Canteens against food waste

Principle: encourage both customers and canteen staff to reduce food waste

Canteens of administrations, NGOs, schools or businesses are one of the main place of consumption of food. Unfortunately very often the staff as consumers and clients of the canteen, are not tempted to sustainable consumption. Often the problem is that the meals come in fixed portions or that the consumers are making their choices only based on the pricing of the food.

The “canteens against food waste” action aims at reducing food waste in canteens and at increasing customer awareness about their food choices: choices that directly affect their lunch but that may become a useful tool for the prevention also in the consumption of food at home.

For this reason, part of the tool refers to the planning of their food consumptions choices and awareness of reduction of food waste and the consumption of leftovers.

General information

- reduce
- reuse
- recycle
- difficulty
- environmental impact
- cost
- Waste stream
  - paper
  - packaging
  - WEEE
  - organic

Objectives

- Reduce food waste by promoting a sustainable food “management” in public canteens
- Increase sustainable consumption patterns of employees
- Increase customers’ and suppliers’ awareness in food waste prevention.
- Inform customers on correct food strategy to avoid food waste.
- Encourage people to cook leftovers at home.
### Table clothes for waste prevention

**What is it?** This table clothes will raise customers’ awareness to consume a sustainable quantity of food: “if you like what you are eating, it is better to have it twice”. The right consumption of food is the first step to avoid food waste: with useful suggestions the table clothes will make customers aware about the food waste in public canteens and tools to avoid food waste. The table clothes are the first things that a customer see under the plates and, during the queue waiting for the food, they will have time to read suggestions to avoid food waste.

**How to use it?**
- Use this clothes on the table under the plates
- Inform your customers about waste prevention
- Aware to consume a sustainable quantity of food with numbers, pictures and simple suggestions to avoid food waste.

**How to evaluate?** Amount of clothes used.

### Doggy bags

**What is it?** Doggy bags available for customers to take away their leftover food in order to prevent food waste. When a customer didn’t consume all the food ordered she/he can be encouraged to take away the leftovers with the distribution of doggy bag at the beginning and at the end of the queue for the dishes: the canteen staff will encourage to use doggy bag to avoid food waste even when the customers return their plates.

**How to make/use it?**
- Let the canteen staff know how to use doggy bags
- Inform them that this action helps to fight against food waste.
- Encourage customers to use doggy bags in different places inside the canteen

**How to evaluate?** Amount of doggy bags taken away.

### Panels to show how to develop a correct food strategy to avoid waste

**What is it?** These panels shows to customers how to avoid food waste (plan your meal well in advance, use everything what you have, if there are leftovers compost it etc.). The panels will be positioned in different places inside the canteen and will be different according to the position: the entry panel will focus on the meal planning, the panels around the tables will focus on the right consumption of all the food and the importance of doggy bag, the exit panel will focus on the importance of avoid food waste.

**How to make/use it?**
- Inform customers on correct food strategy to avoid food waste

**How to evaluate?** Number of panels
Recipe book: “Cooking with leftovers”

► What is it? These books teach customers on how to cook with leftovers avoiding food waste. Will be distributed in the canteens to encourage the spread of such practices and reduce food waste. The books will inform and encourage people to avoid food waste even at home, but this books will increase people’s awareness that will encourage customers to avoid food waste even in canteens at lunch.
► How to make/use it?
  o These books will be distributed in eco canteens to encourage people to cook leftovers at home.

How to evaluate? Number of books distributed

Preparing the action: Initial assessment of the situation

1 month before the EWWR

Conduct an audit (EWWR food waste calculator for restaurants) to be aware of the amount of food thrown away and the total customers served by the canteen. The audit is a technical document that allows you to consider the existing situation about waste stream, with waste production data, and territorial analysis with similar existing event or initiatives. The audit will reveal also the food distribution system used by the canteen helping to better understand how to place the panel, the dispenser of doggy bags, etc.
Inform the canteen staff about the tools and educate them about the importance of avoiding food waste: the staff will encourage to inform customers about the use of doggy bags and recipe books with a half-day workshop. The involvement of canteen staff is very helpful to increase a sustainable consumption of food for employees.

Preparing the action: development and production

3 weeks before the EWWR

All the communication materials will be realized and printed: also the doggy bag will be prepared to be distributed.

Few days before EWWR

The materials will be distributed in the canteen; the panels, the recipe books and doggy bags will be placed in the different positions. In addition, all the customers will be informed about the campaign by the canteen staff. Employees and, if applicable, external guests of the canteen, will be encouraged to join and a small audit to count the daily amount of food waste will be set up (calculated by the volume or weight of bins).

Implementing the action

During the EWWR

The initiative will continue throughout the week, when the communication materials will be used, and people will be involved and encouraged to take the measures displayed and use doggy bags otherwise. All the tools will be monitored and the materials will be daily replaced to provide the correct amount of doggy bag and recipe books with new ones.

The canteen staff will encourage people to use the doggy bags and recipe books.
Evaluation methodology

After the EWWR
The audit prepared during the assessment will be the landmark for the amount of food waste and the total number of the customers. The final assessment will have the same measuring and the same measured terms after the EWWR.

In order to evaluate the results of this action, you should consider the:

- Amount of table clothes used.
- Amount of doggy bags taken away.
- Number of panels
- Number of books
- Number of persons involved in training
- Amount of food waste avoided

You can measure the amount of food waste by volume of weight, using the same measure terms of the initial assessment. It is very important to organize a final session with the canteen staff in order to receive suggestions, impressions and feelings about the numbers and amount of the tools.

The number of doggy bag is strictly connected to the amount of food waste: many doggy bags used may indicate a reduction of food waste!

You can also inform internal employees with e-mailing about the saving of food waste and other useful data.

More information

- **Examples of actions**
    [www.ewwr.eu/docs/case_studies/EWWR%202010_Case%20Study_Admin_France_0.pdf](http://www.ewwr.eu/docs/case_studies/EWWR%202010_Case%20Study_Admin_France_0.pdf)
  - BARCELONA FOOD BANK FOUNDATION, Turning municipal market and supermarket chain leftovers into local solidarity resources, Catalunya, Spain, 2011
  - Covar 14 Eco-restaurant, winning action in administration category EWWR 2012:
    [www.ewwr.eu/docs/case_studies/EWWR_2012_Case%20studies_Administration_Italy.pdf](http://www.ewwr.eu/docs/case_studies/EWWR_2012_Case%20studies_Administration_Italy.pdf)
  - Ecoscience Provence, Launch of the "Eco-Management" action for the itinerant market, France, winning action in EWRR 2013 edition
  - Waste Watchers Cookoff, Playbusters, United Kingdom, 2012

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

- **Other interesting links (Italy):**
  - Last Minute Market: [www.lastminutemarket.it](http://www.lastminutemarket.it)
  - Eco Ristorazione Trentino: [www.eco.provincia.tn.it/Ecoristorazione_Trentino/](http://www.eco.provincia.tn.it/Ecoristorazione_Trentino/)