



CHEF'STORE INDUSTRY REPORT:

Food Waste in America in 2023



AMERICANS THROW OUT MORE THAN **19 MILLION TONS** OF FOOD EACH YEAR, ROUGHLY **\$161 TO \$218 BILLION** WORTH OF FOOD ANNUALLY.

Food waste is a hot topic among restaurant owners, farmers, businesses, and the general public. Food waste is a pervasive and pressing issue in America, where a staggering amount of food goes uneaten and ends up in landfills each year. Americans throw out more than **19 million tons** of food each year, roughly **\$161 to \$218 billion** worth of food annually.

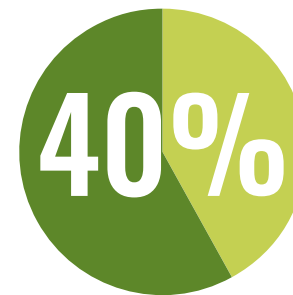
This wastefulness not only widens societal inequalities but also has detrimental environmental consequences, contributing to greenhouse gas emissions and squandering valuable resources such as water and energy.

CURRENT FOOD WASTE NUMBERS AROUND THE COUNTRY

While global food waste numbers amount to **2.5 billion tons** yearly, America, unfortunately, leads the world in food waste statistics.



The U.S. is responsible for **60 tons** of food waste every year



That number is nearly **40 percent** of Americans' entire food supply and equates to **325 pounds** per person in waste

What Role Do Restaurants Play in Food Waste Numbers?

Food waste doesn't only occur in the domestic sphere. Restaurants also contribute to excess waste.



The food service industry is responsible for **40 percent** of food waste



85 percent of restaurant food is thrown out



Nearly **half a pound of food per dish** is wasted in American restaurants

Where Does Restaurant Food Waste Come From?

Food waste doesn't only occur in the domestic sphere. Restaurants also contribute to excess waste.

- **73 percent** of food waste comes from back-of-the-house operations
- **27 percent** comes from the front-of-the-house

Average food waste percentages across kitchen and service break down to the following food items:

- Produce Trimmings: **39 percent**
- Meats: **19 percent**
- Bread and Pastries: **9 percent**
- Prepared Produce: **9 percent**
- Other Ingredients: **24 percent**





WHY MANAGING FOOD WASTE MATTERS

Food loss and waste have far-reaching effects on food systems. When food is wasted, all aspects of the food chain—from water to land, utilities, labor, and capital—are also exhausted. On top of that, food waste in landfills can contribute to rising greenhouse gasses.

Food Waste's Impact on the Environment

- **11 percent** of globally produced greenhouse gas emissions come directly from food waste
- Food loss in the U.S. equates to greenhouse gas production of **37 million cars**

Economic and Social Repercussions Caused by Food Loss



One in seven people living in America experience food insecurity, which could be alleviated by redirecting edible food waste



American consumers, food service enterprises, and companies spend **\$218 billion** yearly on food products that are never consumed



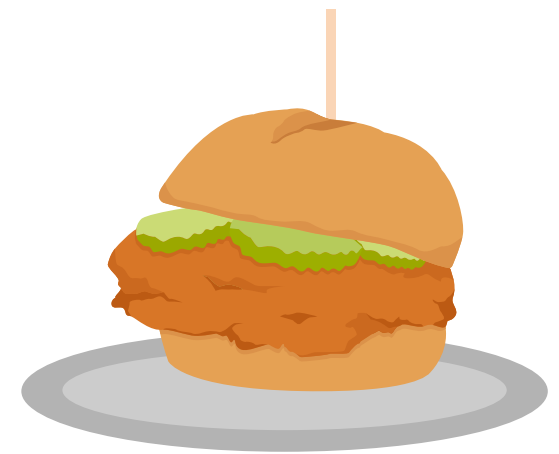
Restaurants spend roughly **\$162 billion** each year in food waste-related costs and contribute to nearly **18 percent** of food insecurity numbers



HOW MITIGATING FOOD WASTE IMPROVES YOUR RESTAURANT'S BOTTOMLINE

In addition to securing food sustainability by managing food waste, restaurant owners can also improve food costs and profits. Engaging in food-saving efforts has been shown to:

- Create a **7:1 cost-benefit ratio**
- Retain **\$1.6 billion in profits** across the restaurant industry by only reducing food waste by 20 percent
- Boost profits by **\$620 million** simply by performing an internal food waste audit



LOOKING FORWARD: TECHNIQUES FOR TACKLING FOOD LOSS IN YOUR RESTAURANT

No matter your reasons for food waste reduction, there are many ways to get started on a loss-reduction program.

- Track your food waste
- Look for composting options
- Donate usable food products
- Repurpose ingredients for stocks, preserves, juices, and more
- Examine your portions
- Streamline menus to utilize popular ingredients

Paying attention to your in-house practices is vital to mitigating food waste and improving your bottom line.

Tackling food waste in America requires a multi-faceted approach. Raising awareness and promoting changes such as improved meal planning and implementing innovative strategies like updated inventory management to minimize waste make big differences.

Addressing food waste is a crucial step towards building a more sustainable food system that ensures everyone has access to nutritious food while minimizing environmental impact. Together, we can make a tangible difference in combating food waste and building a better future.



Sources:

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