

WORKING TOGETHER IN PRECINCTS TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE.

Are you a foodservice business wanting to reduce your food waste?

Are there other food service businesses nearby?

Don't think you have enough space for an extra bin?

Think it might cost you more?



LEARN HOW TO WORK WITH OTHER FOODSERVICE BUSINESSES NEARBY IN YOUR PRECINCT TO:

Separate your
food waste

⋮

Save
money

⋮

Help the environment
and your community

FIRST: WHY SEPARATE OUT FOOD WASTE?

NSW businesses or institutions that sell or handle food, like supermarkets, cafes, schools and hotels, are required under new legislation to separate food waste from general waste for collection, in stages starting from 1 July 2026. More information [here](#).

- Greater Sydney is running out of landfill space, likely to result in increasing costs for disposal in the years ahead.
- Food waste in landfill simply rots, where it generates methane, a greenhouse gas 25 times more powerful than carbon dioxide.
- Collected separately, it can be recycled into beneficial products, including animal feed and compost or used to generate energy.
- It helps raise awareness of how much food a business is throwing away, helping you to identify opportunities to reduce waste and save money.

A food waste reduction challenge run by Zero Waste Scotland¹ found that **71% of businesses** that separated and weighed food waste achieved a **30% reduction** in food waste through measurement alone.

TIPS ON HOW TO SOURCE SEPARATE FOOD WASTE.

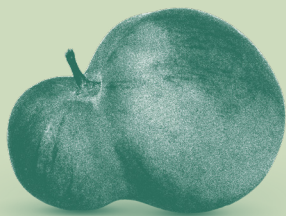
Talk about why you recycle food waste.
Employees often feel they will get into trouble for wasting food and might think their performance is being monitored.

Easy access - put bins where food waste happens, e.g. at the plate scrape have bins for food and non-food so that napkins and packaging don't end up in food waste.

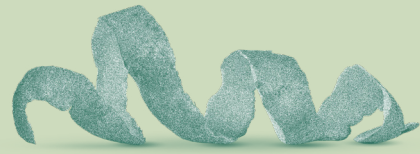
Use clear signage or colour codes to make easy for staff to identify bins.

Regularly update staff on their diversion achievement.

Different bins for kitchen waste and what is left by your customers can help work out where the waste happens.



TIPS ON FOOD REDUCTION.



Record what you are seeing.

Setting up a social media group is a great way to share information and photos of what is thrown away.

Ask for **everyone's** inputs – make it fun, create a challenge to see who can come up with the best food waste saving idea.

Look at what is in the bin and try to work out why, e.g. are your portions too big? Is stock going out of date before it can be used? Are you preparing too much food? Can other businesses use your surplus?

Make some **changes** to reduce the amount you are throwing away and save money.

Celebrate the wins.

You can **weigh** food waste to create a baseline and track your progress. This also helps to understand how much you can save on general waste disposal fees by reducing what you send to landfill.

Not all food waste can be avoided – **make a plan** for what to do with food waste you cannot prevent.

[See Hospitality Food Reduction Guidelines.](#)



WHY REDUCE FOOD WASTE?

SAVE MONEY.

Not just on wasted ingredients but also on wasted labour and overheads, disposal costs and potential lost sales from preparing food that ends up in the bin.

RETAIN STAFF.

84% of hospitality workers will stay longer in a job if an employer takes action on environmental issues.³

PROTECT OUR PLANET.

Reduce your carbon footprint. Wasting food wastes all the natural resources, like water and energy, used to grow, pack, transport, sell and prepare it and food sent to landfill generates methane, a greenhouse gas **25x** more potent than CO₂.

ATTRACT CUSTOMERS.

Consumers want to support businesses taking action on sustainability with food waste.

SAVE TIME.

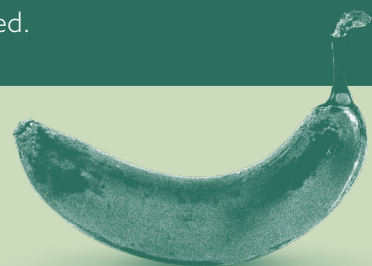
Why waste time preparing and cooking food that just ends up in the bin? No one likes to see their efforts go to waste.

MORE FOOD TO PEOPLE IN NEED.

