

# Food Waste Charter Guidance: PREPARED FOODS SECTOR

**THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY PROGRAMME**  
The Driving Force for Ireland's Move to a Circular Economy



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

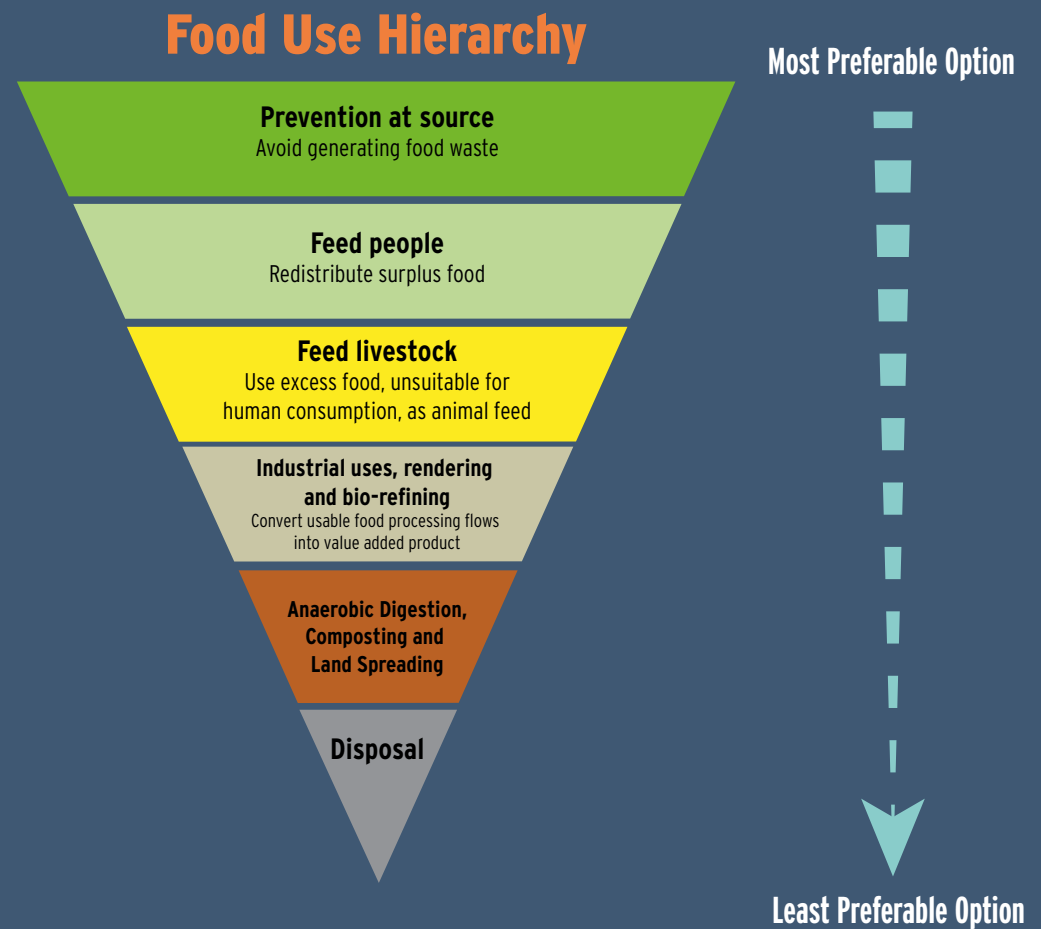
Tackling food waste is one of the key steps we can all take to help combat climate change and support Ireland's transition to a circular economy. This guidance provides a checklist of actions to help measure your organisation's progress in taking action to reduce food waste, along with some case studies to inspire you.

In the *National Food Waste Prevention Roadmap 2023-2025*, the Government has set out its strategy and identified key actions to meet Ireland's commitment to reduce food waste by 50% by 2030, in line with United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12.3. *Food Vision 2030*, the stakeholder-led strategy for the Irish agri-food sector, also aims to halve the level of food waste per person by 2030 in accordance with SDG 12.3. Achieving this goal requires a collective effort from all businesses, aiming to prevent food waste by using raw materials as efficiently as possible. Doing so not only saves money but also reduces environmental impacts.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) leads the National Food Waste Prevention Programme, implementing activities to *drive change* across the food retail, distribution, processing and manufacturing sectors, as well as *reducing food waste* in the hospitality and food service sectors.

To understand our progress towards the 2030 target, we need to improve monitoring, measurement, and reporting of food waste across all sectors. To support this aim, the EPA has established the Food Waste Charter. The Charter is a voluntary agreement that asks food sector businesses to Pledge, Measure, Reduce, and Report on food waste. By signing the Charter, food sector businesses commit to measuring and reporting on food waste in a clear and consistent manner, and to taking actions to reduce it in accordance with national targets and associated milestones.

