

# The Restaurant Group: Taking action to reduce plate waste

CASE  
STUDY

## Background to business

The Restaurant Group (TRG) operates around 400 restaurants and pubs throughout the UK. Brands include wagamama and Frankie & Benny's

TRG aimed to develop a plate waste reduction strategy for the long term to achieve a reduction in plate waste per diner by 2030.

## BACKGROUND

After conducting a spoilage, preparation and plate waste audit using the Guardians of Grub Food Tracking Calculator, with the Sustainable Restaurant Association (SRA), The Restaurant Group (TRG) identified plate waste as the source of around 80% of their total food waste. A key objective of this project was to understand if monitoring plate waste and implementing interventions can drive down food waste across the business.

The SRA and TRG worked closely to identify and measure the main waste culprits. The SRA and TRG then designed a number of interventions which were piloted across TRG's brands. Three months later a second audit was conducted to assess the impact of the changes.

## LEARNINGS

- Carbohydrates are the biggest cause of TRG's plate waste: chips, rice, and noodles.
- Recipe specifications create accurate portions, adherence to these portions reduces food waste.
- The more teams are engaged in food waste reduction initiatives, the greater the impact.

? **TIP** Use the Guardians of Grub [cost savings calculator](#) to monitor waste and identify your waste hotspots. Make a change, and then measure again to evaluate its impact.

The  
**Restaurant**  
Group plc



## KEY LEARNINGS

- Identifying the cause of plate waste starts with Front of House, so be sure to use them as your eyeballs on waste.
- Impact data is key: identify a problem, make a change, and measure the impact.
- Restaurants can shift the dial on plate waste, it isn't just the customer's decision, brands can influence portion size, remove regularly wasted ingredients, and design plate architecture to influence consumption.

## SAVINGS

- 80% of total food waste came from customer plates
- One intervention reduced waste per brand by 20%, on average

Check out our free resources at [www.guardiansofgrub.com](http://www.guardiansofgrub.com) including a free 15 minute [Cost Saving Skills Course](#) for everything you need to take action on food waste. You can also contact us at [GuardiansofGrub@wrap.org.uk](mailto:GuardiansofGrub@wrap.org.uk)

## IMPROVEMENTS MADE

With help from the SRA, plate waste reduction interventions were designed per brand, to tackle the most wasted dish. These interventions were piloted at a few sites, and its impact assessed with a second waste audit. The pilot reveal the effectiveness of the intervention and the opportunity to scale across the business.

TRG implemented the use of portion measuring tools in kitchens, for example fries scoops for leisure brands and a rice scoop for Wagamama. This aided teams during busy service to portion correctly every time. By implementing these initiatives, there was an average c.20% reduction in plate waste per cover.

The findings from the plate waste pilots will inform the wider strategy of how TRG can deliver plate waste reduction in the long term.

"This project has proven that you can identify the causes of plate waste, and intervene to create a solution. These solutions save money on procurement and waste management."

Louisa Dodd, Senior Project Manager, SRA



**[Find out more](#) about how to understand where your customer plate waste is coming from with our Protecting Profits from [Plate Waste toolkit](#), so that you can find the right solution for your business with Guardians of Grub operational tools**



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