

Food Waste Prevention for Commercial Kitchens

Before utilizing edible food recovery and organic recycling as a means to divert organic materials from the landfill, commercial kitchens should prioritize the first line of defense against food waste: prevention. Food waste prevention can take shape in many forms. Use the tips below to start preventing food waste before it happens!

Purchasing:



- Work with suppliers to enable flexibility for adjustments to purchase based on demand.
- Manage inventory with consistent procedures to streamline flow of items.
- Purchase seasonal and local foods and buy in bulk when possible.
- Buy produce with imperfections at a reduced cost - tastes just as good!

Storing:



- Learn best storage and handling techniques for all inventory and implement techniques to maximize the life of foods (e.g., freezing, dehydrating).
- Train staff on “first expired, first out” storage practices.
- Implement a labeling system that is thorough, descriptive, and visible.

Preparing:



- Reduce trim waste by refining knife skills.
- Use all parts of an ingredient with the ‘root to stalk’ and ‘nose to tail’ methods.
- Practice a just-in-time system to reduce overproduction and serve fresh.

Serving:



- Identify less popular items and drop poor performers.
- Cross-utilize ingredients, revamp leftovers, and offer seasonal options across menu items to minimize waste and spoilage.
- Adjust and reduce portion sizes and garnishes. On average, plate waste accounts for 70% of food waste in a restaurant.
- Offer before serving. Inquire if customers want complimentary sides before automatically serving them.

