

# Eco-Restaurants



The Eco-Restaurant concept aims to optimise a restaurant's performance in all environmental aspects. This includes waste prevention, reducing energy and water consumption, and reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions. This factsheet will, however, only focus on the food and packaging waste aspect. **Less food waste means more profit!**

A wide array of measures is possible so as to achieve the goal of becoming an Eco-Restaurant for food waste prevention: Offer a distinction between small and medium or medium and large plates, change your planning, shopping, storing and cooking habits, encourage clients to take home their leftovers in doggy bags, redistribute food that is still suitable for consumption to shelters or food banks or make it animal feed, compost food scraps and food that isn't eatable anymore instead of throwing it away. The benefits of implementing these measures are numerous: Apart from orienting former food waste to human or animal consumption, or to compost and thus stopping food waste, the restaurant will save money by wasting less food and will improve its environmental footprint.

This action is also applicable on canteens in schools or businesses. Even if the conditions are different, the possible measures taken are similar!

## General information



reduce



difficulty

Waste stream



reuse



environmental  
impact



paper



packaging



recycle



cost



WEEE



organic

## Objectives

- ▶ Minimise the total amount of food thrown away during the meal/dinner service
- ▶ Raise awareness among cooks, staff and restaurant owner on how to change their [planning](#), [shopping](#), [storing](#) and [cooking](#) habits
- ▶ Optimise the system so that the food outputs will be provided to food banks and other institutions to feed people in need, fed by animals, or composted on site.
- ▶ Create a culture of sustainability in the restaurant and amongst clients
- ▶ Encourage customers to be a part of the initiative by ordering smartly and consciously
- ▶ Raise awareness among clients on the amount of food wasted from the meal they are served

## What does it include?

- ▶ Adopting sustainable [planning](#), [shopping](#), [storing](#) and [cooking](#) habits
- ▶ Letting customers choose between **different portions sizes** (small, medium, large)
- ▶ Provide **doggy bags** for leftovers (paper/cardboard)
- ▶ Offer one dish made from leftovers in your menu
- ▶ **Inform clients** about the new policy by putting information on posters, leaflets or table sets
- ▶ Provide olive oil, salt, pepper, etc. in **glass containers** instead of small plastic bags
- ▶ Use reusable **cloth napkins** instead of one-use paper napkins

## What you need

- ▶ One or several **restaurant(s)** that is/are willing to participate
- ▶ **Information and communication material:** Get EWWR information material to inform the staff and the restaurant's clients about [food waste](#) and measures against food waste prevention ([planning & shopping](#), [storing](#), [cooking](#)); get the promotional poster to advertise for your action. Prepare specific material to advertise for your action and to inform clients about the measures taken.
- ▶ **Tools:** Doggy bags, cloth napkins, glass containers for salt, pepper, olive oil, etc. See the section on tools below.

## Tools to make this action

### ***Doggy bags to take away leftover food***

- ▶ What is it? Doggy bags are paper bags made available for customers to take their leftover food home for later consumption at home.
- ▶ How to make/use it?
  - Ask your staff to inform your customers that they can take away their leftover food.
  - Inform them that this action helps to fight against food waste.
- ▶ How to evaluate? Weigh the amount of organic waste in return of plates before and during the action. Count the number of doggy bags taken home and weigh them.



## **A banner or sticker to prevent accompanying bread leftovers**

- ▶ What is it? A banner or a sticker on the menu informing customers that accompanying bread is only set on the table on demand and in the amount demanded, in order to prevent food waste.
- ▶ How to make/use it?
  - Attach this banner or sticker on your menus.
  - Ask your staff to inform customers that this action fights against food waste.
- ▶ How to evaluate? Weigh the amount of bread thrown away before and during the action.



## **A banner or sticker on the menu or a new menu to inform about different size dishes**

- ▶ What is it? Some restaurants offer big quantities of food in their courses. Offering different sizes allows customers to order dishes depending on their hunger and will thus prevent food waste.
- ▶ How to make it?
  - Attach a banner or a sticker on your menus or print a new menu informing customers that they can order different sized dishes.
  - Inform them that this action will prevent food waste.
- ▶ How to evaluate? Weigh the amount of organic waste in return of plates before and after the action. Count the number of small, medium and large dishes ordered.



