



FOOD WASTE MADE EASY

FOR RESTAURANTS

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This document is a toolkit designed to help restaurants implement organics separation in their businesses. It was written by hospitality, for hospitality. It is accompanied by a video series if you'd prefer. While it is comprehensive we do want to make this practical and supportive for you to make meaningful change.

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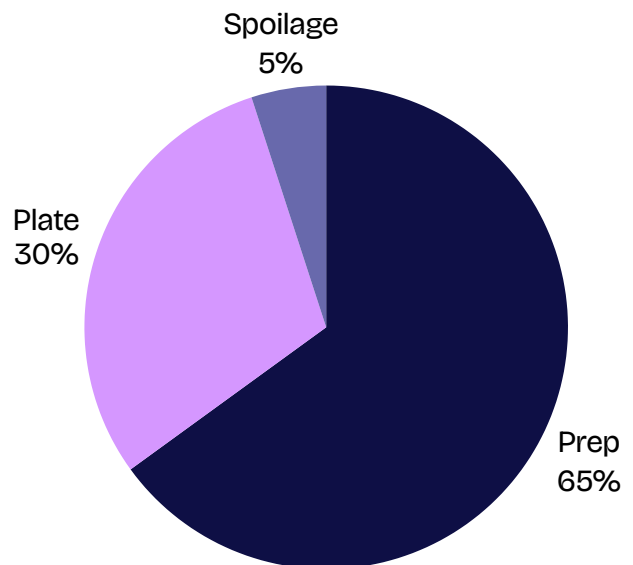
FOOD WASTE MADE EASY

FOR RESTAURANTS

WHY SPLIT IT?

1. Can save money \$\$ - many report 25% of your waste bill
2. Once you're separating you can see what you're throwing away and reduce spend on excess
3. Once its setup, it's easy. Your staff and customers will love it
4. Mandates are rolling out for restaurants from July 2026
5. Reduce your environmental impact and emissions

WHERE DOES THE WASTE COME FROM?



Source: Love Food Hate Waste / EFWA

"The team has responded really well.

There was a short adjustment period while everyone got used to what could and could not go into the organics bins, but it became part of the normal routine fairly quickly."

Tom, Chief Operations Officer, Atticus Hospitality

MANDATE REQUIREMENTS

The core requirement is straightforward, businesses must:

- provide adequate bins for food organics waste collection and
- ensure **weekly collection** and separate transportation of **food organics** waste from non-organic material.
- Source separation of food waste is essential to meeting the requirement.

The amount of waste you produce determines WHEN the mandate applies to you. If you have 14+ 240L bins per week (or any combination of bins equal to or more than 3,960L) you will need to start by July 2026.

A great resource to check when this is mandated can be found at <https://bintrim.epa.nsw.gov.au/fogocalculator>

BENEFITS (BEYOND WASTE BILL SAVINGS)

Beyond saving money switching to organics collection has benefits beyond the bin:

- **Sustainability leadership:** An opportunity to enhance your environmental credentials and attract eco-conscious customers and staff, and improve workplace culture
- **Grant funding:** There is an opportunity to access Bin Trim Rebates for equipment
- **Operational improvements:** Improved practices around waste could lead to better kitchen organisation and potentially reduce food bills as well
- **Community leadership:** Opportunity to work with other venues if space is limited.
- **Data-driven decision making:** Use waste data to optimise purchasing, reduce food costs overall and reduce food waste at the source.



3 STEPS TO SUCCESS

1 PLAN

- Dumpster dive! Look in your bins - measure, by doing an audit (or estimate) the % of your general waste bin that is food waste
- Get quotes and estimate your cost saving
- Review and document your current back and front of house processes

2 CHANGE

- Changes to bin rooms and collection
- Operational changes to your kitchen setup, menu planning, portioning
- Front of house, including plate collection
- Any additional (non food) waste changes you may also want to implement at this time

3 COLLABORATE

- Make someone accountable now and in the future
- Create a training plan for your current team
- Adapt this to your onboarding for new team members
- Communicate your change to key stakeholders outside your organisation

1

PLAN

Calculate your waste

Calculate the amount of food waste you make. The most accurate way to do this is through a food waste audit, which you separate all food waste from your general waste for at least a day (a week for a more accurate picture) and measure how many kilograms you are currently generating.

Best practice is to separate the food waste into the categories of where they were generated Preparation, Spoilage and Plate waste, which will give you more insightful data.

Alternatively you can use the **EPA's Bin Trim App** to help estimate this amount. Typically, somewhere between 35-65% (by weight) of the general waste bin can be made up of food waste in hospitality businesses.

Estimate your cost saving

To estimate potential cost savings, you will need to engage your waste provider — we recommend getting at least **two quotes**. Provide them with information on how much food waste you generate so they can size an appropriate organics service.

