

# 2 Tips to get you started

## How to reduce waste & manage the waste flow

Many day-to-day food and beverage practices generate waste.

The following tips will help you to identify where you can reduce, reuse, recycle – and save! Each area guides you to additional resources within the toolkit.

You can also use these tips as discussion points when presenting the Toolbox Talks in Section 5.

### did you know?

Planet Ark research has found that around 3.28 million tonnes of food is thrown out by Australian homes and businesses each year.

### 2.1 Menu planning

- Review the quantity of food left on plates and front of house (i.e. buffet) and the type (e.g. side dishes, mains, desserts etc.).
- Review the quantity of garnishes/serviettes that are used to present/serve dishes/drinks.
- Assess the levels of waste and review menu planning practices.
- Provide customers with options of serving sizes to allow for differing appetites.
- Develop side order dishes offering customers a choice with regard to how much they wish to eat.
- Identify ways in which the offcuts from one dish can be used for another (e.g. celery tops used for drink garnishes, stocks etc.).
- Identify opportunities to use one food type over a number of dishes (e.g. meat offcuts for shaslicks).

#### Additional Resources for Menu Planning

Taking Action 3.1 Menu Planning

Taking Action 3.4 WRAP – developing a waste reduction action plan

### 2.2 Purchasing

- Print your purchasing ordering sheets double sided.
- Buy in bulk wherever possible to avoid excess packaging. (But remember that buying too much will also lead to waste.)
- Purchase products in concentrated forms, such as cleaning products.
- Purchase products with minimal packaging.
- Talk to suppliers about what options they can offer you to reduce waste (e.g. will they take back drums, crates, polystyrene boxes?) Investigate potential of returnable/reusable packaging with suppliers.
- Investigate purchasing pre-prepared foods to reduce food wastage and save costs. Although these items may be more expensive at face value, they may prove more economical once time and handling costs have been factored in.
- When comparing the costs of suppliers, take into account the waste cost. Disposal costs are increasing, and will continue to do so.
- Ask for your products to be supplied in recyclable packaging (e.g. strawberries).
- Check your packaging on a regular basis – packaging can change from non recyclable to recyclable without you noticing (e.g. some suppliers are now providing strawberries in recyclable punnets, yet the punnets still look the same – they just have the 1 or 3 code underneath).
- If large plastic drums, detergent and chemical containers are currently non-recyclable, try to reuse them or return them to your suppliers. Most suppliers will collect, wash and refill drums. Many large plastic drums now carry deposits. If your supplier will not collect them, there may be others that will.

#### did you know?

Event goers are prepared to pay extra for food and beverages that are packaged in environmentally friendly material. They will make a conscious decision to purchase from stallholders who use environmentally friendly packaging. Source: Sustainability Victoria

#### 2.2.1 Purchasing tips for events

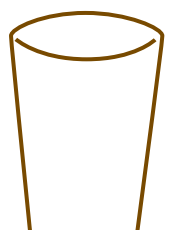
- Decrease costs by reducing types of packaging.
- Use packaging that can be recycled.
- Use packaging made from recycled material.
- Where bags/containers are needed, use recycled and unbleached paper products. This saves trees and helps to create demand for recycled products. Chemical bleaching (chlorination) to achieve pure white paper is unnecessary and creates pollution.

#### Additional Resources for Purchasing

Frequently Asked Questions 4.1 What is green purchasing?

Frequently Asked Questions 4.2 What is recyclable packaging?

Frequently Asked Questions 4.3 What is not recyclable packaging?



## 2 Tips to get you started

### 2.3 Delivery and Storage

- Investigate arrangements with key suppliers to take back packaging, e.g. returnable crates, polystyrene boxes.
- Avoid storing food items one on top of the other, which often damages food and creates waste.
- Avoid having products delivered in non-recyclable packaging wherever possible.
- Minimise spoilage - ensure that once products are received, they are placed in correct storage areas as soon as possible, especially fresh produce. Spoilage not only costs in terms of unused products, but also costs again in waste disposal.
- Rotate stock to avoid out of date products.
- Identify packaging that can become reusable containers for storing food – ensuring, of course, that food hygiene issues are addressed.
- Store left over food in airtight containers (this also stops odours getting into other products, e.g. onion smell in milk).
- Implement a waste management system to recycle packaging and reduce the cost of waste disposal.

