

The Seahorse waves goodbye to food waste



Key facts

- Smart purchasing and flexible menus are key to keeping food waste low.
- Running out of a main dish is a better business proposition than overstocking expensive, short life ingredients.
- Use preparation scraps and shells for stocks and sauces.
- Return packaging to produce and fish suppliers.

Baseline data*:

Food Waste = 150g/ cover

Food Waste Cost = 27p/ cover



Summary

The Seahorse restaurant in Llandudno serves high quality seafood, which is costly if wasted. Despite good, basic waste reduction practices being in place prior to using the 'Your Business is Food, don't throw it away' materials, owner and head chef Don Hadwin was keen to gain a better understanding of the financial costs of food waste to the business.

Don orders his produce carefully, trying not to over-order. He has learned not to be afraid of running out of a main dish during service and believes it demonstrates to the customer that the menu is constantly changing to reflect the best available daily produce and that the restaurant's food is freshly prepared and in demand.

He takes care to keep food waste to a minimum during preparation because of cost and environmental concerns. Disposal is a challenge as his allocated bin space is not adjacent to the restaurant, making the need to improve the business's awareness of unnecessary food waste all the more pressing. He has taken action to reduce supplier packaging waste by returning polystyrene containers to the fish suppliers and produce boxes back to the produce supplier for re-use.

When monitoring the food waste Don explained how a large proportion of crab and lobster shells were likely to influence his waste weighing statistics as this waste is inedible and cannot be avoided. Don felt there were improvements to be made on plate waste levels, and this provided the focus when using the Your Business is Food resources.



"Your Business is Food inspired me to look at a different way of serving side dishes and further reduce plate waste."

Don Hadwin, Owner, Seahorse restaurant

*Based on Your Business is Food 3 day tracking calculator

Smart purchasing and flexible menus

The Seahorse had very low spoilage waste during the waste monitoring period. Smart ordering is essential as prime fresh fish has a very limited optimum period and Don tends to under stock rather than overstock menu items.

He is comfortable with running out of dishes during service as it ensures all stock is used up and signals to the customers that the food is of high quality, 'daily fresh' and in demand.

The menu at The Seahorse is flexible and allows Don to re-use stock that isn't consumed in other dishes. This ensures that he is not left with high priced quality food going out of date.

Challenges and scope for change

Food waste volumes are always carefully monitored. Efforts are made to cut any food waste to the bare minimum, with fish trimmings and other scrap cuts used as a base for stocks, soups and sauces. Much of the plate waste comes from unavoidable waste (such as lobster and crab shells), however, for the remaining plate waste, which is 'edible', there remains room to incorporate Your Business is Food practices to reduce waste levels further.

Key Outputs

During the waste monitoring period, Don learned that the bulk of food waste was coming from the plate. The data shows that there was 21.16kg of plate waste for 190 covers.

Preparation waste was a reassuring 0kg for two of the three programme days, however, it is reasonable to assume this would be higher over a longer monitoring period, as the restaurant is open seven nights a week. Similarly no recorded spoilage waste was recorded, meaning that the existing waste reduction practices were effective.

	Food Waste Monitoring		
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Prep	8.55kg	0kg	0kg
Plate	7kg	8.32kg	5.84kg
Spoilage	0kg	0kg	0kg
Total Waste	15.55kg	8.32kg	5.84kg

Table 1: Accumulated food waste weight over three-day monitoring period

	Food Waste Cost Calculator		
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Total Cost	£26.89	£14.39	£10.10
Grand Total			£51.38

Table 2: Real monetary value of food waste weight

	Meals Served		
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Meals Served	59	75	56
Grand Total			190

Table 3: Total covers during monitoring period

Changes Made

Don's produce buying policy, experience of consumer demand, his preparation and stock/sauces production and his record on spoilage show he is already pushing very closely to a zero pre-plate food waste level.

Little of the high value "centrepiece" elements on the plate- crab, lobster etc. are left by customers. Even so Don agreed that, by following the Your Business is Food exercise, he can reduce food waste even further, for instance in the areas of side dish vegetable servings and salad ingredients, that are occasionally over-ordered and returned by customers.

Create your own waves to deliver Savings

Don used the Your Business is Food 3-day tracking sheet and calculator to provide some initial insights as to how much the food thrown away was costing the business.

For even more insights and detail, you could use the 7-day tracking sheet over a month with the Your Business is Food calculator tool to get real insight into purchase costs and true cost values for your business.

Access the full suite of Your Business is Food resources [here](#).



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