

# GETTING STARTED

A quick step by step guide to protect your profits and our planet by reducing wasted food



TOURISM  
NORTHERN  
IRELAND

wrap



GUARDIANS  
- OF GRUB -

# WHAT'S IN THIS GUIDE?

Help feed people not bins, defend your profits and protect our world: whether you're an individual, independent business, single site or larger operator working to save food in Hospitality and Food Service (HaFS).

By acting together as Guardians of Grub, we can create the momentum to make measuring and reducing wasted food everyday practice in the sector.

Wasted food costs food businesses [£10,000, on average. per site per year.](#)

And a whopping 75% of this food could have been eaten!

Which impacts on climate change: for every kilogram of food wasted, on average, you also throw away an estimated equivalent of 3.39kg of CO2.

The Guardians of Grub campaign supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 of halving food waste by 2030 and because wasting food feeds climate change, this also contributes to Net Zero or carbon reduction targets.

This guide will give you the tools you need to identify hotspots to protect profits and the planet.

Ready to give your business a boost? Let's get started!

## GOOD TO KNOW:

As well as saving you money, this guide helps you meet your business' legal obligations. Check out the [Waste \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2012](#) and the [Waste \(Scotland\) Regulations 2012](#) and [Northern Ireland Guidance for 2015 Regulations](#) for further information.



# 3 IS THE MAGIC NUMBER

There are three main actions to making a difference:



Join the Guardians of Grub campaign and take the **pledge** to demonstrate your commitment to rise up against wasted food.



Select your **Guardians of Grub Champion** to lead the troops.



Follow the principles of **Target Measure Act**; set a food waste reduction Target, Measure and take Action

Target  
Measure  
Act

# BECOME A GUARDIAN

[Sign the pledge](#) and join the ranks of Guardians of Grub from the across the Hospitality and Food Service sector.

Next, read our [Partnership roles](#) to determine the type of Guardian you are going to be - Guardian, Champion, Ambassador or Supporting Partner.

Let us know what you're up to and, if appropriate, we can add you to our [Wall of Fame](#).

Ready to give your business a boost? Let's get started!



# CHOOSE A CHAMPION

Before we get into the Guardians of Grub tools and tips, business owners need to identify the right person to make change happen; someone passionate about making a difference who can be their Champion.

## A CHAMPION

Your Champion needs to rally the troops. Explain why every member of staff is a Guardian of Grub and implement regular meetings so that everyone has a voice. Making sure staff are empowered to bring ideas to the table.

When you've chosen your Champion, our [two-page to do list for Operators](#) explains how to make the most impact linking actions and the Guardians of Grub resources available.

Once you're seeing savings, share a [case study](#), [video short](#) or join our [Wall of Fame](#)!

## BUT NO HERO STANDS ALONE

We have a range of engaging materials that will help get everyone on board which you can find [here](#). A great place to start is our 15 minute [Cost Saving Skills Course](#). It inspires and trains staff to measure and reduce food waste. The [Business Case Presentation](#) sets out the cast-iron profit and planet protecting case for food waste measurement to persuade colleagues to care about saving carbon and cost. And if you want to hear about our next [Becoming a Champion](#) behaviour change course, just email [guardiansofgrub@wrap.org.uk](mailto:guardiansofgrub@wrap.org.uk).



# TARGET

To set your target and see the impact it could make to your bottom line and the environment, plug your estimated or actual cover numbers into our Guardians of Grub Cost Saving Calculator [here](#). It's free to use and takes less than a minute.



Setting a target gives a sense of purpose and structure, allowing you to build a food waste reduction action plan as part of your Net Zero journey.

You could start with a 20% target for the first month and then review how achievable this is over the year.

If you want to align with global targets, consider using either the [Courtauld Commitment 2030](#), UK Food Waste Reduction Roadmap or the UN Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 target. This is a food waste reduction target of 50% by 2030.

And if you're thinking "Does tracking food waste really work?" The answer is "Yes".

Whether you're a local café or operate across multiple sites, the Guardians of Grub tools and techniques are already helping companies save money and protect the planet. Check out some of our [case studies](#) and [video insights here](#).

