

# FOODSERVICE FOOTPRINT

Sustainability issues in the food industry  
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## SODEXO'S ACTION MAN

Aidan Connolly on his dislike  
for the word 'sustainability'

## ARE WE UNITED AGAINST WASTE?

Unilever Food Solutions calls  
for a coalition

## FIGHTING FOR FISH

Is the foodservice sector  
ready to back Hugh?

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How to roll out sustainability  
programmes

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# #Comment...

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## Virtual is a reality

I spend quite a bit of time in this job chasing PR's – or public relations executives as they like to be known (they also probably spend quite a bit of their time chasing people like me, but that's beside the point). Some of this chasing can be fruitful, some of it less so, but I couldn't do my job without these gatekeepers (as they probably less like to be known).

As well as deal with daily nagging from people like me, they also keep us up to speed on any news from their clients or companies. Traditionally, that's been a simple process; I give them my email address; they add me to a database; I get news emailed direct to me; then I unpick it. Easy.

Now I am being told by some that the "best way" to access their news is to follow them on Twitter. Now, call me a twit, but Twitter seems confused, cluttered and complicated – and finding something interesting is needle-in-a-haystack stuff (especially if you follow the likes of Jamie Oliver who tweets incessantly). But I'll have to get used to it.

For the time being, the new *Foodservice Footprint* website ([www.foodservicefootprint.com](http://www.foodservicefootprint.com)) will keep me busy enough. Now it's been revamped, we'll be using the site as a forum to swap ideas, as well as to keep you up to speed on the latest news ... that's provided I can (a) find it on Twitter and (b) track down the PR's.



**David Burrows**

*Footprint*  
Editor-in-Chief

*"Call me a twit,  
but Twitter seems  
confused, cluttered  
and complicated"*

## Food for thought

Almost 40% of UK diners would pay more to eat in places that commit to cutting food waste. What's more, older people are prepared to accept smaller portions, while the vast majority of men and women would leave things they didn't like off their order – but still pay full price. But only - and here's the important bit - if they were given the opportunity to. A whopping 120,000 tonnes of food is left on consumers' plates every year. Could we cut the vast majority of it by simple communication and save the industry millions in the process? See pages 20-39 for a special waste supplement.



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**Andy Dawe** is head of food & drink at the Waste and Resources Action Programme. He explains the group's plans for a voluntary agreement to deal with foodservice waste.



**Anne Pierce** explains why she was impressed by the Footprint Awards and how her education charity, Springboard, is also finding a pipeline of talented young people from a variety of backgrounds.







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## Olympics commitments are challenging admits Sodexo CEO

CATERING SUPPLIERS to the Olympic Games still face barriers to delivering on the food vision for London 2012, according to the chief executive of Sodexo.

As part of its Food 2012 Charter, the organising committee LOCOG requires caterers to commit themselves to supporting and implementing a "local, seasonal, healthier and sustainable" food agenda, but Aidan Connolly said for catering suppliers, some of the issues around the definition of local sourcing still need addressing.

"There are a lot of challenges concerned with translating the bid promises into reality. I don't think all the legacy issues have been solved but it will still be the greenest games ever."

Connolly gave the example of strawberries as a product where the definition of local is open to interpretation. "We looked at strawberries recently – beautiful strawberries, produced in England but the seedlings come from Holland, the coil netting comes from East Africa, the farm is staffed by Polish workers and managed by Polish managers and the trucks are from Germany. So you start to question what does local really mean?"

Despite not being an official Games sponsor, Sodexo will be one of the largest catering suppliers to London 2012 and Connolly believes that, despite the ongoing challenges, the event promises to be a runaway success.

For our exclusive interview with Aidan Connolly, see page 15

## Caterers support British Food Fortnight



Birch Primary School in Essex preparing Shepherd's Pie with chef Mark Baumann

SEPTEMBER 17 marked the start of the 10th British Food Fortnight, with caterers as involved as ever.

Brakes has developed a web toolkit to help restaurants and pubs make the most of the two weeks. A dedicated area of the Brakes Group website includes template marketing and promotional material such as posters, menus, and recipe ideas for classic British dishes.

Many other caterers will also be supporting the initiative with promotions and advice. Vanessa Millard, senior marketing manager

at 3663, said the two weeks is an ideal opportunity for operators to promote the use of British food on their menus and clearly show customers that they're using quality produce.

Taking place between 17 September and 2 October British Food Fortnight is a celebration of the best of British food and drink. Established in 2002, it aims to help producers, suppliers and growers, as well as foodservice outlets, to champion and promote the UK's finest local and regional products.

## Is gurnard the new cod?

### HUGH'S FISH

Fight has put sustainable fish back on the menu, and is encouraging diners to cast their net wider than traditional favourites like cod.

M&J Seafood says that since the launch of the TV series 'Hugh's Fish Fight' there has been an increase in awareness of alternative species among chefs and restaurateurs, and this has helped drive sales across the foodservice industry.

Mike Berthet, director of fish and seafood at M&J said the company's efforts to promote species that have been under-used have been given "a huge boost" by the series. Sales of gurnard have risen by 62%, for instance.

However, the New Economics Foundation has warned that promoting the consumption of unwanted species is "a risky gamble", given that it could lead to more demand for fish and put more pressure on fish stocks.

Sales data from the grocery sector in the aftermath of the first series of 'Hugh's Fish Fight' shows that in some supermarkets sales of lesser known species as well as the favourites like cod increased.

The European Commission is currently in the process of reforming its Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) to help better protect fish and fishermen.

- *What the reform of CFP means for you – page 8*



## Sustainable fish push

Over seventy thousand people will be offered sustainable fish at work after ISS Facility Services Food and Hospitality announced a raft of new commitments to sustainable seafood this week. The caterers have joined some of the country's most progressive restaurants and caterers including Wahaca, the National Trust and Leon in signing the Sustainable Fish City Pledge. This requires companies to remove endangered species from menus and catering, serve sustainably managed fish and encourage suppliers to source sustainable fish.





**Mum went to N-Ice. The world's first gourmet restaurant serving only frozen food opened for its first week in August. The pop-up restaurant is designed to promote the benefits of frozen food – in terms of taste, quality and sustainability. The British Frozen Food Federation took the opportunity to dine with the Government's environment department, waste advisors at WRAP and the Schools Food Trust.**

## New T.G.I. deal for 3663

FOODSERVICE DISTRIBUTOR 3663 has won a five-year food and drink contract with restaurant chain T.G.I. Friday's – worth more than £30m a year.

The deal will see 3663 commit to helping T.G.I. Friday's meet its sustainability ambitions, for instance by recycling waste cooking oil to convert into bio-diesel for the 3663 fleet.

3663 collects waste oil from customers and then processes it to create the bio-diesel that fuels its vehicles. Given that it is accredited with ISO 14064 assurance, 3663 is in the unique position to quantify a carbon dioxide 'saving' for T.G.I. Friday's based on the amount of waste oil recycled. In just five months – to the end of May this year, T.G.I. Friday's saved more than 160 tonnes of carbon dioxide with 3663.

Allyson Scott, head of supply chain at T.G.I. Friday's UK, said: "We strive to treat the environment with the same respect we show our guests and it's great to work with a business partner that has the same ethos."

# New carbon standard for hotels

**Carbon clarity. A new scheme for measuring carbon emissions from hotels will bring consistency and credibility to reduction targets**



FOR THE first time, leaders within the hotel industry are collaborating to reach a consensus on a single methodology for calculating carbon footprints.

The Carbon Measurement Working Group is being driven by hospitality members within the International Tourism Partnership (ITP) and the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) including the likes of Marriott International, Hilton Worldwide and Premier Inn.

