Business Waste Solutions
Tool 2 - Identifying Food Waste Sources
Tracking Food Waste Sources

The following page can be used as a tracking sheet to record the primary sources of food waste generated in your business. We recommend tracking for at least three days to collect an accurate representation of the source and quantity of food waste being generated. The monitoring period can be extended beyond three days for a more thorough understanding of food waste sources.

Tipping fees for food scraps and organics are less than a third of the cost of mixed waste destined for landfill. Sorting waste correctly reduces a business's vulnerability to the rising costs associated with contaminated waste. It is always important to remember that the best way to lower waste associated costs is to first reduce the amount of waste generated across all streams.

1. To gain insights into where food waste is being generated in your business identify and commit your team to three-days of separating and monitoring food waste. Focus on the three main food waste sources:

    a. Food spoilage waste
    b. Food preparation waste
    c. Customer plate waste

    Separate waste from each source by collecting waste into three separate bins. Place bins in areas relevant to the waste type being generated to ensure your staff can still easily handle waste, e.g. ensure line cooks know which bins are to be used for food waste resulting from preparation, as opposed to food that has spoiled while in storage.

2. Collect visual or metric data for each of the three food waste sources, either by

    a. Weighing the amount of food waste generated (kg) daily from each source

    OR

    b. Record the number of times per day the bins collecting waste from each of the three sources (spoilage / preparation / plate waste) are emptied and the proportion to which each was full (e.g. ¾ full).

        i. Unsure of a bin's size? Estimate the volume by counting how many 1 litre containers of water it takes to fill the bin.
        ii. Once you know a bin's volume you can multiply this by 0.55 (a standard factor used to convert volume to weight).

3. Consider placing all contaminants in a separate bin during this exercise to better identify trouble items.

WASTE FROM FOOD SPOILAGE

Day	Date	Total Bins Filled	Volume (l)*	Weight (kg)**
1				
2				
3				
TOTAL				

WASTE FROM PREPARATION WASTE

Day	Date	Total Bins Filled	Volume (l)*	Weight (kg)**
1				
2				
3				
TOTAL				

CUSTOMER PLATE WASTE

Day	Date	Total Bins Filled	Volume (l)*	Weight (kg)**
1				
2				
3				
TOTAL				

Cumulative Results	Weight (kg)**	Percentage (%) (Total weight from each waste stream divided by TOTAL food waste and multiplied by 100)
Total Food Waste from Spoilage		
Total Food Waste from Preparation		
Total Food Waste from Plate Waste		
TOTAL		

* Not needed if weight calculated -> Volume Daily Total = Number of bins filled x bin volume

** Weight Daily Total = sum of all food waste weights (If calculated based on volume, weight = volume x 0.55)