



# RESTAURANT RESOURCE GUIDE

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Wasted food means wasted money. Every year, food service businesses in the United States lose as much as \$57 billion through wasted food. But, the good news is that your business can take simple, but effective steps to reduce your wasted food. Studies show that nearly all businesses that try to reduce their wasted food through measurement, employee training, and kitchen best practices experienced a positive return on investment. Check out the resources listed in this guide and see how much money your business can save.



# MEASURING WASTED FOOD

## GUIDE TO CONDUCTING AND ANALYZING A FOOD WASTE ASSESSMENT

This guide from the Environmental Protection Agency provides detailed step-by-step instructions for conducting a comprehensive food waste assessment and analyzing the results. [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-08/documents/r5\\_fd\\_wste\\_guidebk\\_020615.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-08/documents/r5_fd_wste_guidebk_020615.pdf)

## FOOD AND PACKAGING WASTE PREVENTION TOOL

Information on the reason for waste such as over-preparation or improper cooking is important to collect in order to make meaningful changes. Food service establishments can use this tool, created by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to track the daily amount, type of, and reason for wasted food and packaging. Users enter information into the Food and Packaging Waste Prevention Tool, which automatically creates graphs and data summaries to help identify patterns of waste generation. Based on these patterns, a business can make strategic changes to its operation to maximize waste reductions and cost savings. Note: After clicking on the link for this tool, select “Save” instead of “Open” to ensure your browser opens this tool with the right program. <https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/tools-preventing-and-diverting-wasted-food#packaging>

To go deeper to measure and track the amount, type of, and the source of the food and packaging waste in your business, check out these resources at the Environmental

Protection Agency’s website: <https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/resources-assessing-wasted-food>

## PAPER WASTE TRACKING TOOL



Prefer a hard copy log to track your business’ wasted food? EPA also has a hardcopy tool in pdf format that can be downloaded at: <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-08/documents/food-waste-log.pdf>

## FOOD WASTE MANAGEMENT COST CALCULATOR

The **Food Waste Management Cost Calculator** estimates the cost competitiveness of alternatives to food waste disposal, including source reduction, donation, composting, and recycling of yellow grease. The calculator:

- Develops an alternative food waste management scenario based on your waste profile, availability of diversion methods, and preferences, and
- Compares cost estimates for a disposal versus an alternative scenario.

This calculator demonstrates that environmentally and socially responsible food waste management is cost-effective for many facilities and waste streams. The more you know about your current waste management costs, the more accurate the calculator’s estimate will be, but default values are provided for many variables.

<https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/tools-preventing-and-diverting-wasted-food#calculator>

# ESTIMATING WASTE AND WASTE SPENDING

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VIDEO

## INVENTORY FOOD AND TRACK WASTE

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You can't manage what you don't measure and food is no exception. In this brief video from the National Restaurant Association, Gail Gand describes why this is important in your restaurant and how to start tracking your food waste to save thousands of dollars a year.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmC0fOcmDuE>

## MEASURE WASTE SPENDING

Check out these tips from the National Restaurant Association for tracking how much you're spending on managing your waste. Tracking your spending can help you create a waste reduction plan and track

your progress. <http://conserve.restaurant.org/Best-Practices/Reduce-Waste-Recycle/Measure-Waste-Spending>

## FOOD WASTE ESTIMATION GUIDE

This site has useful tools to help your business estimate the amount of food waste it is likely to be generating. Along with general information, the site includes specific guidance for: supermarkets and groceries, restaurants, colleges and universities, hospitals, and hotels.

<https://recyclingworksma.com/food-waste-estimation-guide/>

# MENU PLANNING

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VIDEO

## MENU PLANNING VIDEO

QUICK

Want to reduce your restaurant's food waste but worried about compromising the existing menu? Check out this video, produced by the National Restaurant Association. In it, Marcus Samuelsson, Celebrity Chef, Chopped Judge, and Author, shares how sustainability impacts his menu, how he cooks smart with "the good stuff," and how he engages staff to minimize food waste.