Many hotel chains have set carbon reduction targets, but there have been inconsistencies in the methodologies used,

leading to confusion. The new scheme should allow for a more harmonised approach, with the first standards in place by the 2012 season.

Stephen Farrant, director of the ITP, said: "Customers and investors rightly want to know about the carbon footprint of the hotels they are dealing with. The fact that 12 global companies in the international hotel sector have come together to achieve, for the first time, this degree of consensus on the complex issue of carbon measurement is testament to the crucial importance of addressing the carbon issue."

## Tourism scheme for caterers

Bartlett Mitchell, the boutique contract catering company, has become the first contract catering company to achieve Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS) accreditation for one of its operations. A successful pilot will now lead to GTBS assembling a wider group of contract caterers and ultimately offering this accreditation to the wider contract catering sector.



# Hugh's up for a fight?

Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall has timed his campaign to coincide with the reform of Europe's fishing policy. He's captured the imagination of the public, but what about his colleagues in the foodservice industry? *David Burrows reports.*

Photo: @Mark Johnson

IT WAS the campaign that changed the eating habits of a nation. It involved a barn, a lot of chickens, a celebrity chef or two – knee high in chicken sh\*t – and a supermarket giant. It was, of course, the 'Chicken Out' campaign fronted by Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall (HFW) in January 2008; the campaign that 'exposed' the chicken industry in the UK. The result? Hugh cried. Consumers sympathised. And many food businesses changed their policies and there was a rush for free-range chicken.

Now HFW is getting all teary eyed again – but this time about fish. And rightly so: fish are in trouble. Iconic species, like the Mediterranean bluefin tuna, are on the brink of collapse. The London restaurant, Nobu, was of course at the heart of an intense campaign to remove the fish from its menus – and the compromise to add a line to menus detailing the fish as endangered has still not satisfied critics.

But the threats to fishing stocks do not begin and end with tuna. In large parts of European

waters more than 70% of assessed stocks are over-fished. The European Commission, which oversees fishing policy, admits that over-fishing is a reality, as is fleet overcapacity, heavy subsidies, low economic resilience and a decline in the volume of fish caught by European fishermen.

***Foodservice has largely been left alone by campaigners – retailers have been the bigger catch***

This situation has, ironically, been brought about by regulations designed to do the opposite. The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) is one of the oldest common policies in the European Union and, since its introduction in 1970, one of the most controversial. In a series of Channel 4 programmes, HFW told viewers about the millions of tonnes of

perfectly edible fish (also called 'discards') that are thrown back under the EU's tight fishing quota systems.

The 'Fish Fight' campaign sparked a frenzy of consumer support with hundreds of thousands signing up to a petition calling for an end to discards – and a robust reform of the European policy. "I've decided to do something about this crazy situation," HFW recently wrote, "[and] now is the perfect time to launch a campaign to end this madness – and to find a better way to protect fish stocks."

Indeed, discards is just one element of what many agree is a broken system: a recent study by the European Commission found that only 9% of European fish stocks are likely to be at sustainable levels by 2022 if the CFP is not radically changed.

Just before the summer Parliament break, the Fisheries Commissioner, Maria Damanaki, published her 'Starter for 10' on how to reform the CFP – the third time the policy has been reviewed. "I sincerely hope that





**Half empty or half full? Fisheries policy is being reformed to bring economic and environmental sustainability to the industry**

this is the birthday of a new, flexible and intelligent fisheries policy that is fit for today's environmental and economic challenges," she said.

While not widely celebrated, the proposals did suggest the Commission was beginning to see sense on the science: that fish stocks are in trouble.

And now the hard work starts. The next 18 months will involve intense lobbying as green groups, industry, scientists and politicians battle to reform the CFP and reverse the damage done by what some refer to as 30 years of poor policy.

And expect the lobbying to be harder than ever – especially from the environmentalists. WWF, for one, says there might not be another chance in 10 years' time to save the seas, such is the state of the stocks. The NGO has been working with the seafood industry in calling for an "ambitious" reform of CFP, and formed a WWF/Industry Alliance with the likes of Eurocommerce, Euro-Toque (an international chef association) and Eurocoop. In the UK, not only retailers and processors support this Alliance, but major suppliers to foodservice companies such as

M&J Seafood, part of the Brakes Group, and Direct Seafoods.

Sally Bailey, WWF-UK head of fisheries and seafood, says that foodservice companies have an important role to play in developing sustainable fisheries policy in Europe. "Foodservice companies can advocate to the UK government and the European Commission to improve the CFP. [After all], sustainably harvested fisheries products are essential for the future business of foodservice providers."

Indeed, the sustainability of the foodservice sector depends very much on sustainable fish stocks. Some companies are already very engaged with the issues. Moshi Moshi and Soseki have an entire section on the environment on their website while Vacherin has had a "comprehensive sustainable fish programme for over three years", explains director of food, Lloyd Mann. "It outlines to our chefs which species to use and which species to avoid according to the Marine Conservation Society's guidelines. Over 80% of our fish is brought from UK waters and we update our policy every month so that we don't buy fish in their spawning season."

Others have gone down the Marine Stewardship Council route. MacDonald's sources all its fish from stocks certified by the MSC, while Sodexo made a bold move to ramp up its work in this area with all its outlets now certified by the MSC. This will see one million customers offered sustainable fish.

Large or small, foodservice companies have a responsibility to get to grips with the issues. "Everyone in the foodservice industry needs to be fully aware of the Common Fisheries Policy," says Nathan Outlaw, a 2 Michelin star seafood chef in Rock, Cornwall. "If you don't, the customers will, and they'll be quick to point them out in no uncertain terms. Keeping aware of this knowledge is now a part of being a chef or restaurateur."

To date, foodservice companies have been largely left alone by campaigners – with the obvious exception of Nobu. Retailers have been the bigger catch. But, as noted by Outlaw, diners are becoming more interested in the issues – not least as a result of high-profile campaigns like Hugh's Fish Fight.

The Sustainable Restaurant Association says more and more consumers are asking about fish – which means more and more restaurants are taking action. "Foodservice companies approach this issue a little bit differently to retailers, but more and more often we're seeing restaurants write a sustainable seafood policy and let their suppliers know their sustainable sourcing expectations," says the SRA's George Clark.

Ultimately, it'll boil down to customer demand though. If the public is made aware of the seriousness of the situation, they will choose to eat fish from sustainable sources and try more abundant species. In theory.

Campaigns like the one run by HFW will certainly help fish to fight their corner. Maybe one day soon people will care as much about the fish as they do about the chickens.

## Chip shop chat

"It's easy to source fish sustainably when you are in a town with fishing boats – no one forces anyone to buy Blue Fin Tuna. Most of the fish we sell is caught locally and we encourage customers at our wet fish counter to try less commonly bought fish with tips of how to cook them.

You can't generalise about food service companies. Some seem very committed to the cause, others much less so. The CFP, which dictates that dead fish are thrown

overboard and not landed, is madness. Quotas mean that trawlers throw back cheaper species in order to land more expensive ones – so that also needs to stop.

I'm not sure how much political will there is in Europe to reform things. Had fish stocks been a priority we wouldn't be where we are now.

Ultimately it'll come down to customer demand. The public needs to be aware of the seriousness of the situation and choose to eat fish from sustainable sources and try more abundant species."

*Jonny Dunhill is owner of Eddie Gilbert's, the fishmonger, gourmet fish and chip shop and restaurant.*



## Customers want help with health



FOODSERVICE OPERATORS could increase sales by tapping into increasingly health-conscious consumers.

Though the value of the eating out market is expected to grow by 2.8% to £42bn this year, less disposable income and low spend thresholds are influencing the choices consumers make on where to eat.