## CASE STUDY

[Thwaites](#) launched a food waste tracking trial using the Guardians of Grub tools. Over four weeks, the three sites saw an average 38% reduction in food waste. Watch the video to find out how measuring and monitoring made such a massive difference.



# MEASURE

Now you have your target it's time to measure food waste. We recommend that you use four containers and download the labels [here](#).



## PREPARATION

Food that is thrown away during preparation, such as offcuts.



## SPOILAGE

Food that's damaged or out of date, such as vegetable spoilage.



## PLATE WASTE

Food that is left on plates such as chips and garnishes.



## OTHER

Other types of food thrown away, such as food that is ready to serve but not eaten, e.g. over production, buffet.

## CASE STUDY

Biagio from Café Rouge explains how easy and helpful it is to measure each food waste stream to identify hot spots.

Watch the [full video](#).

Watch the [shorter video](#).







# ACT

So far, so simple. You have great intel on your food waste. And you have your Target. Now it's time to Act. Follow these seven simple steps, covered in detail over the next few pages, and you'll be well on your way to saving money and helping to save our planet.

## SPOILAGE

1. Smart ordering
2. Savvy storage

## PREPARATION

3. Smart menu
4. Essential skills

## PLATE

5. Right portion sizes
6. Engage customers

## OTHER

7. Surplus and food waste collection

Our [6 Ways to Save Food poster](#) is a great way of sharing info – either on the kitchen wall or via comms and social media.

# ACT



## SMART ORDERING

Following these simple steps could help increase profit.

- **CHECK** – Brief your team to check your stock regularly and purchase only what you need.
- **FREQUENCY** – Investigate if you could order less but more often to save on storage space and keep food fresh.
- **SUPPLIERS** – Order meat and fish cut to specifications – to save prep time and leave less food to throw away.
- **JUST-IN-TIME** – Work with your suppliers to arrange just-in-time deliveries so you only order what you know will be used.



# ACT



## SAVVY STORAGE

Well organised storage increases efficiency and avoids unnecessary food waste.

Some good tips for storing:

- Label items with purchase and use-by dates (if applicable).
- F.I.F.O. First in, first out! Store new items at the back to ensure older items are used first.
- Store food as soon as it is delivered. Avoid overloading the fridge or freezer.
- Use airtight containers or vacuum packing to keep already prepared food fresh for longer.
- Revise shelf/storage plans frequently to ensure they reflect your menu.
- Consider using frozen, dried, bottled or tinned goods as alternatives to fresh ingredients where quality is comparable.

Visit the [WRAP website](#) for more guidance on labelling.



**CLEVER  
STORAGE =  
LOWER RUNNING  
COSTS AND  
HIGHER  
PROFITS**

## ACT

### SMART MENUS

Too many choices can be overwhelming for customers and reducing your SKUs can really help increase efficiency.

Review your menu with our Menu Planning slides which you can find [here](#).

### CASE STUDY

The Airport – a busy pub in Manchester Airport – found that 88% of their waste was coming back on customers plates.

By making simple menu changes – such as serving ‘naked’ burgers without buns unless requested they saved nearly £3,000 in the first four weeks alone! Read the full case study [here](#).

**THE AIRPORT:  
SAVED  
NEARLY  
£3000  
IN 4 WEEKS**

### CLEVER IDEAS TO REVIVE YOUR MENU

- Explore ways of using the same ingredients for different dishes.
- Employ cooking methods for making the most of meats, fruit and vegetables and herbs.
- Be creative by using leftover ingredients and offcuts.

#### Do something **SPECIAL** and offer:

- Chef or lunch specials to use up excess ingredients.
- Garnishes and side orders by request to give customers the choice of what and how much they want to eat.
- A range of portion sizes.



# ACT

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Getting your staff excited about protecting your profits and our planet couldn't be simpler.

We recommend ALL staff start with the [Cost Savings Skills Course](#) to give them the key information they need on why we need to act and how to get cracking with tracking in just fifteen minutes.

Our [posters, gifs, videos, printed materials, guides and explainers](#) will help get everyone on board either in person or via comms and social media.

Our People, Planet, Profit on-demand series offers in-depth, practical advice from industry leaders. Webinars available include [Skills for the Future](#), [Serving Net Zero](#) and [Plate Waste](#).