<https://furtherwithfood.org/resources/reduce-food-waste-maintain-trendy-menu-marcus-samuelsson-red-roosterchoppedauthor/>

# EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

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Empower and Engage Staff with Eco-Efforts. Engage your staff to help identify new ideas for ways to reduce waste in your business. Check out this National Restaurant Association video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WqCSV2ZLH9Q>

VIDEO

# PREVENTION TIPS

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## FOOD LOSS PREVENTION OPTIONS FOR RESTAURANTS

This two-page tip sheet from EPA provides a range of prevention ideas, including tips for performing a waste audit, involving kitchen staff, prep and storage, purchasing, serving, and more. [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-08/documents/food\\_loss\\_prevention\\_options\\_restaurants\\_august\\_2016.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-08/documents/food_loss_prevention_options_restaurants_august_2016.pdf)

## REDUCING FOOD WASTE IN YOUR RESTAURANT

This National Restaurant Association website has a variety of resources to help you plan and implement actions to reduce wasted food in your restaurant. <http://conserve.restaurant.org/Best-Practices/Reducing-Food-Waste>

## HOW TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE

This guide, developed for restaurants and food service businesses in Massachusetts, but equally applicable for businesses in Oregon, provides an easy to digest summary of best practices you can implement in your kitchen, as well as links to other useful resources. <http://www.recyclingworksma.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/How-to-Reduce-Food-Waste.pdf>

EASY

## REDUCING WASTED FOOD AND PACKAGING: A GUIDE FOR FOOD SERVICE AND RESTAURANTS

This guide, published by the Environmental Protection Agency, offers information on reducing food waste, donation, and alternatives to landfill disposal of your organic waste. [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-08/documents/reducing\\_wasted\\_food\\_pkg\\_tool.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-08/documents/reducing_wasted_food_pkg_tool.pdf)

EASY

## FOOD STORAGE TIPS

Is improper storage leading to food waste in your restaurant? Check out these storage tips from the Environmental Protection Agency: [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-02/documents/smart\\_storage\\_ftgtw\\_2\\_1\\_2016\\_pubnumberadded\\_508\\_v2.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-02/documents/smart_storage_ftgtw_2_1_2016_pubnumberadded_508_v2.pdf)

## REDUCE WASTE IN YOUR RESTAURANT: EXTEND OIL LIFE WITH PROPER FRY COOKING TECHNIQUES

VIDEO

Learn how to reduce fry waste in this National Restaurant Association video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-kBuOuleIU>

## REFRIGERATOR AND FREEZER STORAGE CHART

The FDA tips sheet provides guidelines for food storage that can help you avoid wasting food through spoilage. <https://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/FoodborneIllnessContaminants/ucm109315.pdf>

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## REDUCING FOOD WASTE

This website—part of the National Restaurant Association’s “Conserve Program”—includes tips on restaurant best practices, both front-of-house and back-of-house that you can implement in your business to reduce wasted food. [http://conserve.restaurant.org/Best-Practices/Reducing-Food-Waste-\(1\)](http://conserve.restaurant.org/Best-Practices/Reducing-Food-Waste-(1))

## REDUCE WASTE IN YOUR RESTAURANT: CREATE STANDARD PACKAGING PROCEDURE

VIDEO

Does your restaurant do a lot of “to go” business? Check out this video for useful tips on how packaging procedures can reduce waste. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8Ba4m1E50>

## RESTAURANT FOOD WASTE ACTION GUIDE – REFED

This comprehensive guide covers a wide range of prevention options tailored to restaurants, ranked in terms of their profit and feasibility potential. The guide also provides real life examples of solutions in practice, as well as tips for developing waste prevention strategies. Prevention opportunities covered include menu planning and service, procurement and supply chain, and production efficiency (including a nice section on waste tracking and analytics). The guide also covers food donation and waste recovery, and includes links to additional resources. [https://www.refed.com/downloads/Restaurant\\_Guide\\_Web.pdf](https://www.refed.com/downloads/Restaurant_Guide_Web.pdf)