



Sector Action Plan Summary

2022-2025

# Bread & Bakery



## Overview

Each year, more than 319,400 tonnes of good-quality food is wasted across the Australian bread and bakery value chain, from farm to consumers' plates. This includes grain wasted in primary production, food materials wasted in bakeries, unsold products in retail, and uneaten bread and bakery products in Australian homes.

This food waste is equivalent to the weight of 456 million loaves of bread, while at the same time half a million households are struggling to put food on the table each day, and 1.3 million Australian children don't have enough to eat (Foodbank, 2022). Food waste also costs the Australian economy \$36.6 billion a year, with significant costs worn by businesses, households, and the environment.

Australia is committed to halving food waste by 2030. Stop Food Waste Australia was established with funding from the Australian Government to lead the delivery of the National Food Waste Strategy. The Bread and Bakery Sector Action Plan will help businesses to reduce waste, save money, protect the environment, and deliver this 2030 target.



## Overview

The Sector Action Plan was co-designed with organisations across the Bread and Bakery Sector (the Sector), including large-scale manufacturers Goodman Fielder and George Weston Foods, multi-chain retailers Bakers Delight, suburban bakeries like Bob and Pete's, and industry bodies Australian Bakers Association. The Sector Action Plan is developed by Stop Food Waste Australia with support from the Federal Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, New South Wales Environment Protection Agency (NSW EPA) and Rawtec.

Organisations in the Sector are expected to benefit from delivery of the key actions identified in the Sector Action Plan by:

- ▶ lowering their food waste and associated operational costs
- ▶ reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts associated with their food waste
- ▶ demonstrating corporate social responsibility by donating surplus to food rescue, and helping consumers to reduce food waste at home and save money, and
- ▶ showing leadership by helping Australia meet its goal of halving food waste by 2030.



## Food waste hotspots across the Sector's value chain

Many organisations in the Sector are already proactively engaging in food waste reduction actions. However, individual organisations cannot resolve all issues alone, and a collaborative, system-wide approach is needed.

Within the Sector, there is a reliance on sending food waste to animal feed, which while ensuring waste is diverted from landfill, misses potential opportunities to avoid waste in the first place or upcycle or donate this food.

The Sector Action Plan takes a systems lens and applies the [WRAP UK Whole Chain Efficiency Toolkit](#) to tackle the root causes of food waste hotspots across the Sector's value chain.

Key food waste hotspots and root causes include:

### Manufacturing

- ▶ An estimated 50,000 t/yr of bakery food materials in manufacturing is either wasted or diverted to animal feed. Hotspots in manufacturing relate to machine failure, human error, and overproduction. Some root causes include breakdowns from missing scheduled machinery maintenance, consumer expectations for bread baked daily, and lack of data and systems to aid forecasting.

### Retail

- ▶ An estimated 104,000 t/yr of bakery food materials in retail is either wasted or diverted to animal feed. A major hotspot in retail is unsold bread. Some root causes include manufacturers' requirement to take back and deal with unsold product in retail (sale and return practice, excluding South Australia), oversupply, and consumers' expectations for well-stocked shelves.

### Foodservice

- ▶ An estimated 54,000 t/yr of bakery food materials in foodservice is either wasted or diverted to animal feed. These volumes include foodservice activities across restaurants, cafes, aged care facilities, correctional centres, hospitals, and other facilities. A major hotspot in foodservice is plate waste, i.e., people not eating/finishing the bread they are served. Some root causes include portion sizes being too large, and items like bread baskets used to satisfy consumers expectations for value for money.

### Households

- ▶ An estimated 220,000 t/yr of bread and bakery items go uneaten in households across Australia each year. A Fight Food Waste CRC study determined the root causes for bread and bakery waste in households, which include desire for freshness, poor storage at home, shopping too frequently and just-in-case buying.

## Key solutions

The Bread and Bakery Sector Action Plan identifies food waste hotspots and root causes to pinpoint the most impactful solutions. These actions are proposed to be developed in conjunction with key industry bodies and with ongoing engagement within the Sector.

Key actions include:

### Industry training:

- ▶ Develop a Better Practice Guide and toolkit for reducing bread and bakery food waste.
- ▶ Develop micro-credentials for reducing bread and bakery food waste in manufacturing.

### Knowledge sharing

- ▶ Set up a platform or mechanisms for bakeries/retailers to receive updates on technologies/equipment to help reduce food waste.

### Investigate legislation to

- ▶ Reduce waste associated with retail 'sale and return' practices (like South Australia's) in other jurisdictions.
- ▶ Mandate separate organics collections (like upcoming NSW legislation).

### Supporting systems

- ▶ Review nutritional requirements/practices in institutions.

- ▶ Pilot using point of sales (POS) data to identify the 'sweet spot' between full shelves, the opportunity to maximise sales and limiting food waste.

### Target households

- ▶ Begin/expand production and promotion of smaller loaves.
- ▶ Introduce visual cues on packaging to inform households on how to extend the life of their bread.
- ▶ Amplify messaging provided through the potential Nationwide Consumer Behaviour Change Campaign and State/Territory-based campaigns.

Ongoing communication and collaboration across bakery partners and governments will be essential to the success of the SAP. The following actions will support the execution of the plan:

- ▶ Transition the Sector Action Plan project reference group to a 'food waste working group'. This group to have clear terms of reference, implementation priorities and continue to work collaboratively to tackle food waste.
- ▶ Annual reporting of food waste volumes by bread and bakery organisations to track progress on reducing food waste.
- ▶ Hold an initial Roundtable with state and territory governments to review the SAP and determine governments' priorities.

## For further information please contact:

enquiries@fightfoodwastecrc.com.au  
or visit [www.stopfoodwaste.com.au](http://www.stopfoodwaste.com.au)

