

Food Waste in Full-Service Restaurants 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).



Restaurants (both quick service and full service) are responsible for 40,000 tonnes^a of food waste, costing the sector an estimated €115 million per annum.



Full-service restaurants were found to have a higher rate of food waste generation compared to quick-service restaurants, but a lower rate compared to hotels.



Reducing food waste is an excellent opportunity to improve gross profit and can be done without affecting customer experience.



Food Waste Benchmark:

Based on research carried out in 2016-2018, Irish full-service restaurants waste on average

263 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 full-service restaurants.

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.

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

* A cover constitutes a person served regardless as to whether it is a full meal or a smaller item like a starter only.

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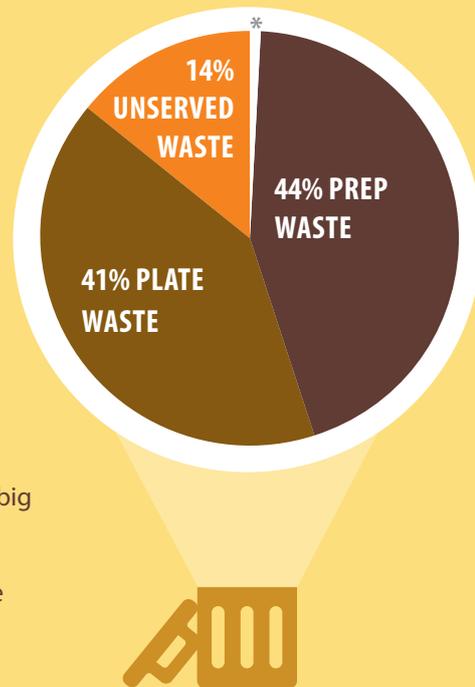
Where is food waste coming from in full-service restaurants?

To get a better understanding, food waste can be measured according to source. For full-service restaurants, leftovers on customers' plates (plate waste) and preparation waste are the main types of food waste.

Unservd waste: Unserved food waste is relatively low in this sector as many businesses operate on a made-to-order basis for the majority of their offerings. Nonetheless, it holds all of the costs of purchasing, preparation, storage etc., yet has not generated any income. This is a key area to consider for cost savings.

Plate waste: Leftovers on plates is the largest contributor to avoidable food waste in this sector. On average, plate waste makes up 41% of total food waste. While nobody wants to skimp on portion size, small changes to how food is served can make a big impact on this waste.

Preparation waste: This waste type is typically high in full-service restaurants due to the large proportion of food prepared on site. While much of this waste is unavoidable, improving preparation practices can reduce it.

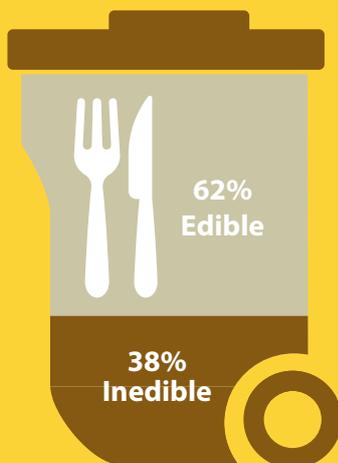


*1% RESIDUAL FOOD WASTE (FROM SINKS)

What food is getting wasted in full-service restaurants?

It has been found that 62% is food that could have been eaten. The exact make up of food waste varies from one full-service restaurant to the next but the identified trend is given below.

Type of food waste in brown bins



Unavoidable or inedible foods (e.g. banana skins, tea bags, veg peelings) contribute less than 38% to overall food waste in canteens.

Top four types of avoidable food waste



Cost per kg of food waste in full-service restaurants

€2.90 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 @ €2.90/kg for 52 weeks = approx €13,000 per year