

# CUTTING WASTE BY 16% BY ASKING CUSTOMERS IF THEY WANT CONDIMENTS.

## BACKGROUND

The Airport is a busy food-led pub next to Manchester Airport's runway. The restaurant is family focused with a barbecue style menu.

### ? TIP

Use clear buckets and bags in the kitchen so you can see what's being thrown away



## KEY OUTPUTS

The Airport started to separate and monitor food waste following Robinsons' Greener Retailing project with Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU). The pub's menu had recently been redesigned and waste wasn't an obvious problem. However, General Manager Trevor Roberts had heard about the monitoring process at one of the brewery's area meetings and, being very focused on driving efficiency, was keen to trial the process

Duty manager Emily explained that getting the staff motivated was quite easy. Although it took two or three days to get used to measuring food waste, it quickly became part of the daily routine. In fact, a weekly challenge soon developed among the team as they strived to get the waste figures down further each time.

## MONITORING AND MEASUREMENT

The staff used bins labelled 'spoilage', 'prep' and 'plate waste' to separate food waste. The Airport has a busy kitchen so the bins needed to be emptied several times a day. Each bin was weighed using luggage scales and the weights were then recorded on a waste sheet with the head chef or general manager entering the figures into the Food Waste Calculator developed by MMU. The calculator covers a four-week measurement period and works out the annualised cost of wasted food as well as the difference between the first and fourth weeks measurement.



## CASE STUDY

Often just seeing how much is going into the bins is enough to start the process of change and after four weeks pubs usually see a reduction in waste.

*"I would say to any publican that is thinking of doing this that it is definitely worth it whether you're a large food-led pub or a small one. This trial really helps you identify areas that can improve your business. It really opened my eyes".*

**Trevor Roberts, General Manager**



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## KEY OUTPUTS

During the first week, waste per cover was not excessive at an average of 101 grams, with an estimated cost of 18 pence per cover. However, with 1981 covers in the first week, **some days the pub was throwing away as much as 41.75 kilos of waste food worth £74.** Based on the first week this would amount to 10 tonnes of food with an estimated annual value of £18,403. Taking into account associated costs (including energy for cooking and storage, staff time water and waste disposal) the true cost of food waste to this pub is estimated to be £27,697 per year.

- **A small proportion (5%) came from spoilage.** The high turnover at this pub means there is little chance of stock going out of date.
- **A similarly small amount of waste (7%) came from prep,** or 'chef's' waste as very little food is prepared on-site.
- **Plate waste was the largest category at 88%.** The barbecue style menu generates a lot of bones so a high proportion of the plate waste is inedible. However the staff found substantial quantities of coleslaw, sauce and half bread buns where customers had removed the lid of the burger to eat just the meat and base.

Another surprising finding was the amount of cutlery finding its way into the bins - around 100 items over the four week period with an estimated annual cost of £1,000.

## CHANGES MADE

Coleslaw and sauces are now being offered to customers rather than served automatically. Now, instead of using eight tubs of coleslaw a day, the pub uses just one. The kitchen is much more aware of waste, and at the end of week four there was a marked reduction in each category:

- **Spoilage reduced by 22%**
- **Prep waste reduced by 27% and**
- **Plate waste reduced by 14%**



## SAVINGS

Although plate waste saw the smallest percentage change at 14%, this was the largest category to start with so the reduction is substantial. Overall between week one and week four, total waste was down by 16% saving an estimated £2,946 in food purchase costs plus £1,000 annually from rescued cutlery. All burgers are offered 'naked' without the bun at a cost incentive of 50p less.

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