For more information and to sign the Charter visit <https://foodwastecharter.ie>



# HOW RESOURCE EFFICIENT ARE YOU?

## PREPARED CONSUMER FOODS:

The Prepared Consumer Foods (PCF) sector is proactive in driving regular innovation around key food trends and sustainability agendas and has a key role in leading the shift towards circularity.



Businesses just like yours are investing in many positive changes in their own processes and practices. One sure-fire way to improve the circularity and environmental performance of your product is to reduce how much food is wasted – during procurement, production, retail or at consumer level.


Many businesses underestimate how much food waste is costing them (international studies estimate that it could be as high as **4% of turnover**). Reducing food waste has great potential to improve your business' turnover.

To start reducing wasted food and saving costs take the Food Waste Charter pledge, measure your food waste, take action to reduce it and report on your progress. Our checklist shows some simple actions to help you measure your progress. Tick off the actions on the checklist on the following page and give yourself a point for each tick to see how you score.





# ACTIONS CHECKLIST - see how you're doing



 <b>PLEDGE</b>	<b>1</b>	We have pledged our commitment to the Food Waste Charter to work together to reduce food waste.	
	<b>2</b>	The Food Waste Charter is a public commitment and as such we communicate our commitment to staff (e.g. via staff briefings) and externally with customers (e.g. via our website and social media).	

 <b>MEASURE</b>	<b>1</b>	We measure and record our food waste in line with the Food Loss and Waste Measurement Protocol. ( <a href="https://www.foodwastecharter.ie">https://www.foodwastecharter.ie</a> ).	
	<b>2</b>	We have a Food Waste Reduction (FWR) target.	
	<b>3</b>	We regularly (minimum monthly) track progress against our FWR target.	
	<b>4</b>	Our percentage food waste is a company KPI (key performance indicator).	
	<b>5</b>	We report progress against our food waste KPI at monthly management meetings.	

 <b>REDUCE</b>	<b>1</b>	We design out waste at the sourcing stage. By considering sources of waste in product recipes and processing at the concept stage with our suppliers and sourcing teams, we can design out potential causes of waste.	
	<b>2</b>	We work with procurement team and suppliers to ensure that ingredients are purchased in batch appropriate quantities.	
	<b>3</b>	We align production and sales planning more closely in the supply chain, including order timing and the production of mutually agreed forecasts to reduce discrepancies between actual sales and orders.	
	<b>4</b>	We use methods like Whole Chain Planning to reduce waste that arises at various stages throughout the supply chain.	
	<b>5</b>	We minimise production changeovers.	

 <b>REPORT</b>	<b>1</b>	We report annually on our progress and achievements.	
	<b>2</b>	We publicly report annually on our progress and achievements.	
	<b>3</b>	We have produced a case study to showcase our progress and achievements.	

## This score is just a first step.

Ideally you should use this checklist as an initial food waste action plan and aim to score a full 15 points. It is recommended you review your progress every 6 – 12 months. Once you have achieved a full score, the target should be to continue to reduce your food waste volumes, preferably measured as a percentage of your total food produced.

**For more inspiration,** please refer to the following Case Studies

Ballymaguire  
Foods

**Company:** Ballymaguire Foods

**Goal:** Reduce food waste in their operations by 50% by 2030.



**Method:** Ballymaguire operate on a demand and order basis. They rely on Tesco to give them a heads-up on predicted order-size depending on demand. This helps Ballymaguire to cut back on surplus production. They monitor just how much of the ingredients they are cooking and slicing, to get a better idea of how much should be going into each product, further reducing the amount of waste. Good time management, better grouping and planning allow for a decrease in shelf-life waste. The production process is also monitored and studied to figure out if there can be any improvements, which leads to a reduction in waste (to 3.8%).

Finally, surplus foods are donated to food charities that go towards those in need.

M&S

**Company:** Marks & Spencer

**Goal:** Reducing Food Waste through Retail Supply Chain Collaboration

**Method:** The short shelf life of sandwiches coupled with unpredictable demand from consumers due, for example, to the weather and other factors can lead to high levels of waste. Marks & Spencer provides a wide range of sandwiches (including ingredients) for their customers with different types varying in their popularity. By obtaining a fuller understanding of the contribution made by all sandwich lines and taking action with Uniq to review the range, both businesses have seen a substantial reduction in their costs.



For Marks & Spencer this has been achieved through reduced stock and lower write-off. For Uniq there are fewer change-overs and improved revenues as they are able to push sales without driving up waste. For more on this case study see: [Reducing Food Waste through Retail Supply Chain Collaboration - Wrap \(readkong.com\)](https://www.readkong.com)

## TO FIND OUT MORE:

Email us: [foodwastecharter@epa.ie](mailto:foodwastecharter@epa.ie)

Check our website: [www.foodwastecharter.ie](http://www.foodwastecharter.ie)



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