Previous experience continues to be the main driver of venue choice, but today's diners are also looking for a wider range of options to be made available to encourage

them to eat more healthily.

Over 50% of people also prefer to eat at outlets where ingredients are locally or regionally sourced.

The findings are part of the Eating Out in the UK 2011 report, compiled by Allegra Strategies. Anya Gascoine Marco, Allegra head of food and beverage insight, said:

"Consumers are looking for improved healthier options to be available, together with a commitment from operators to showcase ethical practices."

## London schools hungry for health

THERE'S GOOD news for the capital's schools, with new figures showing that half of all London boroughs are now serving healthy, ethical and environmentally sustainable meals.

More and more meal providers across London are now meeting the Food for Life Catering Mark's Bronze or Silver award, which ensures they are sourcing ethical and environmentally sustainable food, championing local food producers and making it easier for people to eat healthily



In Richmond, for instance, a local campaigning group, School Food Matters, worked to get schools signed up to the Food for Life Partnership scheme and helped the council re-tender school meals to secure a Silver standard award, at the same time as making savings of up to 40p per meal.

Libby Grundy, director of the FFLP, said these latest figures are great news showing that London schools are now "getting the healthy eating habit".

The news follows a report by the London Assembly which found that child obesity costs the capital £7.1m a year to treat and that rates of childhood obesity are higher in London than any other English region.

The special feature on catering for kids, first run in July's issue, is now available at: [www.foodservicefootprint.com/features-2](http://www.foodservicefootprint.com/features-2)



**Rugby star teams up with 3663. Six development chefs from 3663 are supporting a training programme run by England international rugby player, Olly Barkley. The chefs have developed and tested a range of meals for more than 70 nine to 16-year-olds to enjoy throughout the three-day academy.**



# Are you all clear on the new labelling rules?



**The European Parliament recently approved new food labelling rules – rules that could affect your business and the information you provide to customers. Nick Hughes guides you through the Food Information regulations.**

NUTRITIONAL LABELLING has long been an emotive issue for the food industry. The drawn out saga of traffic lights versus Guideline Daily Amounts demonstrates not only how divided UK business remains on the subject but how seriously they take their responsibilities to providing nutritional information to their customers.

To date, efforts at providing nutritional information have been on a voluntary basis, but new legislation coming from Europe means that foodservice suppliers that have been lagging in their voluntary commitments will soon have to step up to the plate where nutritional labelling is concerned.

In July, the European Parliament approved new food labelling rules as part of the Food Information regulations, which will apply to all pre-packaged foods. They include the provision of on-pack nutritional labelling for key nutrients, mandatory country of origin information on a raft of fresh food products and allergen information both on pack and at point of sale.

Businesses will have three to five years to come into line with the new rules, so how the regulation will impact foodservice operators depends largely on how far they are on their own nutritional labelling journey. Businesses ahead of the curve in providing information to customers can rest easy, and

will remain largely unaffected; those that have been slow to engage with the issue, meanwhile, are likely to find themselves faced with some exacting – and potentially costly – new requirements.

The greatest impact will be on businesses that supply own-branded food to customers and those who supply pre-packaged 'food-to-go' such as sandwiches and pastries. The regulation requires that energy content and amounts of key nutrients – fat, saturated fat, carbohydrates, sugars, protein and salt – are stated in a legible tabular form on the food packaging, together and in the same field of vision. This information must be provided per 100g or 100ml in a minimum font size of 1.2mm, a requirement that has caused concern among brand owners who could face estimated bills of £8,000 per SKU to make changes to existing text.

***The size of text to ensure improved legibility is a controversial issue given the costs involved***

"The size of text to ensure improved legibility may prove contentious due to the significant time and cost which will now be involved in compliance," says Stuart

*Continued on page 12*

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Shotton, consultancy services director at technical consultancy FoodChain Europe. “Inevitably these costs will be passed on to the consumer and at a time when food prices are on the up, this will be controversial.”

The rules also seek to make it easier for consumers to see if a product contains allergenic substances, which must be highlighted in the ingredient list. In a move that will have significant repercussions for the foodservice sector, information on allergens must be provided for non-pre-packaged foods, for example on food sold in restaurants and canteens.

Existing rules on country of origin labelling, which currently must be displayed on certain foods such as beef, honey, olive oil and fresh fruit and vegetables, will be extended to fresh meat from pigs, sheep, goats and poultry and could in future be extended to other categories such as meat when used as an ingredient in, for example, ready meals or sandwiches. Products that were previously frozen, meanwhile, will have to be labelled as such at point of sale.

In key areas such as nutrient information, the legislation will not have a massive impact on UK food businesses, which are acknowledged as being well ahead of their European counterparts. “The new legislation requires back-of-pack nutrition information in tabular format, which is something UK food and drink manufacturers have been providing for many years,” says FDF director of food safety and science Barbara Gallani.

### ***The clock is ticking for many SMEs to get their houses in order***

Foodservice operators have also been getting ahead of the game in this area. Although foods pre-packaged on site on the day of sale will be exempt from the regulation, each Member State can decide whether to require the information to be communicated to the consumer in a different way. Prêt à Manger already provides nutritional information on its website and at point of sale and is “prepared to comply with the regulations in any way necessary”, according to a spokeswoman.

Sodexo, meanwhile, recently relaunched its Delifresh range of own brand sandwiches,

## **60 seconds on labelling with...**

**Helen Farnsworth, 3663 nutritionist**

### ***What does 3663 currently offer its customers in terms of nutritional information?***

Our own brand product labelling consists of Group 2 (the energy value, protein, carbohydrate, sugar, fat, saturated fatty acids, dietary fibre and sodium) nutritional information, unless space is limited and then the nutritional information may be reduced to either Group 1 (energy value, protein, fat and carbohydrates), or omitted completely – all information being detailed per 100g or per 100ml as sold. Where a nutritional claim is made on the packaging, relative to the claim, additional nutritional information is also provided.

### ***Will the new regulations require you to alter or add to the information you currently provide?***

The pending Food Information regulations will not mean that we will have to change a great deal in terms of nutritional information/allergen, as we are already very transparent.

### ***Which of the new requirements will have the greatest impact on how foodservice distributors currently operate?***

Areas that could impact both 3663 and

wraps, sub-rolls and paninis – sold direct to the public at cafes, restaurants and venues such as Royal Ascot and Hampden Park stadium – to include calorie labelling and GDAs with a traffic light system. Providing consumers with as much information as possible about the food they eat is “very important”, says Wan Mak, head of nutrition and dietetics at Sodexo. “It gives people the opportunity to make informed decisions



its customers are the requirements for identifying products that were previously frozen, such as frozen pastries which will need to be labelled as previously frozen by customers. Also the increased country of origin labelling could have a large impact if this is extended to ingredients within a product.

### ***How else are you meeting the challenges labelling presents?***

As part of our ongoing commitment to the Responsibility Deal and being transparent on our labelling, we are supporting customers that sign up to the out of home calorie labelling pledge by providing calorie information of core range products per 100g or 100ml as sold, cooking instructions, where appropriate, and portion size guidance. This information can be requested by product code through the 3663 Advice Centre.

Additionally, we will be making calorie and other nutritional information available for customers on our website in the near future.

about eating a healthy diet.”

While the Sodexos and Prêts of this world are in good shape to meet the new requirements, small and medium sized foodservice businesses, who have previously viewed nutritional information as a chore rather than a responsibility, have up to five years to get their house in order once the regulation is ratified by the European Commission. The clock is ticking.



