

# How to Conduct a Food Waste Audit<sup>1</sup>



USE THE FOLLOWING STEPS TO DETERMINE THE FOOD WASTE GENERATED BY YOUR BUSINESS OVER A TWO WEEK PERIOD.

Make sure that you take into account fluctuations between busy and slow periods and note the time of day. These results will help you to identify where food waste is being produced in your business and opportunities to improve efficiency.

1. Provide staff with extra bins and ask them to put all food waste into these bins for two weeks. Label the bins with 'food waste only' stickers.
2. Provide separate bins and encourage staff to dispose of
  - i. spoiled items,
  - ii. preparation and
  - iii. plate waste accordingly.This will allow you to easily identify where the majority of your waste is coming from.
3. Check for any food in the general rubbish bins, to make sure you are capturing all the food waste.



SPOILAGE



PREPARATION



PLATES

<sup>1</sup> Reference – NSW EPA (2015) Understanding your food waste. Online accessed 1st April 2015. <http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au/business/hospitality/understanding-your-food-waste.aspx>



## Work Out the Volume of Your 'Food Waste Only' Bins

1. Inspect the food waste only' bins on a daily basis before they are emptied.
2. Remove any contaminants plastic or cardboard.
3. Use the bottom of a bucket to firmly press the food waste down into each bin so that the contents are packed without air pockets.
4. Estimate the volume of food waste in each bin or use a bathroom scale to weigh the bins.
5. Record quantities and description on a data recording sheet.
6. Empty the food waste into your garbage skip or bins for collection.
7. Wash out 'food waste only' bins and return to kitchen staff. Another option is to use a bin liner such as a biodegradable bag.
8. At the end of each week, calculate the total quantity of the food waste material collected, and the average proportion of each type of food material type.
9. Review relevant business records to estimate seasonal variations, and to calculate peak volumes of food that would be expected during busy periods.

You can use this data as your benchmark. After you have implemented your new food waste avoidance practices, complete another audit and compare the new data to your benchmark data.

Produced by Hunter Councils and Hunter TAFE. *This project is supported by the Environmental Trust as part of the NSW's EPA's Waste Less Recycle More Initiative, funded by the waste levy.*

For more information

Visit [www.lovefoodhate.nsw.gov.au](http://www.lovefoodhate.nsw.gov.au)

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