## **A jar for promoting tap water consumption**

- ▶ What is it? A jar for promoting tap water consumption among customers.
- ▶ How to use it?
  - Set a jar full of tap water on every table.
  - Encourage customers to drink tap water instead of bottled water in order to prevent packaging waste.
- ▶ How to evaluate? Weigh the amount of drink packaging thrown away before and after installing the jars.



## Support tools for communication

### A panel to show the best practices in waste prevention carried out

- ▶ What is it? On this panel a checklist with all commitments made by your business in terms of waste prevention is set up as a list of objectives. This will encourage staff and also indirectly suppliers and customers to keep up with the good job.
- ▶ How to use it?
  - Make your commitments, formulate the objectives and note them down on the panel
  - Check all objectives reached.
  - Display the panel in a strategic spot in your restaurant and on your website.
- ▶ How to evaluate? Number of goals achieved. Evolution of the results achieved regarding food waste prevention over time.



### A distinctive sticker / poster

- ▶ What is it? A sticker and a poster to inform customers that your establishment carries out best practices in waste prevention.
- ▶ How to use it?
  - Show the sticker in a strategic spot.
  - Put up the poster on a strategic point.
- ▶ How to evaluate? Number of participating restaurants and quantity of food waste prevented by participating restaurants.



## Preparing the action

### Before the EWWR (one month beforehand)

- ▶ Prepare and distribute information and communication material to the restaurant staff
- ▶ Put up posters advertising for your EWWR action
- ▶ Conduct an initial food waste audit at the restaurant to evaluate where (planning/ shopping/ storing/ cooking) and how much food waste is generated. Do also add an analysis of where the food waste goes now (compost, animal feed, energy recovery, disposal).
- ▶ Make an evaluation of how many drink packaging is thrown away: count the numbers of bottles and weigh them

- ▶ Set up logistics and transport network if necessary; for instance, to conduct the sorted food waste stream to the right destinations
- ▶ Invite people to participate
- ▶ Check with your local authority if they provide support for these kind of initiatives, in the form of free pick-up services (for leftovers to be transferred to food banks) or reusable containers for these transports
- ▶ Decide which actions will be implemented, and buy or print the tools needed (doggy bags, reusable jars, ...), inform your kitchen staff to serve different size dishes on demand, or your waiters not to serve bread unless customers ask for it.

## **Pre-EWWR (one or two weeks beforehand)**

- ▶ Enhance your advertising campaign
- ▶ Remind people about the activity
- ▶ Provide staff and customers with clear information about the initiative and how to join it
- ▶ Inform your customers and suppliers about the commitments you're about to carry out

## **Implementing the action = day of the action**

- ▶ Display the information material on a prominent position
- ▶ Run your initiative
- ▶ Inform your customers and suppliers about the commitments you're about to carry out
- ▶ Ask your staff to encourage customers to drink tap water
- ▶ Ask your staff to inform customers about the possibility of taking away their leftovers in a doggy bag
- ▶ Take pictures and videos so as to give positive feedback
- ▶ Promote the use of doggy bags by explaining the scale and impact of food waste
- ▶ Use the event to inform about the problems caused by [food waste](#) and to provide tips how to reduce food loss in customers everyday life
- ▶ Remember to follow up the measures implemented and the quantitative monitoring of the food waste produced

## **Evaluation and feedback**

### **After the EWWR**

- ▶ Evaluate the tools used:
  - Doggy bags, bread sticker and different sized dishes:
    - Weigh the amount of leftover food delivered with doggy bags. Compare it with the amount of food waste thrown away. The action is a success if the amount of leftover food delivered with doggy bags grows while the total amount of food waste decreases.
    - Weigh the amount of bread thrown away. Compare it with the total amount of food waste thrown away. The action is a success if the amount of bread thrown away decreases through time compared to the food waste stream.
    - Weigh the amount of leftover food thrown away from dining rooms. Compare it with the total amount of food waste thrown away. The action is a success if the amount of leftover food thrown away decreases through time compared to the food waste stream.
  - For this evaluation you can also use the EWWR food waste evaluator
  - Jar for tap water consumption: Weigh the amount of mineral water packaging thrown away. Compare its evolution through time since you start serving tap water in reusable jars. Note that it's on customers' choice to ask for mineral water or not. You can consider the action is a success if the amount of mineral water packaging decreases over time.