The BIN TRIM APP is available online

1

PLAN

Review your bin area

Review the space you have for bins and your number of collections. You may be able to swap one general waste bin out directly for an organics bin but others may have to add an extra bin.

For example if you have 1 x 660L general waste (red) bins collected daily (7/week) and your food waste is 35% (by volume) this would become 1 x 240L food waste bin collected daily and 1 x 660L red bin collected 5/week. But this change will see you have an extra bin so you need to take into account the limitations of the space you have. If you don't have enough space **consider partnering with neighbours**.

You could also review other equipment to make space - if you're not using your glass crusher, could you switch to a CDS collection at the same time?

Review your kitchen space

Review the space you have for bins inside the kitchen and for collection. Slim jims are what most people have - if you have two for prep can one become food waste? Will you have enough space to add a bin without removing one? In tight kitchens this is the most practical step forward.

Stage your implementation

Are you making this change now? Even if you don't fall under the mandate, if you have space you can start compliance and saving now. You can also 'stage' collection by type of waste e.g. prep first, then plate

1

PLAN

Pick your bins

Slim jims, benchtop caddies and under bench caddies are all options . Our recommendation is to simply replace (or change the usage) of your current bins - with labelling and/or liner changes.

Placement of bins

If you're already separating prepped food waste, we recommend that you operate 2:1 food waste to non food waste bins during prep. Currently you might keep extra bins out during prep that go away during service - you'll need to balance these as you would do your other bins.

Label clearly

The best way to avoid contamination is to create clear differences between the bins - either different coloured bins and/or different coloured liners. This also is the same for other recycling streams!



2

OPERATIONAL CHANGE

- ✓ Offer fewer menu choices
- ✓ Improve forecasting
- ✓ Sharpen your ordering
- ✓ Optimise your kitchen
- ✓ Standardise recipes
- ✓ Use all parts of ingredients
- ✓ Consider your portion sizes



Meal prep and planning

We recommend the audit so you have a clear picture of YOUR waste profile - you might have more or less plate waste or spoilage. What can you do to tighten up? Do portion sizes need to change? Do you need to reduce the range of dishes you serve?

Look at the data to help drive your decision making. If you're not using a costing system (like Restoke) consider adding one to refine and improve your ordering. We recommend that you involve your front of house team to learn your plate waste.

As a chef or owner you can build a more streamlined and profitable business by wasting less - because while we focus on the waste side of the equation in most of this document there is a huge secondary financial win if you're wasting less and that is reduced spend on food.

2 CHANGE: FRONT OF HOUSE

So far we've focused on the kitchen, because that's where food waste happens? Not completely.

Plate waste typically accounts for **30%** of your food waste. Even if your venue doesn't make as much as that, you still need to consider it in a food waste collection context.

It may not be as simple as switching your waste collection to food - if you have custom bins with space for napkin and food.

Typically it is the source of most contamination as well - for example serviettes, toothpicks etc. If you're using cloth napkins it is easier to avoid and can probably start straight away.

However, it is also sometimes recommended to stage plate waste food collection after you have spent time on the operational changes e.g. smaller portions, and embedded prep waste.

We've created a series of videos to support this toolkit - [watch them](#)

TOP TIP

Stage your implementation - save plate waste for when you've embedded collection of prep waste

2 CHANGE: WASTE SUPPLIER

Your waste supplier will most likely be your biggest supporter through this change- although we do recommend getting two quotes.

Importantly, do not treat this as adding a new service, but as an opportunity to reconfigure and renegotiate your overall waste setup. You should be looking to reduce general waste collection frequency and renegotiate pricing as well.

As food waste is removed, general waste bins will be lighter, which can support a lower rate per lift (e.g. reducing from ~\$30/bin to closer to ~\$25/bin). You should also expect a reduction in excess weight charges, which are often driven by dense organic material. Use these points as talking points with your waste service provider.

The questions you may need to work out together:

- Do you currently offer organics collection?
- If I halve my landfill bin what will the total cost be?
- Am I currently being charged overweight?

Have you thought about a CDS?

Container deposit refunds can further offset the cost of bin changes and improve waste contamination at the same time. Win/Win

3

COLLABORATE

Train your team

1. Ensure that you have a champion in the team, that might even be you!
2. Repurpose our training guide
3. This lives through constant repetition
4. In the same way you take care on how you prep your food, you're taking care of where the rest goes
5. Once you start splitting keep it going by reducing waste further

Set-up resources for incoming team members

1. That repurposed training guide isn't a 'use once' - find a home for it with your onboarding materials
2. Have a plan if people who are doing the right thing leave to ensure continuous improvement

Share what you're doing

1. Share the love! Send us content about your initiative so we can highlight it -
2. This is something you can shout about on your own socials too

FAQS...