In 2024, almost half of low-income households faced food insecurity.² You can help address food insecurity in your community by donating quality food, helping people in need and the environment and saving you money on disposal costs.

REDUCE YOUR OVERHEADS.

Energy and water are used to store, prepare and cook the food you serve. If you throw food away, the money you spent on these bills has also been wasted.



WHAT IS A PRECINCT?

Food Precincts are places with a grouping of foodservice businesses (cafes, bakeries, restaurants, quick service restaurants and/or takeaways). These vibrant areas also generally generate large amounts of food waste.

Talking to food service businesses in precincts, we found why it is difficult to deal with food waste because there is:

- Not enough space.
- Staff churn.
- Lack of knowledge on how to contract an organics collection.
- Lack of skills in food waste separation and reduction.
- Not enough time in the day.



WHY WORK WITH OTHER FOODSERVICE BUSINESSES IN YOUR PRECINCT?

ESTABLISH A SUSTAINABLE PRECINCT

Attract customers who want to support sustainable businesses and staff who want to work in them.

LEAD THE WAY

Be recognised for doing the right thing and driving change in your community.

CREATE NETWORKS

Share what you know works and get practical advice from others.

FIND LOCAL SOLUTIONS

Another business or community group might be able to use what you cannot.

ESTABLISH GREATER INFLUENCE

Work together and attract new and more competitive services.

SHARE SPACE AND SERVICES

Not everyone has space for equipment or extra bins.

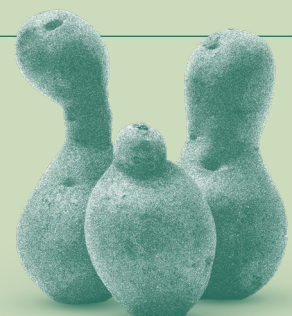
IMPROVE LOCAL AMENITY

Reducing waste and waste collections improves the local environment.

CREATE GREATER IMPACT

No one can solve climate change on their own and simple changes by everyone add up.

When choosing a hospitality job, **94% of employees** say a workplace's commitment to social and environmental responsibility influences their job choices.³



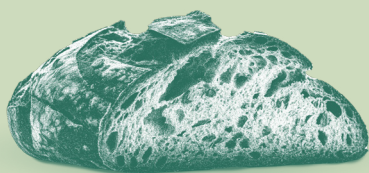
WORKING TOGETHER IN YOUR PRECINCT?

UNDERSTAND YOUR FOOD WASTE (AND ALSO WHAT THE COLLECTIVE PRECINCT SITUATION IS):

- You cannot manage what you don't know.
- Each business in the precinct should undertake a food waste review for 3-7 normal business days to understand their waste needs and establish a baseline.
- By knowing how much food waste your business generates, you can determine the number of food waste bins needed and adjust the number of general waste bins accordingly.
- If businesses cannot conduct food waste review, they could review the composition of their general waste bins to estimate food waste volume, then use data from their waste contactor to work out the potential weight or volume of food waste.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY:

- Everyone is busy and often working different hours, so:
 - Think about your precinct and how, when and where you will bring people together and exchange information to make it work.
 - Perhaps set up a social media group for instant communication and real time problem solving.
 - Let your customers know – people like it when the business they use is helping to reduce emissions and protect the environment. So don't forget to let your customers know!



CHAMPION THE OPPORTUNITY:

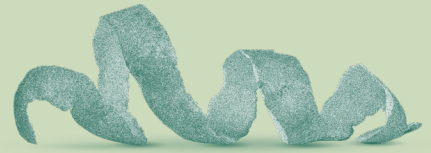
- Every successful precinct food waste project is driven by at least one champion.
- Champions help align everyone and motivate others to take action but clear roles and responsibilities for participating businesses are essential to sharing the workload and maintaining momentum.
- The more champions the better, to share the load and ensure continuity if there are staff or management changes.



THINGS TO CHAT ABOUT WITH OTHER BUSINESSES IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD:

- Potential **cost savings** from working together.
- **Why** and **how** to reduce and separate food waste.
- **Impacts on staff** – staff are usually pleased to support better environmental action, but want assurance that their efforts lead to that.
- **Roles and responsibilities** – who will do what and when.
- **Share** practical tips and food waste saving ideas.
- **Opportunities** to prevent waste – donating surplus food or meals to food rescue, better stock management, menu planning.
- **Good news** – what is working well and what you all have achieved.
- **Problem solving** – if something isn't working well, how you can make it easier.