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# Sodexo's action man

In a rare interview, Sodexo chief executive Aidan Connolly explains why, where sustainability is concerned, actions speak louder than words. *By Nick Hughes.*

Continued from page 15



**F**OR A man who declares his principal hobby as “recreational eating” Aidan Connolly has ascended to his dream job. As chief executive of Sodexo UK & Ireland, Connolly is responsible for serving one million meals every day in the UK to customers ranging from prison inmates to football supporters.

Despite a recent drive into the facilities management business, where margins are significantly higher than in foodservice, both Sodexo and Connolly’s passion for food remains undimmed. “Food is in our DNA”, he says. “We’re undoubtedly growing faster in non-food, but food is where we come from.”

Sustainability is intertwined with this DNA. Connolly treats the term as “a fad word” and not something he and his executives talk about in isolation at board meetings. “It’s not like a badge or a shield, it’s just woven in.” Indeed, ask him if Sodexo has a sustainability agenda and the answer is “we really don’t, it’s just in everything we do”.

So what exactly is Sodexo doing? In 2009, the company launched its group-wide Better Tomorrow plan that consists of 14 commitments to action in the areas of health and nutrition, local communities and

environment. Of the 14 aims, the UK business is the pilot for eight of them reflecting the “proactive” approach to delivering the plan that Connolly says the UK business adopts.

Sodexo has undoubtedly got the key sustainability issues of the day covered: carbon and water footprinting, organic waste recovery, sustainable food supply and health and wellbeing solutions are all accounted for in the company’s latest Corporate Citizenship report. However, in some areas progress appears to be slow.

In 2009/10, just 20% of relevant sites had implemented a carbon footprint reduction programme, 8% a water conservation programme and, most disappointingly of all, just 2% had implemented an organic waste reduction programme. Is it fair to say that, compared with the food retail sector, foodservice is not responding to environmental issues fast enough?

“I think there’s a certain amount of fairness in that criticism,” says Connolly candidly. “I think the reason I don’t accept it completely is that there’s a significant difference in our output. Our output is to a client that is not necessarily the consumer and therefore where consumer trends are running ahead of people’s

willingness to pay me to do something you will get the impression that retailers perhaps are further ahead.”

For a business whose large, diverse client base spans Honda car plants, Ascot racecourse and NHS hospitals, rolling out sustainability initiatives across Sodexo’s entire portfolio is a challenge. “Where the client is saying actually I need you to cut your costs there’s a limit to how far we can go; I can’t impose [policies] on my client,” he adds. “Whilst we’ve had the luxury in the last three years of being able to invest in the business, some of our clients have retrenched, they’ve shut factories, they’ve laid off lots of people and they haven’t had the same freedoms as I have.”

Indeed, one criticism often levelled against foodservice operators is that their involvement in issues affecting their supply chain remains meagre relative to food retailers and, although they have a clear handle on the environmental impact of their direct operations, there is less understanding of the impact of the products they source. On water footprinting, Connolly admits that “we’re only just starting out our journey”, while on carbon “we have got quite a way into working out what our real carbon footprint is”.





## Aidan Connolly

**Job title:** Chief executive  
Sodexo UK & Ireland

**Age:** 54

**Home:** Beaconsfield, Bucks  
(Connolly commutes to work by car but only since Sodexo moved offices to Holborn, central London earlier this year - "I used to take the train but it's just too difficult at the moment".)

**Family:** Married with two children

**Education:** Liverpool University

**Career to date:** Joined Sodexo in 2007 as finance director before replacing Yann Coleou as chief executive in March 2009. Prior to joining Sodexo he was finance director of My Travel UK and before that group finance director and then chief executive officer at home furnishings maker Walker Greenbank.

**Hobbies:** Recreational eating, fast cars and Manchester United.

Although he claims there's a limit to how far up the supply chain Sodexo can reach, he also believes the business is taking its sustainable sourcing responsibilities seriously. Sodexo has a supplier charter in place that has expanded in recent years to cover energy, carbon and water in the food chain. It is also working more closely than ever with NGOs and trade bodies to increase its sphere of influence.

"It seems to me that it's in all our interests that we don't spend 200 litres of water producing a cup of coffee and we need to find ways of changing that. That's actually far beyond the reach of some of our suppliers; you need to go right back to the farming techniques in the countries producing the raw materials. By working with NGOs that are multinational we can multiply our reach."

In some areas, notably those where it has direct control, Sodexo is actually well ahead of its retail counterparts, says Connolly. Take fish: by December 2010, 926 Sodexo sites in the UK offered MSC-certified fish accounting for 17% of the total seafood sourced for the UK business during the 2009/10 year.

The commitment to sourcing 100% certified sustainable fish by 2015 starts at the very top

of the UK organisation; it's a good example of the role Connolly plays personally in driving CSR policy. "Day-to-day I scarcely get involved in MSC issues but I'm very much behind driving the initiative. You've got to have a passion to do this job and you get involved when you can leverage your weight to make a difference."

Connolly's passion for foodservice shines through during an hour spent in his company at Sodexo's brand new head office slap bang in the heart of central London. Unlike many chief executives he is good on the detail of his business and, off-the-cuff, is able to cite numerous examples of the work Sodexo is doing on the ground to improve working practices.

In a recent board meeting he expressed frustration that joints of beef could only be ordered in a weight range of between 2.5kg and 5kg. As a result, conversations are now taking place with the supplier about narrowing the weight range to between 2.5kg and 3.5kg and 3.5kg and 5kg to save on wastage. "It's not really the right use of my time, but sometimes you just can't help yourself but to get involved," he says.

Connolly is not looking for approbation from

the marketplace for his company's work. He believes part of the reason why foodservice operators are perceived to be slow adopters of sustainable practices is the lack of noise they make about their achievements. But Sodexo is not about to start wearing its green credentials on its sleeve.

"We don't do this to feel good about ourselves, we do this because we believe it's right. It's not a USP in the marketplace in the same way that M&S has its Plan A or Sainsbury's is shouting about its green credentials because it's trying to get people through the door. We're not in the business of doing that."

What Connolly is in the business of doing is going about his day-to-day duties in the most sustainable way possible, not just in the workplace but at home in Beaconsfield where he lives with his wife and two children. "We separate all the rubbish, load the car up at weekends and trot off to the local tip," he explains. "But I don't separate that as a sustainability strand, it's just the way we live these days. If anybody can find a way to get the kids to turn the lights off as they leave the room then please let me know."



# You gotta roll with it

Imagine you're a caterer whose clients include a state-of-the-art football stadium owned by Arab billionaires and an underfunded state school built in the 1950s. Now imagine convincing both clients of the need to reduce their energy use by installing presence sensors in the kitchens at a cost of £5,000. Chances are your pitch will elicit two very different responses. *Nick Hughes* looks at the challenges in rolling out sustainability plans across estates.

**R**OLLING OUT standardised sustainability initiatives is difficult for any business but for foodservice operators it can be extra tricky.

There are those that have managed it. Prêt A Manger has a uniform approach to recycling throughout its estate, with each outlet providing separate recycling bins for different types of waste. Mitchells & Butlers, meanwhile, has installed low-energy lighting across its entire estate of pubs and restaurants, replacing over 330,000 light bulbs in the process.

For caterers with a diverse client base, however, a one size fits all approach is rarely achievable. Not only are they hamstrung by client budgets, but each site may have different facilities, cultures, ownership structures and infrastructures. But does this make it impossible?

"It depends on how much the business is willing to change, what it defines as sustainable, does it respond to consumer demand or help shape it and what is the size of the business?" says Duncan Williamson, One Planet Food programme manager at WWF UK.