Our bank of [case studies](#) provide real-life examples of the savings and benefits of measuring and reducing food waste.

Inspiration can come from anywhere and everyone should have a voice, so make sure your Champion has regular staff meetings to capture valuable ideas during the process and is given the appropriate authority and support.

The [Food Waste Reduction Action Plan](#) is a great tool for capturing ideas and making sure tasks are completed.

Reach out and show the team as well as wider staff / senior management team why tackling food waste is a planetary and profit-saving priority with this editable [Business Case Presentation](#).

**“In the Cost Saving Skills Course every subheading was broken down and explained, easy to follow and leaves you feeling motivated.”**



# ACT

## FREE TRAINING WITH BECOMING A CHAMPION E-LEARNING

Knowledge is power! The Guardians of Grub: [Becoming a Champion e-learning course](#) is ideal for individuals and organisations committed to taking action through learning and food waste measurement. The course:

- Has five levels, with a certificate for each completed
- Includes resource toolkits including tools, templates, how-to-guides, podcasts and webinars
- Guides individuals and businesses through every stage of reducing wasted food across operations from kitchen to supply chain and menu design

This course takes you or your business's skills to the next level to make a positive difference to you, your profits and the planet. To find out more or to take part, contact [guardiansofgrub@wrap.org.uk](mailto:guardiansofgrub@wrap.org.uk).



### BECOMING A CHAMPION

*"WRAP's Guardians of Grub 'Becoming a Champion' online learning has been instrumental to IHG's understanding of where and how our food is turning into waste. The 'Becoming a Champion' behaviour change course has really helped us to engage our teams on the value of food and reducing the impact of our food, and contributing to our net zero ambitions – protecting our profits, business and the planet."*

#### IHG Hotels & Resorts UK & Ire

*"Our teams found that just talking about wasted food influenced change and many of our sites put initiatives in place such as zero-waste dishes, utilising excess stock through menu innovations and donating surplus to the community."*

#### Elior UK

For more insights, our Skills for the Future webinar discusses how you can ensure you and your team have the right skills for long-term success.

# ACT

## RIGHT PORTION SIZES

Keep an eye on the weight of your “Plate” food waste container. The goal is to get this as close to zero as possible whilst keeping customers happy. Common sources of food left on plates are sides like chips, bread and vegetables. Measuring your plate waste provides great intel on whether your portion sizes are appropriate.

Consider offering a variety of portion sizes for appropriate dishes. Encourage front-of-house staff to chat to customers about your efforts to reduce food waste. Get them to guide customers to the right dishes and portion sizes to match their appetite, and find out what customers think about the portions you serve.

For more inspiration, our [Plate Waste webinar](#) is packed with insights and real ideas for tackling plate waste.

## CASE STUDY

The Ship Inn in Cumbria, cut food waste by a massive 67% by offering smaller portion sizes, particularly of chips, and putting out smaller portions of sauce. You can read the full case study [here](#).

THE SHIP INN:  
**67%**  
FOOD WASTE  
REDUCTION



### HOW CAN I REDUCE LEFTOVERS?

**1 Offer portion size options**

**2 Offer side dishes as options or by request**

**3 Offer take away “doggy boxes” routinely to all customers with edible leftovers**



# ACT

## ENGAGE CUSTOMERS ON CLIMATE

81%\* of the UK population care about the climate crisis and 32%\* see a link between food waste and the environment.

Wasting food feeds climate change: every kilogram of food wasted has a carbon and environmental impact.

Setting a food waste reduction target gives a sense of purpose and structure, allowing you to build a food waste reduction action plan as part of your Net Zero journey. It also enables you and your business to contribute towards the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 12.3](#) to reduce food waste by 50% by 2030, the Courtauld Commitment 2030 and the [UK's Food Waste Reduction Roadmap](#).

