



FOOD WASTE CHARTER

Implementation Report 2024



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Introduction

The Food Waste Charter is a national voluntary agreement calling on all businesses and State Agencies operating across the food supply chain in Ireland to sign up and commit to reducing food waste.

Charter members pledge and commit to measure (monitor and track their food waste using standardised EPA measurement methodologies), reduce (identify and take at least one target-based action to reduce food waste) and report (to the EPA annually on progress towards measurable outcomes and achievements) on their food waste. 2024 was the first year Charter members submitted reports on a full calendar year.

Food Waste CHARTER



Signing the Food Waste Charter means you



PLEDGE

Commit to work together to reduce food waste.



MEASURE

Monitor and track the food waste and associated cost within your business' operations.



REDUCE

Identify appropriate interventions, set a target and take action to reduce food waste.



REPORT

Report annually to the EPA on your progress and achievements.

[Click to view the Food Waste Charter website](#)



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Promoting the Charter

The Charter was promoted through webinars, panel contributions and exhibition stands at events. Notable events include:

- Joint Enterprise Ireland, Bord Bia and Teagasc Bakery Sector event
- Enterprise Ireland Food Innovation Summit
- Enterprise Ireland Sustainable Enterprise Summit
- Origin Green Sustainability Seminar
- Joint Bord Iascaigh Mhara and Teagasc Coproduct Utilisation Workshop
- CIRCULÉIRE annual conference
- Dairy Processing Technology Centre Webinar
- Shannon Chamber event on sustainability goals





Embedding the Charter

In 2024 the EPA worked with the five supporting State Agencies (Bord Bia, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, Enterprise Ireland, Fáilte Ireland, Teagasc) and others to promote the Charter, increase membership and to embed the Charter into existing State programmes and supports.

Enterprise Ireland broadened the scope of their support funding. The Green Transition Fund for client organisations now includes circular economy and bioeconomy related activities. Client companies can access [Climate Action Vouchers](#) and/or the [Green Start programme](#) to develop a plan to reduce and manage food waste. They also promoted the Charter internally and to client companies at relevant food sector events and provided expert advice through participation in the EPA-chaired Food Waste Charter Action Group.

Fáilte Ireland have been exploring opportunities for incorporating the Charter into their [Climate Action Programme](#), which offers businesses within the tourism sector a variety of mentoring and other supports to help develop their tailored action plans and empower those businesses to operate more sustainably.

Bord Iascaigh Mhara engages their internal Circular Seafood Group cross-business unit to communicate and organise Food Waste Charter activities, continuing to support seafood sector clients in the areas of raw material handling, food waste, bioeconomy, by-products and co-product development. Notable activities include:

- Creation of dedicated Food Waste Charter page on the BIM website. www.bim.ie/food-waste-charter/
- Coproduct Utilisation Workshop in partnership with Teagasc on the potential to repurpose and valorise nutrient-rich side streams into e.g. food for human consumption, ingredients and nutraceuticals.
- Research to support innovation and valorisation in seafood sector, including trialling technology that allows processors to input raw material alongside a few ingredients to produce a fish-based ingredient for human consumption.

Bord Bia Food waste reduction targets are being established through Origin Green Plans and during members' annual review process. Origin Green members are being encouraged to sign up to the Food Waste Charter and to use the EPA Food Waste Measurement Protocol when establishing food waste baselines. Origin Green has also developed food waste prevention guidance for members, including setting food waste targets using the SMART principle. The guidance includes reference to the Food Waste Charter and resources to assist members when developing their targets. A webinar on introducing the Food Waste Charter was hosted for members and included a case study from an Origin Member who had signed the Charter and successfully implemented food waste reduction strategies.

Teagasc has been providing technical support services to businesses to assess current practices and encourage the introduction of practices for monitoring, reducing and preventing food waste. They also hosted the Forum on Food Waste at their conference centre in Ashtown, Dublin.

FoodCloud and the EPA agreed to collaborate in highlighting the importance of measuring food waste and promoting food redistribution as a key solution to prevent food waste, in line with the food use hierarchy. FoodCloud provides detailed impact reports to food business partners, showing the quantity of surplus food diverted from waste through donations, along with the associated emissions avoided.