Indeed, Sodexo's chief executive, Aidan Connolly admits that some clients are very proactive themselves, particularly clients in major manufacturing businesses where they are looking at carbon emissions and carbon trading and are positioning their businesses to deal with those things. "Others," he adds, "are more resistant or don't want to pay for it or don't want the disruption. Some





of it requires changes in the way people do things and that, for their own reasons, doesn't always fit. It's our job to understand that."

On other occasions, inconsistencies in local infrastructure can get in the way of standardising sustainable behaviour. "The most obvious example is different local authorities will have different waste collection policies so businesses will have to adapt to those accordingly," says Dan Crossley, principal sustainability advisor at Forum for the Future.

Getting buy-in from staff on the ground can also be a challenge, especially for businesses who lack direct control over their wider operations such as franchise owners and caterers who service client sites. "You really need your staff and employees to buy into this agenda," says Crossley. "If you're just imposing standards on them without really explaining what it is you want to achieve, the risk is they won't really buy into it or enable it to happen."

Where sustainability initiatives are likely to be costly and require significant investment, businesses should ideally pilot ideas on a handful of sites first before rolling them out across the estate. That way, as Crossley explains, you can try things out on a small scale before investing in a wider national rollout. "The danger otherwise is that you come up with what you think is the right solution, you roll it out nationally and then you find it doesn't work well for whatever reason."

Compass Group and Sodexo were among

the first businesses to trial out of home calorie labelling on menus at selected sites as part of a Food Standards Agency pilot scheme. Both are now rolling out calorie labelling as standard across their businesses. 3663, meanwhile, has scaled up a number of initiatives to the stage where they are now available to all clients. This includes the provision of carbon management data and the opportunity to work with 3663 to consolidate lorry loads and delivery frequencies. "Initiatives may be implemented on a corporate level or sites can be identified for trials," says Shirley Duncalf, 3663 head of safety and sustainability. "It very much depends on the nature of the project or initiative."

Another option open to businesses is to engage with a third party. Mitchells & Butlers enlisted the help of the Carbon Trust to help develop its long-term carbon strategy. The Carbon Trust's involvement was critical in obtaining buy-in from senior stakeholders within the business, says Mitchells & Butlers head of energy Richard Felgate. "It provided the endorsement of our strategy which gave the executive committee the confidence to push ahead with our proposals and provide the investment we needed."

At its most advanced stage, standardisation of sustainability policies can enable businesses to start shaping consumer behaviour. Crossley gives the example of the Swedish burger chain, Max Burger, which in 2009 undertook a project to calculate the carbon footprint of

its food products and display these values on its menus. The chain now encourages consumers to buy chicken burgers and meat-free burgers rather than beef burgers because of their reduced environmental impact.

Max Burger may be an extreme example but it demonstrates the power of businesses to influence change if they can deliver consistent, sustainable policies. The challenges may be great, but the environmental wins for businesses that can pass sustainability initiatives throughout their entire estate are too great to be ignored.

### We never said it would be easy

"Although introducing sustainability initiatives as standard across an estate makes good business and environmental sense, divergences in client resources, infrastructure and culture will mean what's a no brainer for one client will be a no go for another. But that's no reason not to try. Where clients are hamstrung by budgetary constraints and operational deficiencies, foodservice operators should not shy away from finding alternative means of achieving environmental goals. A one size fits all approach may be a pipedream, but for every problem there is a solution. It's just a matter of finding it."

**Nick Hughes**

# Time to tackle waste



**David Burrows**  
Footprint Editor-in-Chief

THERE CAN be little doubt that waste is a hot topic at the moment. In the past two months we've had a government review of waste policy, £10m in funding to help divert more food waste to anaerobic digestion, the *Foodservice Footprint* Early Adopters Roundtable and reports on the make-up of hospitality waste. And now we have the findings from Unilever Food Solution's second World Menu Report.

There are some jaw-dropping stats within some of these reports, but the one that I still can't get my head around is from the Sustainable Restaurant Association. In its 'Too good to waste' report from September last year, it found that every customer creates almost half a kilo of food waste. Two thirds of that is back of house, and most of the rest is left on plates. Cut that waste by 20% and a restaurant turning over £10,000 a week could save about £2,000 per year on food costs.

These stats were actually from a very focused report, so I remain even more sceptical of those that offer up figures in millions of tonnes and pounds for the sector as a whole. To me, some of the stats we see over-egg the pudding. Designed, perhaps, to get us worried about waste. You can take a look at our ticker on each page and make your own mind up.

But over-egged or not, you should know if your business is chucking away too much. And if you don't know? Why not try something like the Unilever Food Solutions Wise up on Waste audit, which takes no more than 15 minutes a day. That 15 minutes might not be worth £2,000 a year, but it will certainly be time well spent.

Indeed, the only thing you need to know about waste, is that it costs you money. Not just in terms of getting rid of it (landfill tax will keep rising), but buying it, transporting it, storing it, cooling it, heating it, preparing it, serving it and then, finally, getting rid of it. Hopefully, the next 20 pages or so will help you stop and think.



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# Here's some real food for thought.

If you want to increase your recycling and protect yourself against rising costs, we can help with our **National Food Waste Recycling Service.**

Our recycling service will help you work towards achieving your zero waste to landfill targets while safeguarding you against the rising cost of landfill tax.

Through our nationwide network of specialist recycling facilities and our fleet of dedicated collection vehicles, we'll provide you with a bespoke solution tailored specifically to your waste volumes and collection requirements.

And when you recycle your food waste with us it can be turned into renewable energy, so there are huge environmental benefits too.

To find out how we could help you increase your recycling and reduce your costs call us now to arrange a **Free Waste Audit** on **0800 054 6090**

You can also find out more about our complete range of services by visiting **[www.biffa.co.uk/ch01](http://www.biffa.co.uk/ch01)**



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## SPECIAL REPORT: WASTE

## Hungry for change

Responsibility for food waste does not sit solely on the doorstep of UK homes. Is the foodservice industry ready for change, asks *Andy Dawe*

**F**OOD WASTE has long been an issue in the UK, with much focus on the amount being disposed of by households nationwide each year. Initiatives such as 'Love Food, Hate Waste' have helped consumers to think about waste in terms of portion sizes, using leftovers, and thinking more practically when shopping for food.

Yet, responsibility for the food being wasted does not sit solely on the doorsteps of UK homes. The hospitality industry has a considerable role to play too. Indeed, our recent report 'The Composition of Waste Disposed of by the UK Hospitality Industry', unearthed some staggering statistics.

Each year the hospitality sector produces 3.4 million tonnes of waste (typically food, glass, paper and card). Of this, 1.6 million tonnes (48%) is recycled, reused or composted, while almost 1.5 million tonnes (43%) is thrown away, mainly to landfill.

Of the waste going to landfill, food waste is a considerable issue, with as much as 600,000 tonnes being disposed of, two-thirds of which (400,000 tonnes) could have been eaten.

If avoidable food waste was prevented and unavoidable food waste diverted to anaerobic digestion, the potential savings to the hospitality industry are in the region of £724m a year.

Our evidence suggests that businesses are keen to reduce waste, increase recycling and reuse rates, but there are factors that can get in the way, preventing good intentions from becoming reality.

Working together offers the maximum opportunity for best practice across the industry and this is why the hospitality industry wants, and would benefit from, a voluntary agreement.

Taking responsibility for actions through agreed targets set out in voluntary agreements has proved incredibly successful across a wide range of industries, through



models such as Halving Waste to Landfill (construction), the Courtauld Commitment and the Federation House Commitment (both food and drink) and the Home Improvement Sector Commitment (DIY).

A voluntary approach secures corporate commitment to specific targets that are integrated into business strategies. It encourages the sector and its suppliers to work together to enhance innovation and ultimately achieve common goals.