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- ▶ Conduct another food waste audit so as to compare with the situation before and after having implemented the initiative.
- ▶ Give feedback to your Coordinator: number of participants (clients who used one of the tools), amount of waste avoided, etc.
- ▶ Send back pictures and videos of your action to your Coordinator
- ▶ Follow up work after the week is done is always fruitful when assessing the level of acceptance of the measures proposed

## More information

### ▶ Information material

- Food waste and its impact: [Do you dare to be aware?](#)
- Tips to reduce food waste:
  - [Shopping & Planning](#)
  - [Storing](#)
  - [Cooking & Eating](#)
  - [Use-by / best-before dates](#)
- Recipes for cooking with leftovers: [www.ewwr.eu/en/support/thematic-days-2014-stop-food-waste](http://www.ewwr.eu/en/support/thematic-days-2014-stop-food-waste)

### ▶ Examples of actions

- Food waste awareness campaign at an agricultural college (FR) 2013:  
[http://www.ewwr.eu/docs/case\\_studies/FR\\_Education\\_Trophees-SERD-2013\\_CSF.pdf](http://www.ewwr.eu/docs/case_studies/FR_Education_Trophees-SERD-2013_CSF.pdf)
- « ...di meno in Meglio » Project (IT) 2012:  
[http://www.ewwr.eu/docs/case\\_studies/EWWR\\_2012\\_Case\\_studies\\_Administration\\_Italy.pdf](http://www.ewwr.eu/docs/case_studies/EWWR_2012_Case_studies_Administration_Italy.pdf)
- Ensemble, réduisons nos déchets – Together, let's reduce waste (FR) 2012:  
[http://www.ewwr.eu/docs/case\\_studies/EWWR\\_2012\\_Case%20Studies\\_Educational\\_France1.pdf](http://www.ewwr.eu/docs/case_studies/EWWR_2012_Case%20Studies_Educational_France1.pdf)
- New Appetite for Change at schools (UK) 2010:  
[http://www.ewwr.eu/docs/case\\_studies/EWWR%202010\\_Case%20Study\\_Admin\\_Scotland.pdf](http://www.ewwr.eu/docs/case_studies/EWWR%202010_Case%20Study_Admin_Scotland.pdf)
- Minimize The Waste - Better Production And Handling Of Food Waste (SE) 2009:  
[http://www.ewwr.eu/docs/case\\_studies/EWWR\\_2009-case-studies\\_Business\\_Eurest\\_SV.pdf](http://www.ewwr.eu/docs/case_studies/EWWR_2009-case-studies_Business_Eurest_SV.pdf)

▶ EWWR Coordinator's website/contact: Find out here: [www.ewwr.eu/list-organisers](http://www.ewwr.eu/list-organisers)

▶ European Week for Waste Reduction: [www.ewwr.eu](http://www.ewwr.eu) [contact@ewwr.eu](mailto:contact@ewwr.eu)

### ▶ Relevant stakeholders

- [Sustainable Restaurant Association](#)
- Urbact: [Sustainable Canteen Project](#)
- [Sustainable Canteens Brussels](#)
- [Food Waste Reduction Alliance](#)

### ▶ Interesting links

- [SAVE FOOD initiative](#)
- [Think.Eat.Save.](#)
- [Food and Agriculture Organization](#) (FAO)
- [Love Food Hate Waste](#)
- OECD [Food Chain Network](#)
- European Commission: [Stop Food Waste](#)



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- [European Environment Agency \(EEA\)](#):
- [European Environmental Bureau \(EEB\)](#):
- Slow Food Movement: [www.slowfood.com](http://www.slowfood.com)
- Too good to waste campaign: [tips for restaurants](#)
- [Ethical Eats](#)
- Council hall of Reus (Catalonia): EWWR action: “[Regala’t aigua](#)”
- Bruxelles Environnement (IBGE) : [Cantine durable](#)
- Unilever: [Wise Up Your Waste](#) (free APP)
- WRAP: [Food waste reduction in the hospitality and food service](#).

## Publications

- International Solid Waste Association (ISWA): [Food Waste As A Global Issue. From the perspective of municipal solid waste management](#).
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Ireland: [Less food waste, more profit](#).
- Intertek/ rdc/ Brussels Environment/ EcoRes: [Réduction des déchets organiques du secteur HoReCa](#)
- SimplyFood/ Bruxelles Environnement/ Wallonie: [Guide pratique cantine durable](#)



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