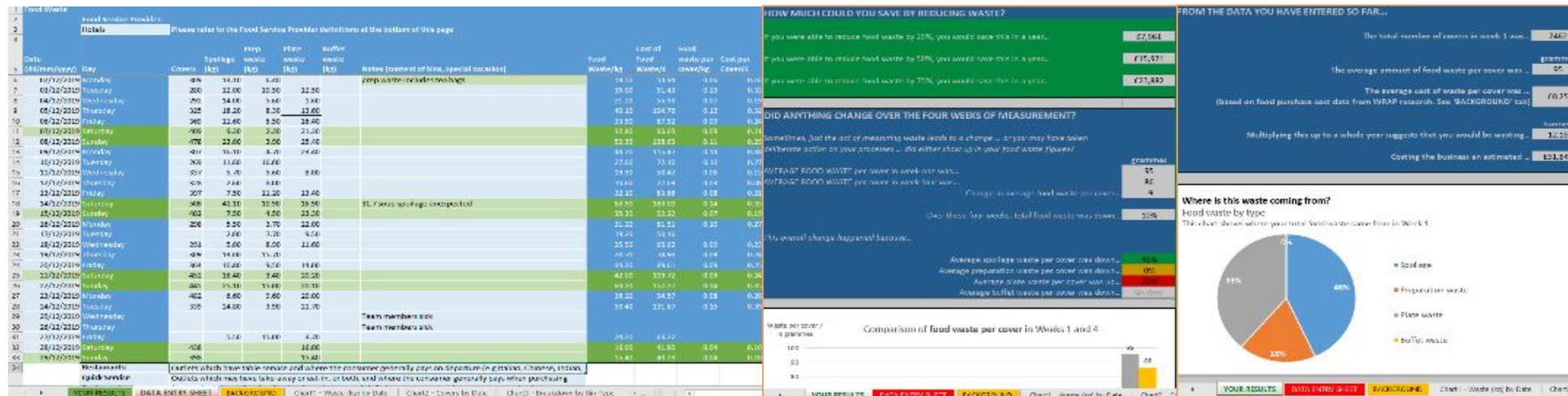


Food Waste Challenge provides you with a simple 4 step guide to help:

- Assess your current food waste data
- Measure your food waste
- Analyse and share findings
- Develop an action plan