Any successful voluntary agreement needs the commitment of industry itself, which is why we're always keen for sector players to engage with us to help shape a future agreement.

*Andy Dawe is head of food & drink at the Waste and Resources Action Programme.*



# No time to waste

Footprint's Early Adopters' Group gets the ball rolling on a voluntary agreement to reduce foodservice waste.



Acquire Services  
BaxterStorey  
Beacon  
Best Western  
Brakes Group  
CH&Co  
Compass  
Creed Foodservice  
Dairy UK  
Domino's Pizza Group  
Essential Cuisine  
Food Packaging Association  
Huhtamaki  
ISS  
LOCOG  
Nestle Professional  
NNFCC  
Partners in Purchasing  
Pret A Manger  
Reynolds  
RHP  
Sodexo  
Unilever Food Solutions

**I**N THE Government's recent Waste Review 2011, the intention was clear: we need to tackle the waste arising from the foodservice sector. Following hot on the heels of that, and as if to reinforce the need for action, was a report from the Government's environment quango. WRAP – the Waste & Resources Action Programme – found that 3.4m tonnes of waste is produced by pubs, hotels, restaurants and quick service restaurants each year. Just under half is recycled. That isn't bad. Many outlets and companies have been working hard to cut waste and deliver more materials to recycling streams than to landfill (as we've reported on the pages of *Foodservice Footprint*).

However, the Government has spied an opportunity that more could be done. In the grocery retail sector, 1.2m tonnes of food and packaging waste have been prevented over the last five years through the success of the Courtauld Commitment – a voluntary responsibility deal between the major grocery retailers and food manufacturers. Now they want to replicate that for foodservice.

The Waste Review states: "As food and packaging account for the majority of hospitality waste, we are developing a responsibility deal with industry focussing on these waste types. This agreement will cover both prevention and sustainable use of the waste that still arises."

That isn't going to be easy. The Government readily accepts that "this is a large and complex sector ... The agreement will be with a wide range of businesses including contract caterers, hotels, pubs and restaurants." We knew that too, which is why we brought together an 'early adopters' group'.

"The group was set up to bring the sector together with those with an expertise in waste and take a look at where we are now," explained Christophe Stourton, Footprint Events Director. "For too long you've all been fighting waste from your own corners – this was about fighting waste as a collective."

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# So, what happened and what did we learn?

The day was split into a series of presentations and discussion groups. The idea was to give the group an idea of how other sector-wide voluntary agreements have worked, and the time to think about some of the unique challenges that foodservice will face. As a result we established some key learnings to take forward to the first meeting WRAP will convene in September to discuss the new responsibility deal.

## What we learned

### 1) Lack of knowledge

While everyone in the room understood that waste is a problem, there was confusion over everything from industry standards and supply chain responsibilities to biodegradability and where the responsibilities for waste lie. It was also noted that high staff turnovers in the sector made education of staff a time-consuming and costly factor.

**Feedback:** there is a reluctance to 'share secrets' in this sector – which could provide a barrier to sharing best practice.

### 2) Best practice indicators

There are examples of good practice in the sector, but no wider best practice guidelines and knowledge transfer. Given the disparity of the sector, a 'one size fits all' guide is not an option.

**Feedback:** A series of simple, factsheets for the industry on waste could be a valuable tool in improving how the whole sector – from large caterers to small businesses – deals with waste.

### 3) Diversity of sector

Foodservice is a diverse sector with a supply chain considerably more complicated than that of retail. There is also the added complication of franchises, with one group suggesting that it would be extremely difficult

to collate data on waste from hundreds of different outlets run as franchises. Another key barrier was the access to collection services for smaller businesses. Where does that leave the average restaurant for example – especially if food is banned from landfill in the future?

**Feedback:** There needs to be a forum through which foodservice can engage with a variety of groups from other industry bodies, NGOs and Government on issues around waste and sustainability.

### 4) Responsibility borders

Through the Courtauld Commitment, food manufacturers had made much progress to help the retail sector cut waste – could this now be adapted to foodservice? The feeling was summed up by one comment: "It's very difficult to identify where packaging comes from and whose responsibility it is to reduce it or recycle it." There was also a feeling that communication up and down the supply chain could improve.

**Feedback:** The boundaries of responsibility for the foodservice sector, in terms of waste reductions, needs to be clearly defined. It is unlikely that this responsibility needs to stretch right up and down the supply chain.

### 5) Demanding customers

Foodservice was seen as a fairly mature market with customers demanding certain things and "hospitality is about offering choice".

**Feedback:** Where is the balance between choice and reducing waste of unwanted perishable goods? After all, companies are understandably reluctant to be seen to be restricting choice for customers.

### 6) Reducing waste in the first place

One issue was whether purchasers understood waste and the issues. In a

restaurant kitchen, for instance, it is all down to the chef who will know first-hand if he/she has over-ordered. However, the purchasing teams of large caterers may not be as well-informed in some case.

**Feedback:** Businesses need to understand the true cost of waste. In the case of food waste, for instance, this isn't the cost of sending it landfill or having it collected, this is the cost of buying it, storing it, cooking and then disposing of it.

### 7) Fear of failure

The fact that the industry is to set about creating a voluntary agreement to cut packaging and food waste is one that many will fear. "Why risk putting our heads above the parapet and being shot down?"

**Feedback:** The big players will need to come on board early on to pave the way for any deal. However, any agreement will also have to be representative of the smaller players.

## Final thoughts...

This was a daunting task, but the day provided the perfect prelude to WRAP's first meeting on the proposed foodservice waste responsibility deal in September. But our role doesn't end here. This early adopters' group was the start of what we hope will be an ongoing 'waste watch' for *Foodservice Footprint*; and this report, the first bones of a living document that we can create together. One thing shone through in this first meeting, and that was the lack of joined up thinking and sharing of best practice. Where better to encourage and develop that understanding than through this magazine?

Please send any thoughts you have on the waste issues you face, the proposed responsibility deal or the early adopters group to: david@foodservicefootprint.com







## Refrigeration

We are reducing the carbon impact of our coolers by installing energy management systems, long-life LED lighting, and doors on open fronted units. Thousands of machines have been upgraded. This helps our customers to save money on their energy bills and is one reason we have reduced our overall carbon emissions by 5.5% since 2007.



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## Refuelling

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# SPECIAL REPORT: WASTE



## Let's talk about it

The time has come for foodservice to join forces to tackle food waste. *Foodservice Footprint* caught up with three industry giants to find out how.

### What is the World Menu Report and what does it tell us?

**Tracey Rogers:** The WMR is a piece of global research UFS has put together which give us trends about consumers' attitudes when eating out of home. The report tells us that consumers are really concerned about the sustainability credentials of out of home eating establishments. Particularly in the UK, consumers were saying that they wanted restaurants to be more transparent about their sustainability credentials and wastage and it would really influence their choice of restaurant.

### And what is the United Against Waste initiative?

**TR:** United Against Waste is a coalition we are forming within the industry to bring all of the key stakeholders and opinion formers together to tackle this issue of waste and take steps in the form of education, communication, best practice and toolkits to really drive this issue through the industry. Anybody who is interested in joining this coalition should make contact with us.

### Is there an appetite in the foodservice industry to tackle wastage?

**TR:** I think there is because people see this as a win-win for them, it's something that consumers want but also there are cost savings to be made by really tackling wastage.

**Lindsay Winner:** Events like today really highlight that there's a definite appetite within the industry. You've seen a lot of speakers showing their level of interest as well as the media.

