

Serve great food with green benefits

Restaurants and cafés typically produce between 1.7 to 7.3kg of waste for each full-time employee a day.

Yet more than half of what is tossed out as rubbish could be recycled. Around one third of a typical restaurant or café waste bin is filled with paper and cardboard, while another 28 per cent is food¹.

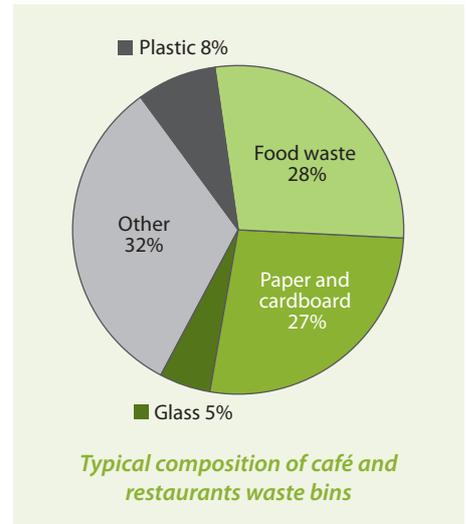
In NSW, food waste formed the second largest identifiable portion of commercial and industrial waste. Sydney businesses alone disposed of over 300,000 tonnes of food waste in 2008².

Between June and August 2008, a Department study found that 74 per cent of total food wasted in Sydney was thrown away before it even got to the consumer³. This means that your staff could literally be throwing money in the bin.

You can recycle everything from coffee grounds, which can be composted, to cooking oils, which can be converted into products like biofuels.

Paper, cardboard and plastic can all be recycled instead of going to landfill.

By putting these materials in the correct bins your business could save money through a reduced waste collection charge, plus you will be helping our environment.



Simple ways your business can reduce waste and save

Think in terms of the waste hierarchy. How can you avoid, reduce, reuse or recycle?

- Avoid** → **Do we need it?**
- Reduce** → **Do we need so much?**
- Reuse** → **Can we use it again?**
- Recycle** → **Can someone else use it or turn it into new products?**



AVOID

To avoid food waste, make sure products from suppliers are in good condition. You should store perishable items immediately to maintain food safety and quality. Order food from local suppliers that can deliver fresh produce when needed.

Other ways cafés and restaurants can avoid waste:

- Order and prepare appropriate amounts of food. Give customers the choice of serving sizes.
- Move to paperless systems such as electronic order taking.
- Avoid over-packaged goods. Order fresh fruit and vegetables without excess leaves or foliage.
- Use paper cups and containers for takeaways rather than supplying plastic items. See our Takeaways fact sheet for more tips on how to reduce costs.

For more information on avoiding food waste visit lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au/business

¹ DECCW, unpublished data

² DECCW (2009). Commercial and industrial waste in Sydney – overview. <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/warr/CommercialIndustrialWaste.htm>

³ DECCW (2010). Audit of commercial and industrial waste in Sydney – full report (unpublished). <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/warr/CommercialIndustrialWaste.htm>



REDUCE

Buy perishables and non-perishables in bulk, so you pay for less packaging and cut down the amount of material you have to get rid of or recycle. For example, buy spirits in bulk bottles that you can attach to a dispensing system.

Here are some other ways to reduce waste:

- Buy items in returnable containers, such as milk crates. Arrange to return these containers to your suppliers.
- Save money by matching your bin collection timetable to your business needs. If your bins are not normally full after a week, then consider moving to a fortnightly collection cycle.
- Keep your work areas clean. If things are well organised and labelled clearly, you and your staff will know where everything is and use products more efficiently. This encourages staff to use only the resources they really need.
- Use refillable sugar dispensers, condiment dispensers, reusable cutlery, reusable tableware and food storage containers. Items that only get used once and then thrown away mean you have to get rid of more rubbish.



REUSE

Buy products with reusable packaging. Great examples are beer kegs and plastic drums for post-mixes. When suppliers suggest moving away from reusable packaging, remind them that you are landed with extra disposal costs. Speak to your meat and fish supplier about using reusable plastic tubs instead of disposable polystyrene and cardboard packaging.

You could also:

- Filter and reuse cooking oil before you get rid of it. The useful life of oil can be prolonged by ensuring oil (for example, in deep fryers) is only heated when necessary for cooking.



RECYCLE

First consider donating unused food to a suitable charity that supplies to people in need in the community. Then sort out what can be recycled.

Visit lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au/business to use our food donation toolkit. It provides everything you need to know about safely donating food to charity.

Go to BusinessRecycling.com.au to find details of recycling service providers. This website allows you to search for service providers in your area that collect specific materials for recycling or allow you to drop them off.

It could be cheaper organising the pickup of recycling bins, rather than paying for the collection of general waste bins where the content goes to landfill. Other recycling options are:

- If you are in a shopping complex, ask the centre's management about setting up a recycling system.
- Look for extra places where recycled material can be collected inside and outside the building. Share recycling bins or containers with another business.
- Ask your recycling contractors for help with providing recycling information, signs and the latest systems.
- Make sure your staff, contractors and cleaners follow your recycling program and sort and put material in the correct bin.
- Collect all used cooking oils and fats in an oil bin for re-processing. It is illegal to dispose of these down any drains and you may be able to get money for good quality oil.
- Buy products with recycled content, such as toilet paper, napkins, office printer paper and packaging. If your brochures, catalogues, sales letters and other promotional material are printed on recycled paper, mention that in the content. This helps to build demand for more products made from recycled materials.
- Promote your firm's recycling actions and encourage others to do the same. For example, publish your environmental policy and objectives on the menu and state that it is printed on recycled paper.

Your sustainable waste policies could save you money, help attract or retain customers and preserve the environment.

For further information

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