

Food Waste in Hotels - Functions

Factsheet

REDUCING
COMMERCIAL
FOOD WASTE
IN IRELAND

In Ireland, it is estimated that 250,000 tonnes^a of food is wasted each year in the commercial sector (the retail sector and all food service businesses).



The hotel sector is responsible for 53,000 tonnes^a of food waste, costing the sector an estimated €180 million per annum.



Hotels have the highest rate of food waste in the Irish food service industry.



More often than not, function numbers are known, but balancing a good customer experience while keeping waste and costs down needs close attention. A good experience doesn't have to mean lots of food waste.



Food Waste Benchmark:

Based on research carried out in 2016-2018, Irish hotel events and functions waste on average

530 GRAMS OF FOOD WASTE PER COVER*

This includes all food disposed, including:



PREPARATION WASTE



UNSERVED WASTE



PLATE WASTE



Use this figure to compare your performance to other businesses in Ireland.

Compare Your Business

See how your business is performing by calculating your food waste benchmark and comparing it to the average for hotel functions.

$$\frac{\text{Total food waste}}{\text{Number of covers}} = \text{Food Waste Per Cover Benchmark}$$

To calculate this value, divide the total weight of food waste for a period of time by the number of covers served in that time.

* A cover constitutes a person served at a function.

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Where is food waste coming from in hotel functions?

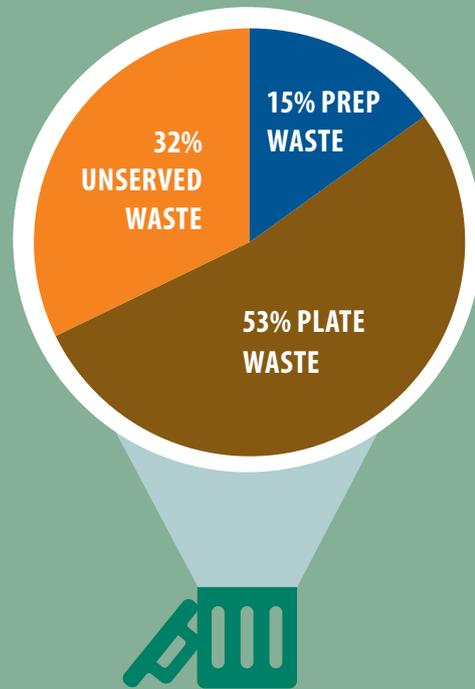
Despite the known number of diners, hotel functions had more food waste than any other type of service studied. Recognising that it's critical to have enough food for an event, there is still lots of room for improvement here.

To get a better understanding, and find out ways of reducing food waste, it can be broken down according to source.

Unservd waste: In hotel events, unserved food waste is any food that was prepared but never even got to a table. Food for this type of service is typically pre-prepared in large batches. This is a key area to consider for cost savings. Reducing this waste has no impact on your customer experience.

Plate waste: For events and functions, plate waste includes any food that was served on the tables. It makes up over half (53%) of the food waste from this type of service. Side servings like veg and potatoes are a big component of this.

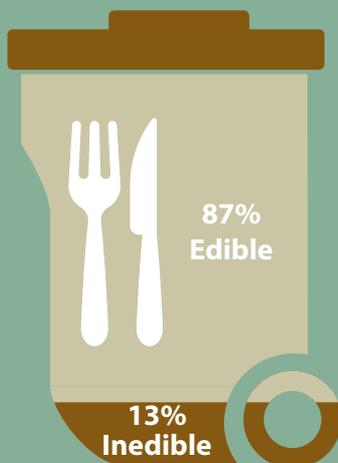
Preparation waste: This waste type is typically low for hotel functions due to the use of pre-prepared ingredients and bulk cooking.



What food is getting wasted at hotel functions?

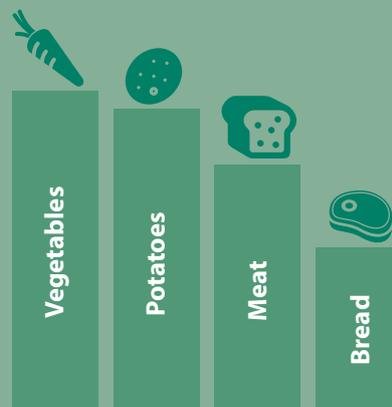
It has been found that 87% is food that could have been eaten. The exact make up of food waste varies from one hotel to the next but the identified trend for functions is given below.

Type of food waste in brown bins



Unavoidable or inedible foods (e.g. banana skins, tea bags, veg peelings) contribute just a third to overall food waste in hotels.

Top four types of avoidable food waste



Cost per kg of food waste in full service restaurants

€3.38 per kg*



* This is based on purchasing cost alone. It gives a zero value to the inedible fraction of food waste.

What is food waste costing you?

For example, one 240 litre wheelie bin of food waste typically weighs ~85 kg. If you have one of these a week it could be costing you:

85 kg/week @ €3.38/kg for 52 weeks = €15,000 per year