**Stephen Reeve:** I think there's a lot going on already too. Within our training academy our chefs learn about how to use different cuts of meats and make use of the offal. We also go back to our suppliers and try and use category two vegetables that normally won't get put into the shops but can be used in cooking.



# SPECIAL REPORT: WASTE

Tracey Rogers,  
Managing Director, UFS



Lindsay Winsor,  
Communications Controller, 3663



Stephen Reeve,  
General Manager, Elior



## Responsible waste disposal is clearly an environmental issue but is it also a business and a social issue?

**LW:** Hugely so. The commercial impact of waste is both in terms of the revenue the food could have generated and the perception of a business that has sustainable credentials being more important to the consumer.

**SR:** It's all three. There's a lot of deforestation going on just so we can grow more products. Socially you've seen in the media the levels of obesity in the UK at the moment and from a business perspective food in the bin is profit in the bin.

## Given the complexities of the foodservice supply chain is it possible to make a difference by just working in your part of the industry?

**TR:** It's possible to make a big difference even if you just have one restaurant. This is an issue where small actions really can make a big difference. The foodservice supply chain is quite complicated but if you break it down into its component parts then you can see every step of the way how you can make savings.

**LW:** Collaboration presents the opportunity to make a much bigger impact. No one sector is in control of just one segment. In our role as a distributor we're impacted both from the supply end and from the customer's end.

## How can you persuade your suppliers and customers to collaborate with you on waste reduction?

**LW:** The fact that it's a commercial issue helps hugely in persuading everybody to get involved. The moral issue for me should take precedent but the fact we can save money in all of our businesses through wasting less has got to be the in hook.

## What achievements have you already made in regard to waste reduction?

**LW:** Our recycled cooking oil programme has been established for over three years now and last year we ended up recycling 2.7m litres of used cooking oil with about a 12% saving in CO2. That's a great example of collaboration.

**SR:** We've just received our Silver Award for the Business in the Community Corporate Responsibility Index. We're also working with 3663 to turn recycled cooking oil into biofuel for use in our vehicles.

## What are the main challenges for

## you in reducing waste?

**TR:** The main challenge for UFS is getting the message across that this issue of wastage can be a win-win for everybody. What Unilever can do is we can be industry galvanisers by bringing all the industry stakeholders together and making this an industry agenda.

## How can we avoid passing the buck where waste is concerned?

**TR:** There's no room for finger wagging. There's no point in us looking back at the past and saying we should have done a better job. The time is now to really grasp this issue and move forward on it.

## What is the next step for United Against Waste?

**TR:** The next step is we're going to have a roundtable discussion bringing all the key industry associations together, we're going to share best practice and we're going to put together an action plan.



# Can bacteria save you bucks?

With landfill taxes on the rise, anaerobic digestion is gaining popularity as a sustainable option for disposing of food waste. But is it the “no brainer” the Government says it is, asks *David Burrows*



**S**CIENTISTS HAVE found a substance that can preserve food for months, or perhaps even years. Lucky Irish microbiologist Dan O'Sullivan happened upon the substance, called bisin, by accident. It's now being touted in some reports as the 'Holy Grail' of the food industry. It's easy to see why. Bisin not only kills bacteria like salmonella and *E. coli*, but its properties could reduce the need for refrigeration. It could also help cut the millions of tonnes of food waste chucked away each year (its powers don't extend to rotting fruit and veg though).

That's all in theory, of course. How many scientific breakthroughs are printed in the newspapers every week? This one seems to

have some legs, but it will be a few years until bisin is available commercially – and there is plenty that can go wrong between now and then. For the time being at least, we'll have to do without Dr O'Sullivan's find, and deal with food waste in other ways. One of the most popular solutions relies on harnessing bacteria, rather than destroying them.

Anaerobic digestion (AD) is a process which converts organic matter like liquids, food waste and farm slurry into a biogas that can be used to generate electricity, gas or heat – or compressed for use as a biofuel. This energy can then be sold, and attracts government incentives. Indeed, the coalition Government's manifesto promised to “introduce measures to promote a huge increase in energy from waste through anaerobic digestion [AD]”. In June, the Waste Minister Lord Henley, announced a £10m loan fund to help finance more AD sites. As part of this summer's waste review, the Government also published an Action Plan detailing how capacity can be increased – including that for foodservice.

Some are already on the bandwagon. Mitchells and Butlers is working with Biffa to ensure more of the food waste from its 1,600 sites ends up in AD rather than landfill; they now collect food waste from their pubs too. Whitbread also do a similarly

large number of collections. McDonalds also now collect their food waste, and though they don't yet send it to AD, they are believed to be looking at the options.

Indeed, for some, the belief is that a few billion bugs really can save them a few thousand bucks. A recent report on gate fees by WRAP only reinforces that prospect: the average gate fee being charged for waste into an AD plant is now around £56 a tonne – a sharp drop on the previous year. Compare that to the cost of landfill, which is around £80 a tonne and set to rise further in coming years thanks to the Government's Landfill Tax Escalator, and the economics are swinging in favour of AD. Some say they could swing yet further as the incentives for producing green energy rise.

*There has been a lag in progress in foodservice compared to grocery*

“This is a material stream with inherent energy and value,” says Adam Read, AEA global practice director for waste management and resource efficiency. “Many of us in the industry believe that not only will the price of food waste treatment fall, but that in time AD plants will actually pay for



**Adam Read**  
“In time AD plants will actually pay for quality food waste feedstock”



# SPECIAL REPORT: WASTE

the quality food waste feedstock, as is the case for glycerol for biodiesel.”

The Climate Change Minister Greg Barker, has already referred to AD as a “no brainer”. And there’s no doubt that the economics are beginning to stack up. But in spite of the interest, there has been a lag in progress in foodservice compared to the grocery and food manufacturing sectors. Logistics and economics are largely to blame.

Take contract caterers. “It’s the same issue that comes up again and again: contract caterers operate on their clients’ site,” explains AEA’s Read. “This limits operational control of the contract caterer and removes the ‘ownership’ of the waste away from those who are generating it.”

Work carried out by AEA shows waste and energy issues have not been a “priority” for contract caterers; instead they have focused on other areas of sustainability like health, local sourcing and ethical products. Now the AD agenda is starting to catch up, and it is about the economics just as much as the environmental agenda. Contract caterers

could make real progress in diverting waste from landfill to AD and, better still, cutting waste in the first place if they start “owning” the waste, says Read (see boxout).

But how about the profit sector and its 600,000 tonnes of waste? The big boys are looking at AD, but what about the hundreds of smaller restaurants? After all, they have what can be a quality feedstock – food waste that isn’t as contaminated by packaging as, say, retail food waste.

*“The collection and disposal model is complex and the sums don’t yet add up.”*

“Foodservice is a relatively new market, and not many players are segregating their waste,” says Peter Pellegrini, project marketing manager at waste company, Biffa. “The collection and disposal model is quite complex [...] and] the sums don’t quite add up yet for your small local take-aways. But

there could be a tipping point as landfill tax continues to rise.”

As more AD capacity comes online, contractors will be looking further afield for feedstock too – and they will eventually come looking on the high street. Some restaurants have already made AD work, says the SRA, and the waste sector is also looking at how to make food collection services scalable.

AEA’s Read says that some of the restaurants and fast food chains are now trying to facilitate collection of their food waste, although he suspects some will give up as it becomes “too hard to make work”. However, more widespread collections of food waste and the ability for small businesses to have their waste collected could help to change things in time. “We’re expecting to investigate how to develop waste minimisation networks – or tag along with current ones – with restaurants, pubs and quick service restaurants to facilitate the increase of food waste collection. So watch this space,” he adds.