Food Waste Reduction Tools – One Month Challenge

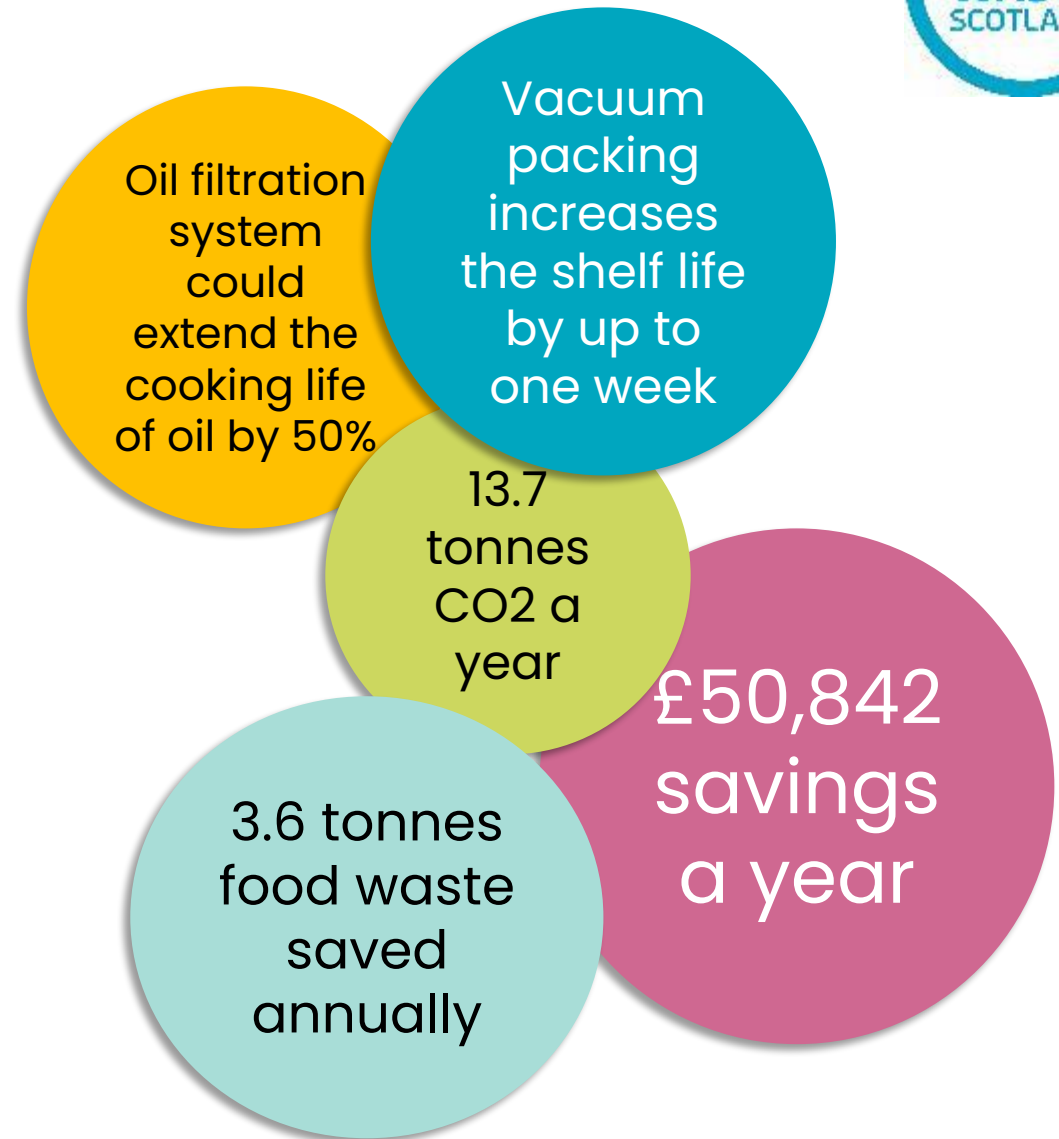


Food Waste Reduction Case Study



Problem:

- Number of covers / diners is unpredictable, ranging from 200–600 a week and, therefore, high priced quality meat is getting wasted
- High costs of cooking oil



Food Waste Reduction Glasgow Film Location

Food Waste Prevention TV and Film Production

Measure YOUR Food waste

Ensure a robust Monitoring and Measuring (MMT) process is adopted to allow caterers to identify hotspots by waste stream (Plate/Spoilage/Prep).

Monitoring and Measuring (MMT) systems are estimated to allow savings between 5% and 10% of total food waste volumes, and therefore cost savings. In recent pilot projects, conducted by Zero Waste Scotland, 70% of participants who simply measured their waste, reduced their baseline waste tonnage by as much as 30%.

Regular and targeted food waste monitoring programme would reduce the food waste tonnage and cost. The MMT does not need to be highly technical or require bespoke equipment. Simply a monitoring spreadsheet and scales required, as well as a 3 bin system for waste Plate/Spoilage/Prep.

Monitoring & Measurement should be performed at defined, regular intervals, generally after each service – Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner.

This will help you identify hotspots and areas for improvement.

Segregation of Waste

It is recommended that production team segregate waste and facilities have the infrastructure in place to allow ALL waste streams to be recycled e.g. food waste, dry recyclables, cardboard, compostables. This would ensure that:

- All that can be recycled IS being captured
- Plate waste could be measured accurately and,
- Food waste was being treated higher up the waste hierarchy being recycled and NOT inadvertently sent to landfill.

Extracting the value of these resources by recycling will reduce the carbon impact of future productions.

**STOP
WASTING
& START
SAVING**

Food Waste Prevention TV and Film Production

Refrigerated units for 'Grab n Go' offering

Fridges be put in place for grab and go.

Fresh goods and produce should be stored at a temperature below 4 degrees Celsius, at all times. The shelf-life of perishable goods will be longer if they are kept at the recommended temperature, reducing waste arising.

Pre-orders for meals

Pre-ordering of meals would result in waste reduction.

A pre-order system could eliminate some of the educated guess work that is typical with this type of catering.

Timing and communication is key to ensuring a successful pre-order system. Some productions have used a 'WhatsApp' group with the production crew. The menus are made available, and selections submitted the day before serving. This has proved to be highly effective, and participation was high resulting in a reduction of food waste

Confirmation of diner numbers

Confirmation of accurate diner numbers would decrease food waste. Having a more accurate figure for diners would reduce preparation / over-preparation waste incurred during breakfast service.

It is difficult to ascertain who will actually eat, therefore, a system of intent to dine would need to be put in place. Recent productions have found that creating a 'WhatsApp' group (as above) for confirmation has been successful.

**STOP
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SAVING**

Food Waste Prevention TV and Film Production

Communication, Training and Engagement

Awareness of your ambition to reduce food waste and changes in procedures to do so are more likely to be adopted by all if this is communicated prior AND during production. Examples of this dialogue could be;

- Training caterers on food waste measurement and reduction techniques;
- Ensuring that at all teams (Caterers, production, facilities) understand what role they play in reducing food waste;
- Consistent messaging, reinforce messaging on call sheets or dietary requirement requests.
- Posters on the 'grab n go tables' and/or catering truck reiterating your aim to reduce food waste
- Waste bin signage – ensure that the signage on waste bins is clear and aligns with the desired outcomes of the business i.e. the right things in the right bins.

Procurement

When seeking future caterers, consider including a section on food waste prevention. e.g.

“ (Insert production company) are endeavouring to reduce the carbon impact of our productions by reducing food waste. Food waste and loss is a major contributor to climate change by reducing what we waste can contribute to greater food security and together we can lower our impact on the environment.

We would ask that when food is used in a production and / or catering during the production, all suppliers consider your food surplus;

- do you currently measure waste?
- is it waste?
- is it avoidable
- can it be redistributed?
- Finally, if all the above has been addressed, then ensure your unavoidable food waste is recycled in food waste bins.”

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Food Waste Reduction **Benefits**

- **Reduction in costs**
- **Increased visibility of waste**
- **Influence your teams & kitchens to be more sustainable**
- **Bring your customers on the journey**
- **A step closer to Net Zero ambitions**

The background features a series of overlapping circles in teal, blue, yellow, grey, purple, orange, and green. A horizontal band of pink and orange runs across the middle. The text 'Thank you' is centered in a large blue circle.

Thank you

•Zero Waste Scotland is a private company limited by guarantee, registered in Scotland as company number SC436030.
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