WHAT WILL WORK BEST FOR YOUR PRECINCT?



HOW MUCH FOOD WASTE ARE YOU GENERATING COLLECTIVELY?

Understanding how much food waste you are dealing with will help you understand costs and the most efficient way of handling.

WHAT SERVICES ARE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE IN YOUR AREA?

Is there a commercial food waste collection service available?

ARE THERE PUBLIC CONCERNS ABOUT FOOD WASTE BINS ON THE STREET AND ASSOCIATED INCREASED TRAFFIC?

Could on-site pre-processing equipment reduce the number of bins and collections required?

ARE THERE CONCERNS ABOUT PESTS AND ODOURS?

Frequent collections or on-site processing can reduce these risks.

How to find a Local Charity?

Go to

www.serviceseeker.com.au

Enter 'Food' as a keyword.

Enter your suburb or postcode.

Click the blue button 'Find Services'.



POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS FOR PRECINCT FOOD WASTE.

**SHARING
A FOOD
WASTE BIN**

**USING THE SAME
FOOD WASTE
COLLECTION
SERVICE**

**SHARING ON SITE
FOOD WASTE
PROCESSING
EQUIPMENT**

SHARING A FOOD WASTE BIN WILL:

1.

**REDUCE NUMBER OF
FOOD WASTE BINS
NEEDED IN THE AREA**

2.

**REDUCE
COSTS**

3.

**REDUCE NUMBER
OF TRUCKS
VISITING THE AREA**

HERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN ORGANISING THIS SHARED SERVICE:

Contract considerations:

- Who will own the contract?
- What happens if this business changes hand or closes?
- Will businesses be able to leave or join?
- No space for food waste bins.

Can you share a food waste bin or collection with other businesses?

You may be able to share a bin or negotiate better rates by joining forces. This also has the added benefit of reducing the number trucks servicing the area.

If multiple businesses are getting a food waste collection you might be able to arrange more frequent collections due to bigger volumes.

Remember, if food waste is no longer in general waste, you will also reduce the number of general waste bins required.



Fee structure:

- How will this be decided?
- What information is needed?
- If businesses leave or join how will this affect fees?
- How will you measure the amount of waste each business generates to fairly divide costs?
- If businesses require different frequencies of collection will this be reflected in charges?

Contamination:

- Only food and bin liners that meet Australian standard AS 4736-2006 are allowed in the food waste bin in NSW. Keep non-food items like food plastic packaging, paper towels and food containers or cutlery out of food waste bins to maximise the quality of compost and avoid penalty charges.
- Provide regular reminders and education on commonly mistaken items to help manage contamination effectively.

Responsibilities:

- Can all businesses easily access the bins?
- Are the bins in a safe location for all users (especially late at night)?
- Can the public access the bin? (May need to use locks to prevent non-food waste entering the bin)
- Who will take the bins in and out for collection?
- Who will keep the bins clean?
- If the bins are damaged who will replace them?



USING THE SAME FOOD WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE:

It might be simpler to think about each business having their own bin but negotiating a better rate by all using the same food waste collection contractor. This will also:

- Reduce costs.
- Reduce number of trucks visiting the area.

HERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN ORGANISING THIS SHARED SERVICE:

- How will you all negotiate fees and timing with the preferred food waste contractor?
- What happens if one or two businesses choose not to join?
- What if all businesses currently use different waste contractors and don't want to use a different provider just for food waste?
- What information does the contractor need to work out details of the service and shared costs?

Reduce costs

If services are shared, costs can be divided and, due to a larger volume of food waste, you may be able to negotiate better rates for collection.



SHARING ON-SITE PROCESSING EQUIPMENT:

Not all businesses have the space for on-site processing. If one business does have space or there is a community space, could this equipment be shared?

- Save the space to share the equipment.
- If the outputs need further processing, sharing equipment still means one pick up.
- Reduce costs.

The NSW government [BIN Trim equipment rebate program](#) may be able to assist.

HERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN ORGANISING THIS SHARED SERVICE:

Contract:

- Who owns the space?
- Who will own the equipment/lease?
- Who pays the energy costs?
- What will happen if the owner of the space changes?
- What if businesses want to leave or join?
- Are there issues with becoming a waste processing facility?