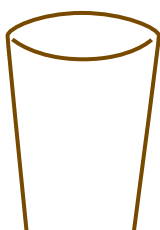
#### Additional Resources for Delivery and Storage

**Taking Action 3.4 WRAP – developing a waste reduction action plan**

**Taking Action 3.5 Waste recovery – setting up your waste management system**

**Frequently Asked Questions 4.2 What is recyclable packaging?**

**Frequently Asked Questions 4.4 What does ‘waste contamination’ mean?**



## food for thought

How many times have you received extra sugar portions at the side of your coffee cup, the coffee has spilled on them, and the portions have been thrown away **unused**?

### 2.4 Food and Beverage Preparation

- In conjunction with menu planning, investigate ways that offcuts from one dish can be used for other dishes.
- Portion control – pre-portion dishes, such as cakes, to reduce the incidence of staff serving various sizes. Large casserole (wet) dishes, such as lasagna in a buffet or canteen arrangement, can also be pre-portioned. If the last piece is deemed too small, it is often thrown away.
- Charity organisations will gladly collect excess food of good quality (that has not been served to the public).
- Having a waste management system in place for recycling reduces the cost of waste disposal.

#### Additional Resources for Food and Beverage Preparation

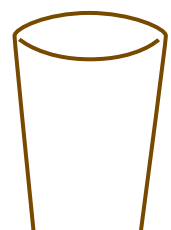
**Taking Action 3.5 Waste recovery – setting up your waste management system**

**Taking Action 3.6 Waste audits**

**Frequently Asked Questions 4.2 What is recyclable packaging?**

**Frequently Asked Questions 4.5 Can we give left over food to charity?**

**Frequently Asked Questions 4.6 Can we recycle food?**



## 2 Tips to get you started

### 2.5 Service

It may appear that the service function provides little opportunity to reduce waste, however there are many ways in which to reduce both your waste and your costs.

- Use recycled paper when printing menus.
- Avoid laminating menus where possible the plastic coating is un-recyclable.
- Wherever possible, use reusable cutlery rather than single use disposable cutlery.
- Review single portion items (e.g. jams, butter, sugar). Wherever possible, avoid single-serve plastic-packaged portions of items such as jams and sauces. These are non-recyclable, wasteful and expensive. Avoid public health and food safety concerns about the use of communal sugar pots and jam jars by serving jams and sauces in reusable containers.
- Serve sugar in refillable spoon-proof dispensers or paper sachets.
- Review the way you serve your drinks. Unnecessary straws, excessive decorations and large napkins create more waste with every drink you sell.
- Having a waste management system in place for recycling leftovers can reduce the cost of waste disposal.

**Be aware that as service is usually the busiest time, staff can forget to comply with the waste recycling practices you have put in place and may need to be reminded.**

#### Additional Resources for Service

Taking Action 3.3 Service

Taking Action 3.5 Waste recovery – setting up your waste management system

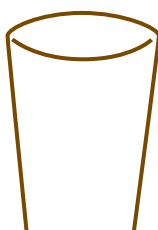
Frequently Asked Questions 4.1 What is green purchasing?

Frequently Asked Questions 4.2 What is recyclable packaging?

Toolbox Talk 5.3 Do you know what you are throwing away?

Toolbox Talk 5.5 What can we recycle around here?

Toolbox Talk 5.8 Can a worm eat it? Food organics



### 2.6 Clean up

- Charity organisations will gladly collect excess food of good quality (that has not been served to the public).
- Check that staff know where, what and how items are to be recycled or disposed.
- Discuss how to best capture items for recycling with your staff.
- Lining general waste bins with different coloured liners is a quick way to differentiate the bins. (Make sure the plastic liner does not get included when the material is collected.)
- Ensure your recycling containers are a different colour from your general waste. This will make it easier to recognise the recycling bins, especially during busy times.
- Develop cleaning management systems, including the accurate measurement of cleaning products. This helps reduce cleaning costs and improve safety, at the same time improving staff well-being and compliance with Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S).
- Check that waste is being disposed of in the correct container.

### food for thought

Waste audits in kitchens found that on average \$15.25 worth of undamaged crockery, cutlery and cloth tableware is accidentally disposed of per business every day. Source: Eating into Waste, Tourism Training NSW

### 2.7 Review and improve

- Check that waste is being allocated to the correct container.
- Check that there were/are enough recycling bins before, during and after service.
- Check that staff know where, what and how items are to be recycled or disposed of.
- Obtain feedback from your waste removalist on your progress.
- Where practicable, implement the Taking Action activities in Section 3 and review progress.
- Identify where changes can be made in the key steps of the catering waste flow.
- Develop review management procedures which look at stock on hand and food left over to assist in more informed decision making around planning and 'over catering'.

#### Additional Resources for Review and Improve

**Taking Action 3.6 Waste audits**

**Taking Action 3.7 Review and improve**

