

Greene King drives down food costs

CASE STUDY

Background

Leading pub operator and brewer Greene King operates more than 200 Hungry Horse pubs across the country. Branocs Tree Hungry Horse pub took part in a trial to monitor and reduce the amount of food being thrown away.

TIP: Check out the “Your Business is Food” advice on preparation, spoilage and plate waste in the starter guide.



YOUR BUSINESS IS FOOD

DON'T THROW IT AWAY...

Summary

Branocs Tree was able to identify savings and reduce the amount of food being thrown away through:

- Improved portion control;
- Optimising the use of ingredients; and
- Improved management of food prepared after the main evening peak service.

The trial successfully reduced food thrown away per cover by around 15% and achieved substantial financial savings. This equates to a reduction across the site of around 4 tonnes per year.

920,000 tonnes
OF FOOD IS THROWN AWAY
BY THE SECTOR EACH YEAR



Food waste trial saves money

“Working with WRAP we have been able to drive down food waste significantly through a combination of small changes. The trial has been a great success, making a real difference to our bottom line.”

Jeff Bones, Manager

Taking action, making saving

A smart meter to measure food waste, was installed in the kitchen at Branocs Tree Hungry Horse to track spoilage and plate waste. By using this information, the site manager and head chef were able to understand why food was being thrown away, prioritise improvements and track their impact.

The study showed that by making simple changes, big savings could be made:

- Portion sizes had crept up and leftovers were common. Through more careful portion scoops significant savings were made possible.
- Simple changes to vegetable preparation helped to reduce the amount of food thrown away. For example, by carefully removing only the very central core of a pepper, at least 10% extra could be gained. Similar gains were made by not automatically discarding a large number of outer layers of onions.

- Too much food was being prepared late in the evening service period, after the main evening peak, which led to unnecessary spoilage. For example, defrosting a whole bag of 12 chicken portions at 8pm meant that some of these may have been wasted. By tracking bookings and customer numbers in the restaurant, requirements for defrosting and other preparation could be more carefully controlled, and wastage of high value ingredients reduced.

Further improvements possible

A number of simple improvements resulted in substantial savings at Branocs Tree Hungry Horse. The approach taken has the potential to be successfully applied in other Hungry Horse sites, and across other Greene King brands (such as Old English Inns, Loch Fyne Seafood & Grill and Belhaven Pubs). This will potentially bring even greater benefits and savings to the wider group.

In addition to the on site improvements, further opportunities were identified at Branocs Tree. For example, the tracking of plate waste highlighted particular dishes on the menu that were responsible for the majority of the waste, so further savings could be achieved through wider changes to the menus.

Top Tips

- ✓ Actively track what food is being thrown away at spoilage, preparation and plate stages.
- ✓ Check your specifications (e.g. preparation procedures) and make sure these are met consistently.
- ✓ Prepare and cook in small batches to respond to demand 'on the go'.
- ✓ Make the most of meat, fruit and vegetables through careful trimming (e.g. reducing the end waste on carrots).
- ✓ Where possible use pre-portioned meal elements.
- ✓ Take particular care over portioning of chips, veg and salad garnish.
- ✓ Maximise the use of prepared and not served food in daily 'specials'.
- ✓ Offer 'lite' bite versions of main courses.
- ✓ Ask customers if there are meal items they don't want that are included in a meal, such as tomatoes with breakfast and steaks.
- ✓ Reduce side dish and buffet plate and bowl sizes, but allow top ups.



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