

The background features abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes in various shades, including light lime green, medium green, and dark forest green, creating a modern and eco-friendly aesthetic.

Food Waste Management in Local Sit-Down Food Establishments 2025

Sustainability Survey

Blackrock, Louth Tidy Towns

Methodology

- ▶ Pen and Paper survey
- ▶ Distributed amongst all sit down food establishments in the village (n=7)
- ▶ All businesses completed and returned surveys (n=7)
- ▶ This document details the findings from these surveys
- ▶ **WARNING:** Sample size small at n=7

Objectives

To effectively understand and assess how sit down food establishments manage their food waste, being essential to gather detailed information on their current practices, challenges and metrics



▶ The Results

Current Practices

6 out of 7 businesses
currently have a system in
place for food waste
management

- ▶ This leaves one business without
in the Blackrock village

Main Sources of Food Waste

- ▶ Customer Leftovers make up the majority of sit down food waste
 - ▶ 5 out of 7 businesses cite this.
- ▶ Preparation Waste is the second biggest contributor.
 - ▶ 4 out of 7 businesses mention this.
- ▶ Expired Ingredients and Overproduction each mentioned once.

Volume of Food Waste Generated Weekly



Majority of businesses produce under 5kg of waste, with the remaining 4 producing more. *The Reducing Commercial Food Waste in Ireland* report from 2019 found that 66% of food waste in the food sector is avoidable.

Food Waste Separation from General Waste



6 out of 7 businesses
currently separate waste

Current Management of Food Waste

What businesses are currently doing

- ▶ Composting is the most popular option of management
 - ▶ 5 out of 7 participate in this practice
- ▶ Partnering with food waste apps is engaged with by 2 businesses
- ▶ Concerningly, 2 businesses are disposing of food waste with general waste.
 - ▶ Interestingly, one of these businesses generates 20kg+ of waste.
 - ▶ This indicates a need for food waste separation solutions to be implemented with urgency.

Food Donation Recipients



Homeless shelters in neighbouring Dundalk receive food donations as no such facilities exist currently in Blackrock village

Incidence of Implementing Food Waste Reduction Strategies

- ▶ 4 out of 7 HAVE implemented a strategy
 - ▶ Training staff on food waste reduction is the most common
 - ▶ Adjusting portion sizes, repurposing food ingredients for new dishes and using inventory tracking systems each used by one business
- ▶ 3 out of 7 have NOT implemented a strategy

Frequency of Reviewing & Adjusting Food Waste Strategies

6 out of 7 businesses

WEEKLY

1 out of 7 businesses

NEVER

Challenges & Future Plans

- ▶ Limited Storage Space for Food Waste and No Nearby Food Donation Programmes are the biggest challenges
 - ▶ Mentioned each by 2 businesses
- ▶ Customer Expectations (e.g., portion sizes) also contribute to challenges for 1 business.

Interest in Implementing New Food Waste Programmes



- ▶ All have an appetite to improve and learn about new strategies

Tracking Financial Impact of Food Waste on Business

TRACK FINANCIAL IMPACT

ALL - 7 out of 7

Suggests the importance of highlighting financial benefits of engaging with food waste management to businesses

Conclusions

- ▶ Currently, most sit-in food businesses are engaging in food waste management in Blackrock village.
- ▶ Nonetheless, the volume of food waste appears high, and other research sources suggest this could be avoidable.
- ▶ Composting is the most popular means of disposing of food waste, however possibility to better foster socially-conscious solutions in this regard.
- ▶ Although lack of separation of food waste from general waste is low, we aspire to fully reduce this practice for the overall betterment of our locality and people.
- ▶ Luckily, an appetite to engage and implement new strategies exists. Tapping into the commercial/business benefit of this will be compelling to onboard businesses.