

PREVENTING FOOD WASTE IN NORTHERN IRELAND SAVES BUSINESS £21,000

BACKGROUND

In partnership with Derry City & Strabane District Council and Mid & East Antrim Borough Council, WRAP enabled 17 businesses to measure food waste and potentially save over £21,000 per year through the introduction of simple measures to prevent food waste by 50%.

KEY FACTS

- Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) from Derry City and Strabane District Council and Mid and East Antrim Borough Council supported 17 local food businesses using the free food waste tracking tools (available at www.guardiansofgrub.com) to prevent food waste over a 6 week period.
- By using food waste measurement tools the businesses identified 131 tonnes of wasted food each year, costing £251,764. Preparation and plate waste were found to be the biggest sources of food waste.
- By continuing use of the food waste tracking calculator two of the businesses were able to demonstrate a reduction in food waste after just 4 weeks.
- More than 50% of the businesses committed to continuing to prevent food waste.

? TOP TIPS FOR FOOD WASTE PREVENTION

- Seek staff suggestions on food waste prevention.
- Train front-of-house staff to explain any menu options or changes.
- Appoint a 'Food Waste Champion' on every shift to co-ordinate food waste measurement.
- Introduce 'table talker' literature.
- Offer side dishes as separate menu item.
- Introduce 'light bites' as smaller portion sizes.
- Review menus based on items being left behind.
- Consider options for preventing buffet waste.
- Cook to order at slower times.
- Improve rotation of short-date foods.
- Where appropriate use pre-prepared vegetables and portioned meats to prevent peelings, trimmings and bones.
- Ensure staff understand good stock rotation practices.

CASE STUDY

"Wow, I love the calculator... I just shared it with the owner... Superb that the formulas and calculations are there and put into graphs. This creates a much more attractive visual that more people can relate to."

Business participant in the trial



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BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

- EHOs recognised an opportunity for businesses to significantly prevent food waste and save money. Most companies, however, cited concerns about the time taken to use the tools, particularly when facing busy periods. Others thought it would be difficult to get staff on board and would take a long time to set up.
- The most common reason cited for getting involved was the potential for 'saving money'. The simplicity of the model also appears to have been a key reason behind the decision to use resources. Each business manager appointed a 'Food Waste Champion' to co-ordinate involvement. The cost of food waste per business is illustrated below:

BENEFITS OF COLLABORATION

- A trusted relationship between the EHO and the business manager was key to effective participation, whilst the inclusion of the Council logo added credibility.
- A printed pack of information helped overcome initial barriers to business involvement.
- The majority of participants felt the Guardians of Grub resources were pitched at an appropriate level.
- The '[7-Day Tracker Sheet](#)', the '[Starter Guide](#)', and the '[6 Ways to Save Poster](#)' were the most widely used resources.

LONG TERM IMPACTS

- Over half of the businesses have now committed to continuing to prevent food waste onsite.
- Experience of supporting food businesses has improved working relationships with EHOs.
- EHOs have enhanced their reputations with food businesses as being trusted experts.

Check out our free resources at www.guardiansofgrub.com including a quickstart guide, tracking sheets and calculator. You can also contact us at GuardiansofGrub@wrap.org.uk

Business type	Reported food waste (Tonnes/business/p.a.)	Cost of food waste (£/business/p.a.)
Hotels	11	£23,153
Restaurants	10	£18,017
Residential Homes	0.9	£1,582



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