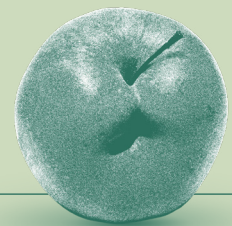


Fee structure:

- How will this be decided?
- What information is needed?
- If businesses leave or join, how will this affect fees?

Responsibilities:

- Can all businesses easily access the equipment?
- Is the equipment in a safe location for all users (especially late at night)?
- Can the public access the equipment? May need to use locks to prevent non-food waste entering the bin.
- Who will operate the equipment?
- Who will be responsible for service and maintenance?
- If the equipment is damaged who will be responsible for repair fees?



No space for on-site processing equipment?

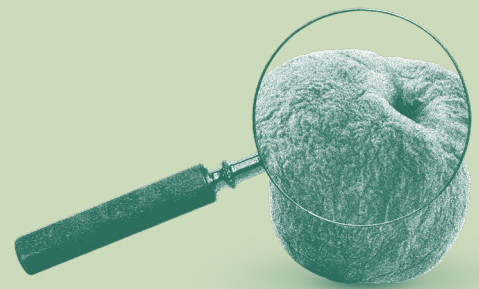
On-site processors will reduce the volume of food waste and space required for storing food waste before collection but is a shared space available?

No time or available staff to operate and maintain an on-site system?

Are there other businesses who could share the load?

WHERE CAN YOU GET MORE INFORMATION?

- [NSW EPA Bin Trim Rebate](#)
- [Guide to food waste separation](#)
- [FOGO Mandate and Rollout](#)
- [Your Business is Food toolkit and video](#)
- [Food Donation](#)
- [Food Waste Collection Training Video](#)
- [EFWA](#)
 - [Hospitality Food Reduction Guidelines](#)
 - [Sector Action Plans](#)
- Your local council



PROS AND CONS OF ON-SITE PROCESSING.

Generally, on-site processing reduces the volume of food waste and associated number of collections required, however, may require extra inputs such as energy and water.

In NSW, any organisation that takes waste offsite, even after on-site processing, must comply with [resource recovery orders and exemptions](#). It often requires further processing to ensure that the recovery waste is lawful.

PROS AND CONS OF FOOD WASTE PROCESSING.^{4,5}

ON-SITE COMPOSTING	PROS	CONS
<p>Composting/ worm farms*</p> <p><small>*May be applicable in outer metropolitan or rural communities</small></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less transport and associated costs/ emissions/traffic • Creates a local system at no extra cost on water or electricity usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Space required • Maintenance/operation • Odours/pests • Good management to prevent GHG emissions and possible water pollution • Need end use for compost • Not taking all food waste items
ON-SITE PROCESSING	PROS	CONS
<p>Dehydration or bio-dehydration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces food waste volume and weight • Less odours/pests • Less collection frequency • Potentially saving on costs • Reduce emissions • Various size to meet small food waste generator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment requires space and maintenance/operation • Collection and energy bills • Relatively high energy use (depending on unit)
<p>Pulpers Squeeze water out to create a semi-dry product</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce volume and weight • Less transport and associated costs/ emissions/traffic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use water and energy • End product needs further processing and may require rehydration to compost • Water may enter wastewater treatment systems with associated environmental challenges





ON-SITE PROCESSING (CONT.)	PROS	CONS
<p>Macerator/Grinders Create a slurry mechanically or biologically</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less transport and associated costs/ emissions/traffic • Less space used for storage of food waste • No odour or pest concern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment requires space and maintenance/operation • Outputs enter wastewater treatment systems with associated environmental challenges • Doesn't accept big bones or hard shells and large amount of raw meats • Limited collection contractors
<p>Black Soldier Fly (BSF) Produce protein for stockfeed and by-product (frass), a soil enhancer. Food waste can be collected for processing off-site or units can be installed on-site</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produces source of protein for stock feed • Less transport and associated costs/ emissions/traffic if on site • Can manage food in its packaging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need larger space for on-site • Good ventilation required to reduce odours on-site

Planet Ark's [Recycling Equipment Catalogue](#), produced in partnership with the NSW EPA, provides more information on onsite processing equipment for food waste.



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