

# SUSTAINABILITY CORNER

SEPTEMBER 2023

## Take Action

Did you answer NO to any of the 12 questions below? If you did, you have identified one or more opportunities to reduce food waste and increase your bottom line!

1. Have you performed a menu/recipe/portion audit?
2. Do you keep small, clear trash containers in prep areas?
3. Have you educated your team on food waste?
4. Do you run specials?
5. Do you hold family meals?
6. Do you manage order quantities?
7. Have you conducted FIFO training?
8. Are your plate/salad bar/buffet garnishes necessary?
9. Do you use “ugly products”?
10. Do you sell your wasted vegetable oil?
11. Do you upcycle your food waste products?
12. Do you donate food and receive tax benefits?



## What is food waste?

Food waste is a broad term but basically means that food was not used for its intended purpose of feeding people. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Produce that never leaves the farm due to blemishes or size issues
- Product that is discarded because it has spoiled or gone past its recommended date
- Product wasted during prep
- Food discarded due to large portion sizes



## Example Menu/Recipe/Portion Audit Questions

- Does your menu contain a lot of ingredients used only in one or two dishes?
- Can your recipes be modified to produce less waste during prep or cooking?
- Can you incorporate trimmings from one dish into another?
- Are your portion sizes too generous?
- Are your guests requesting too many to-go containers?

## In summary...

Minimizing food waste helps the environment in several ways. It minimizes the wasting of land, fertilizer, fuel, electricity, etc. It minimizes food going into landfills where the food will release greenhouse gases as they deteriorate. And most importantly, a key way to improve your bottom line is to look for multiple ways to minimize your operation's food waste.

For more information:

Environmental Protection Agency

[www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/sustainable-management-food-basics](http://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/sustainable-management-food-basics)