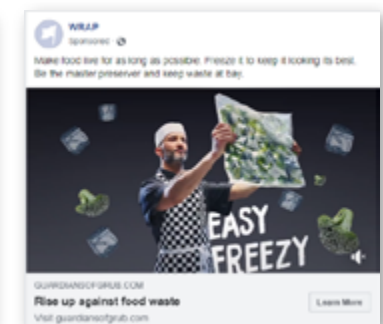
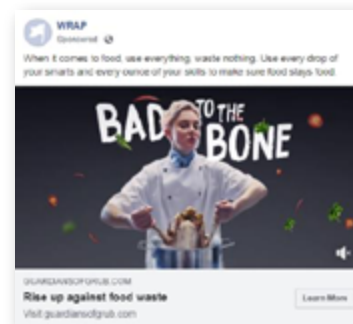
The FSA Consumer tracker shows that after Food Safety, the next most important issue to 57%\*\* of your customers is food waste.

This means your work to reduce food waste is a great opportunity to talk to customers about what you're doing to protect the environment and help tackle the climate crisis. And protect your profits too.

You don't have to wait until customers walk through the door to get them excited about what you're doing. Harness comms and social media - there are tonnes of resources on the website, including a bunch of social media goodies [here](#).

For more inspiration, our [Serving Net Zero episode](#) is packed with insight on how tackling food waste can help you reduce carbon, cost and meet customer expectations.

**FOR  
57%**  
OF CUSTOMERS  
**FOOD WASTE  
IS AN  
IMPORTANT  
ISSUE**



\*Source: WRAP, Life under Covid-19: Food waste attitudes and behaviours in 2020

\*\*Source: FSA's Public Attitudes Tracker Survey Wave 19 results published



# ACT

## ENCOURAGE CUSTOMERS TO TAKE HOME YOUR FOOD AND ENJOY IT LATER

Get staff on board by explaining why you are working to reduce plate waste.

- Speak to your local Environmental Health Professional about the options available for customers to take food home.
- Investigate options for takeaway containers. Encourage customers to bring their own, or provide them yourself, offering them to every diner with edible leftovers as standard practice (making sure they are new and food grade).
- Label the container with storage advice and your branding to remind customers about food safety and to promote your business.
- Find out more from the [Food Standards Agency](#) and [CIEH](#).

To find out more about what your customers think and how to reduce plate waste, check out the Love Food Hate Waste information here.



## WHAT TO DO WITH SURPLUS FOOD

So you've done everything you can to prevent wasted food. But if you've still got surplus that's fit to eat the next best approach is redistribution.

Consider working with a local or national food redistribution organisation.

Doing the right thing will make you feel good and could have a positive impact on your local community.

Here are some useful links:

- [WRAP's Food Surplus Network](#).
- The [Sustainable Restaurant Association redistribution guide](#) gives you all the information you need on redistribution organisations for hospitality and food service.

## FOOD WASTE COLLECTION

For food that's unfit to eat, find out from your local waste management contractor if they offer recycling collections.

For more information on how to ask your Waste Collector to provide you with food waste data, click [here](#) for a useful guide.

### ? TIP

Interested in the bigger picture of throwing away less food? The [Waste Hierarchy](#) is a guide to managing resources in harmony with the environment and your business needs. It will also help you meet your business' legal obligations.



# KEEP IT GOING

Reducing wasted food is all about teamwork. So it's important that your Champion checks in with staff on a regular basis. And we're not just talking about implementing the tools and ideas above. It's about sharing successes, sharing ideas and communicating goals. Here are some ideas to get your team talking.

## OUTLINE THE GAMEPLAN

- [Let staff know why you're tracking wasted food](#)
- [The nuts and bolts of how tracking works](#)
- [What actions you've taken to reduce food waste](#)
- What you plan to do next
- [And how they can get involved](#)

## GENERATE BUZZ

- Use the [campaign assets](#) to promote efforts internally and externally.
- Use staff meetings to share your successes.
- Make space on a notice board for ideas and updates.
- Highlight top staff ideas.
- Set goals and targets.
- Create league tables to create a bit of friendly competition.
- Reward staff for their efforts – whether that's celebrating their work in staff meetings or introducing incentives.

## REAP THE REWARDS

- Communicating effectively can help win wider action across the business.
- Gain support from colleagues.
- Boost team morale.
- Keep clients happy by reducing their disposal costs.



# WHAT IS OUR COMMITMENT TO TAKE ACTION ON WASTED FOOD?

**PHASE 1.** As a business, we will join\* the campaign at [guardiansofgrub.com](https://guardiansofgrub.com) by signing the [pledge](#) and downloading the free [resources](#) and tools to measure our food waste and shout about how and why we support the Guardians of Grub campaign.