COMMON PROBLEMS & SOLUTIONS

- **Limited back-of-house space:** You should be able to reduce your red bin collection to compensate
- **Staff turnover and training challenges:** Create onboarding materials customising our templates so that this change lives on, incentivise your leaders to lead with conviction and by example
- **Contamination concerns:** Practice vigilance in prep and during service particularly - plate waste makes up 34% of waste and has the biggest potential for contamination. Once teams are trained, understand both the operational efficiency and the environmental benefit they should be on board to support.
- **Existing contract conflicts:** If your existing provider cannot adjust due to the mandate you might be able to look at breaking the contract

SIGNAGE MATTERS

Good, clear signage about what does and doesn't go in the bin can help reduce contamination - see our signage on page 16 and also [on the NSW EPA site](#)

We've created a series of FAQ videos to support this toolkit
[Watch now](#)

FAQS...

What are the specific requirements for waste segregation?

It can differ by provider but typically commercial organics collection has far less restrictions than home composting, worm farms or digesters. Commercial composting will usually allow all types of organic food matter including meat & bones, all plant based foods and dairy, eggs etc. What it cannot handle are things like charcoal or wax (from candles) these need specialist removal services. This makes it far easier to manage in practice

How much space is needed for bins and storage?

The space you will need depends on how much food waste you make - if your food waste is 50% - 90% of your current red bin you can estimate how much space you need cross referenced against pickups

How often will pickups occur?

Again this depends on you but ideally you would use the smallest bin you need and have daily pickups to reduce odours. It is much cheaper than a landfill bin and you should be able to reduce your landfill pickups significantly and reduce your overall waste bill.

How do we manage odours?

We recommend that you also use a cleaning company like Bin2Clean to wash your bins weekly.

Are there penalties for contamination?

Yes most providers will charge you for some types of contamination. This is why training all your people is essential. Some of the most common causes of contamination are paper e.g. serviettes and paper towels, plastics and fruit stickers. You may need to switch products if these are things you use and encourage vigilance from your teams

...FAQS

Can we get data on our waste ?

Your waste provider should be able to provide you with accurate data around your waste reduction. If you want to measure your usage yourself prior to the contract this will give you the information to better estimate your potential savings. It will also enable you to have baseline to improve your food waste reduction as your kitchen practices improve over time

How does this integrate with existing waste contracts?

If you are already locked in with a provider you may need to work with them to include organics collection. If you fall under the mandate for July 2026 and they do not provide this service you should be able to break your contract without penalty (check with sam)

How do I get my team onboard

In the same way you have roles like fire warden, first aid, make sure you have a champion for this change embedded in the team - it won't be perfect straight away - aim for progress, not perfection.

MORE QUESTIONS? NEED HELP?

Reach out to the team at [HQ](#)

We've created a series of FAQ videos to support this toolkit

[Watch now](#)

OTHER CIRCULAR IDEAS

These are all changes you can progressively make over time to improve your diversion in organics or recycling, as well as more broadly

CDS

If you're currently collecting glass and other bottles, consider switching to a CDS collection. The 10c returns add up, especially when wine bottles come into the system in a few years, and this will further offset your waste costs

Cooking oil

Consider finding a supplier for your cooking oil where the waste oil is made into biofuel.

Veg Suppliers

Use crate - where your supplier drops off/picks up in a swap system. Look for citrus without stickers - the biggest source of contamination. Talk to your suppliers!

Chicken/meat

Non cryovac bags are a great way to reduce packaging waste around the kitchen - again, talk to your suppliers!

Water systems

There are a number of suppliers who can provide taps for purified still and sparkling water - these are usually very cost effective as well as waste reducing.

Taps & Kegs

Can you consider switching to beer taps and kegs - for the same reason as the water systems

RESOURCES

1. Posters for your kitchen
2. The 'JUST SPLIT IT' logos - to add to training materials
3. Checklist

We've created a series of videos to support this toolkit - [watch them](#)

We've also created a series of FAQ videos to support this toolkit
[Watch now](#)



**just
split it**

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CHECKLIST

REVIEW

- ☐ FOOD WASTE AUDIT OR ESTIMATE
- ☐ WASTE QUOTES x 2
- ☐ REVIEW PROCESSES & SPACE IN THE KITCHEN, BIN ROOMS and FRONT OF HOUSE

CHANGE

- ☐ MAKE BIN ROOM CHANGES
- ☐ CHANGES TO KITCHEN
- ☐ MENU PLANNING
- ☐ REVIEW PORTIONING
- ☐ LOOK AT FRONT OF HOUSE FLOW

COLLABORATE

- ☐ CREATE A TRAINING PLAN
- ☐ CONDUCT TRAINING
- ☐ ADD PLAN TO ONBOARDING
- ☐ COMMUNICATE CHANGES