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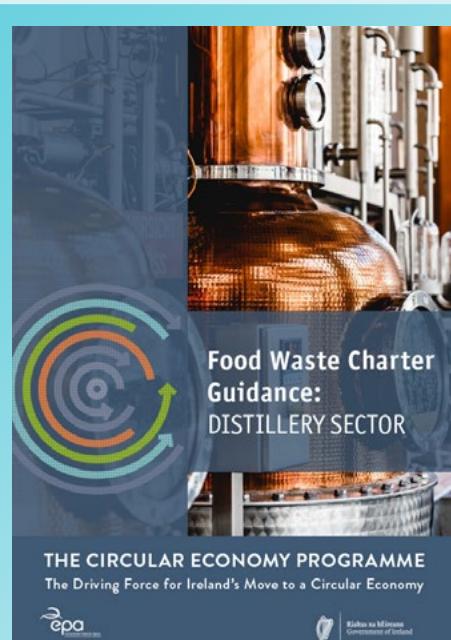
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Building knowledge and developing capacity

Sectoral Guidance

To support a consistent approach to monitoring and measuring in the manufacturing & processing sector, the EPA has developed a standard methodology – the Food Waste Measurement Protocol. In 2024, sectoral guidance for the Distillery Sector and the Brewing Sector was published.



CLICK
TO VIEW



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Knowledge Sharing and Networking

The Forum on Food Waste was held on 27 June 2024 which was an important networking and knowledge sharing event for Charter members and others. 100 people from 69 organisations attended.



CLICK HERE TO VIEW HIGHLIGHTS VIDEO



CLICK TO VIEW CHARTER RESOURCES FOR MEASURING AND MONITORING FOOD WASTE





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2024 in Numbers

Food Waste Charter members by sector

At the end of 2024, there were 62 Charter business members, representing over 70,300 employees. This compares to 24 Charter business members at the end of 2023, representing 42,600 employees.



1

Farming & Fishery



25

Food Manufacturing & Processing



1

Food Wholesale & Distribution



5

Food Retail



21

Restaurant & Food Service



9

Hotels & Accommodation



3

Supporting member

Member Reporting

Total 47 respondents, 15 members did not submit reports for 2024.

Measure



100%

respondents tracking their food waste

70%

with a baseline year for food waste measurement

Reduce



96%

respondents with a specific food waste reduction target

98%

implementing food waste reduction initiatives in 2024

72%

collaborating with supply chain partners to reduce food waste

91%

supporting National Stop Food Waste Day (1st March 2024)

Report



100%

reporting Food Waste Charter activities to EPA

96%

reporting 2024 food waste data to EPA

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Key Insights



Strong promotional activities by the EPA and the supporting State Agencies resulted in a significant increase in members.

Promoting the Charter and benefits of addressing food waste should continue to ensure high representation of businesses across the supply chain.



100% of respondents are measuring their food waste and 70% reported that they accounted for the cost of food waste as part of their tracking.

Businesses see the link between food waste and lost revenue.



Most indicated they have a food waste reduction target, but only 70% of respondents have established a baseline year against which to measure this target.

To tackle food waste prevention in a meaningful way, food waste reduction must be benchmarked against a baseline year to measure progress.

All companies reported doing at least one initiative in 2024 to reduce food waste. The most common initiatives to reduce food waste reported by members were staff training and awareness followed by identifying hot spots and actions to tackle them and then redistribution of surplus.

Members need to focus on evidence-led actions that will prevent food waste in accordance with the food use and waste hierarchy for impact.



The reports show that businesses are at different stages on their food waste prevention journey. While most are measuring their food waste and implementing food waste reduction initiatives, some newer members were not in a position to report on their food waste for 2024.

Some businesses will need additional support to get started and supports available to assist should be highlighted.

The quality and availability of food waste data as reported by members was variable. While 96% of respondents reported data, there were quality issues and inaccuracies, and it is not currently possible to include a figure on the total amount of food waste reported by members in 2024. As members develop their processes and habits around consistent and regular food waste reporting, the quality should improve to allow reporting on total food waste amounts and corresponding reductions.

Charter members need to ensure that food waste measurement is given priority to meet commitments under the Charter and wider food waste reduction ambitions.



Over 90% of respondents supported National Stop Food Waste Day on 1st March 2024, providing information to their staff and/or promoting it through their social media platforms. 3 were not members at the time.

Many members recognise that building a culture of food waste prevention within their business influences staff to support food waste reduction initiatives.

TO FIND OUT MORE

Email us: foodwastecharter@epa.ie

Check our website: www.foodwastecharter.ie

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