**PHASE 2.** We will appoint a Guardians of Grub Champion and will regularly review our food waste figures. We will share our learnings on reducing wasted food and support Guardians of Grub to rise up against food waste.

**PHASE 3.** We commit to setting a food waste reduction target, to measuring and to taking action to reduce our wasted food. We will get our kitchens briefed and set up to measure using Guardians of Grub operational resources and will use the [Campaign Guide](#) to encourage others to take part.

We will incorporate our food waste reduction targets and action plan into our carbon reduction/Net Zero journey.

\* WRAP will share hints, tips and advice for reducing our food waste as well as exclusive content and support.

## TWO PAGE TO-DO LIST

Why not use our step-by-step [Operator Action Plan](#)?

This two-page to do list takes you through all you need to do, linking to the key actions and resources available.



# GUARDIANS OF GRUB CHECKLIST



- ✓ **Find out** how much money and carbon equivalent you could be saving over a year by reducing wasted food with the simple [calculator tool](#) – all you need is estimated or actual cover numbers.
- ✓ **Commit to Target, Measure, Act** and take the [Guardians of Grub pledge](#). Set a Target for reducing food waste, start Measuring your waste, then Act to tackle it. A 20% reduction Target is a good place to start.
- ✓ **Read our [Partnership roles](#)** to determine the type of Guardian you are going to be – Guardian, Champion, Ambassador or Supporting Partner.
- ✓ **Get your staff on board** by explaining why the organisation is reducing food waste. The 15-minute [Cost Saving Skills course](#), [1.30 minute video](#), [posters](#) and [presentation](#) can help.
- ✓ **Make sure all your staff understand** what they need to do with food waste during the waste review. Put up posters, and use social media to get people excited.
- ✓ **Find a Guardian of Grub Champion** to drive the process on site but make sure all staff understand what is happening during the food waste review and can take part.
- ✓ **Set out** separate containers for Spoilage, Preparation, Plate and Other to capture what type of food is being thrown away. [Label](#) the containers so staff know where to put what.

# GUARDIANS OF GRUB CHECKLIST CONTINUED



- ✓ **Weigh the containers** and record each type of food thrown away each day on the [7 day tracking sheet](#).
- ✓ **Input your figures** into the [Food Tracking Calculator](#) or Unilever Food Solutions' free [Wise Up on Waste](#) online tool. This calculates how much wasted food is costing you and shows the potential savings your business could make over a year.
- ✓ **Share** [Food Tracking Calculator](#) figures confidentially with WRAP at [guardiansofgrub@wrap.org.uk](mailto:guardiansofgrub@wrap.org.uk).
- ✓ **Work through** the [Food Saving Summary Checklist](#) for ideas on ways to keep good food from being wasted.
- ✓ **Review** your waste and carbon equivalent impact figures with staff weekly and make talking about ways to save food a regular topic of staff meetings. Get staff thinking about where your waste comes from, and why, and make sure everyone feels they can take part. Show the charts from the [Food Tracking Calculator](#) and explain how saving food fits in to your carbon reduction targets/Net Zero journey.
- ✓ **Plan actions** to reduce the amount of food, and embodied carbon, your business throws away, getting ideas, inspiration and food saving tips from Guardians of Grub resources including the [6 Ways to Save Food Poster](#), [case studies](#), the [15-min Cost Saving Skills Course](#), [the People, Planet, Plate webinars](#), and the [masterclasses](#). Record these actions in your [Food Waste Reduction Action Plan](#) and keep track of progress.
- ✓ **Go public** and talk about savings and successes and how tackling food is helping you meet your carbon reduction commitments. Also consider signing up to the UK Food Waste Reduction Roadmap and the [Courtauld Commitment 2030](#).

# THANK YOU!

You now know how to become a Guardian of Grub and to apply the principles of Target, Measure, Act.



But this is just the start of the journey; so keep going, sign the pledge [here](#) and tell us how you are progressing at [guardiansofgrub@wrap.org.uk](mailto:guardiansofgrub@wrap.org.uk) - we'd love to hear from you!

So, what are you waiting for?

Protect your profits and our planet.