## True cost of food waste

The findings of Unilever Food Solutions’ World Menu Report show the spotlight on food waste is shifting from in-home to out-of-home. Over 80% of UK consumers say it’s important that ‘places to eat’ aim to reduce the amount of food waste that is thrown away every day. In fact, 40% would be prepared to pay more for meals in places that have commitments to cut food waste.

No-one really knows how much food waste is generated by the foodservice industry, but it’s clearly a lot. There is a fair portion that comes from leftovers (around 30% according to the Sustainable Restaurant Association) but the majority is back of house. Of the 600,000 tonnes of food waste that comes from the profit sector, two thirds is edible, according to the Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP). This is a waste of money, and perhaps more so than many companies think.

“The cost of waste [in the foodservice

sector] is 4% of turnover, and that’s almost on a par with energy. But what companies often see are just the disposal costs. You need to consider the costs of purchasing, storing, preparing and cooking that ‘waste’,” says Rebecca Hawkins, a research and consultancy fellow in hospitality at Oxford Brookes.

A report by the Sustainable Restaurant Association (SRA) last year claimed that an average restaurant cutting food waste by 20% could save £2,000 a year through avoided food purchase costs and between £150 and £1,700 on waste collection costs.

These figures may be hard to swallow, but the bottom line is that food isn’t cheap to buy, and it’s no longer cheap to chuck away. “Landfill tax is steadily increasing and imposing a great financial burden across the whole hospitality industry,” says Mark Linehan, managing director at the SRA. “Restaurants and pubs are increasingly looking for means to keep food waste out of landfill, not only to decrease their environmental impact but also to save money.”

The best way to achieve that is to cut the waste in the first place. But there will always be some waste – and while composting is a viable option, the Government’s preferred option is anaerobic digestion.



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## Caterers must own their waste

The leading contract caterers are looking to address energy and waste costs at the moment, and many now have dedicated environmental champions and managers. It is however a much more difficult task to make the necessary changes than in a food manufacturing company. For example, a contract catering company may have one thousand outlets and it's not possible for an

environmental manager to visit all of these sites. But for a food and drink manufacturer it is possible, given that they often have a smaller number of larger sites – sites with much larger rewards.

So, how can more caterers be encouraged to make food waste a priority? "Own the waste," says AEA's Adam Read. "Potentially we could look at the design contract caterers have with their clients to incorporate waste minimisation and disposal issues – but the key to all of this is monitoring. There is a particularly big opportunity for the larger clients – like the NHS and MOD – but

on these facilities there is generally no monitoring of waste (or energy) in terms of contract catering – the client owns the site and the equipment, and he pays the waste and energy bills."

This monitoring of waste is something that Unilever Food Solutions is encouraging through its 'Wise up on Waste' toolkit, which includes a manual waste audit that takes "just 10 to 15 minutes a day". Some businesses are already wising up. Caterer Vacherin runs waste audits biannually with its clients – a move which has helped push recycling rates from 55% to 67%.

## Restaurants face a collection headache

"Brighton is currently a hotbed for food waste development, with a green council, waste management is at the top of the agenda, but currently only private companies offer an AD service.

Brighton & Hove City Council is in discussion with a number of other local

councils about setting up their own AD system – but I can't see this happening anytime soon. Until then it's up to individual businesses in the food service industry to do it themselves – at great expense and hassle.

Luckily, as a vegetarian restaurant we can work with a vermiculture system. We simply need to keep our food waste – what comes back from tables and some waste from kitchen prep – separate from all else and empty it into specific bins which get collected two or three times a week."

**Olivia Reid, Marketing manager, Terre à Terre**



## Manufacturer's viewpoint

"As a business we have had a focus on keeping waste at an absolute minimum since the early days. The fruit we use in our smoothies is of such a high quality that we want to use every last piece if we can. We've managed to drill our production & distribution waste levels down to well below industry average now too, through a number of initiatives.

Inevitably there will be some waste. The fruit peel, stones and so on are removed at source and are always used by our processors for some kind of by-product such as fertilizer or even fruit schnapps. Once it gets to the blending and bottling

stage of our supply chain, any waste is sent for either animal feed or AD. Lastly any finished goods waste is sent to a food donation charity if possible, otherwise to animal feed.

We are in the process of moving our smoothies from a use-by date (indicating they're unsafe once out of date) to a best before date (indicating their taste starts to decline steadily but safely once out of date). We are legally able to donate our smoothies once they go past their best before date which should in theory ensure all the excess was consumed by people rather than some still by animals. The trouble is that very few UK organisations buy into this. I suspect we could learn a lot from the US."

**Louise Stevens, sustainability manager at Innocent Drinks**





# View waste with imagination

Nestlé is renowned as one of the food industry's great product innovators. Now the company is channeling its creative powers into the issue of waste prevention.



**W**hen it comes to waste, prevention is better than cure. Indeed, for all the advances the foodservice industry has made in recycling and responsible waste disposal, the greatest environmental wins can still be made by ensuring that waste does not occur in the first place.

As part of the company's Creating Shared Value agenda, Nestlé has set itself a target of sending zero waste to landfill by 2015 and preventing waste in the supply chain based on the waste hierarchy.

Some of this target will be achieved through recycling and recovery disposal routes such as anaerobic digestion but Nestlé's primary focus is on shifting up the waste hierarchy to the point where no waste is created where it is feasible and possible.

"Clearly, it is better to eliminate waste in the first place," says Inder Poonaji. "Our ambition is to eliminate waste in all forms in our operations and facilitate this mantra along the value chain."

Typical waste elimination practices include using less material in design and manufacturing e.g. Easter eggs, where the packing was redesigned improving recyclability and distribution utilisation. This was one of Nestlé's biggest waste prevention wins - by reducing pack sizes and using different formats such as foil wrapped hollow figures Nestlé Confectionery UK reduced the amount of packaging materials used for medium-sized Easter eggs by 100 tonnes (12.6%) in 2011 versus 2010.

An even bigger environmental win was achieved in 2009 by replacing non-recyclable plastic with recyclable cardboard packaging in 20 million Easter eggs, representing 80% of the 25 million sold that year. By next year the company plans to have removed plastic packaging from its Easter eggs in its entirety.

Of course, waste prevention is not always possible. Where waste is created, Nestlé focuses on the best way of dealing with it

by trying as far as possible to move up the waste hierarchy, says Inder.

Behind prevention, the next best method of waste management is to prepare materials for re-use, by checking, cleaning and refurbishing whole items or spare parts.

## Reusing material where possible.

Product waste at Nestlé's Girvan factory is processed into animal feed and sent to farms within 50 miles of the factory while edible food is redistributed via the FareShare charity.

Next in the hierarchy comes recycling materials. At Girvan, metals, plastics, paper, cans and cardboard are processed by Nestlé's waste contractor and traded as commodities. Where possible this also involves separating different types of waste in order to maximise their return; for example, stainless steel is worth a lot more than general metal.

Other methods of recovery include anaerobic digestion, incineration with energy recovery, gasification and pyrolysis, which produce energy and materials from waste. Sending waste to landfill is the final, and least preferred, option.

The scale of the environmental win achievements will be different for each example, says Inder, but clearly some forms are better than others. Packaging, for example, has been at the top of the waste agenda not just for the industry but for the public and NGOs for several years. A key target of WRAP's Courtauld Commitment 2 is for a 10% reduction in the carbon impact of grocery packaging through improved packaging, increased recycled content and greater recyclability. But the process of reducing packaging is not always as simple as it sounds. Any packaging reduction has to make sure that the product itself is not compromised either from a quality, safety or an aesthetic point of view.

"Waste management is one important pillar in the sustainable approach and we still have to focus on energy, water, bio-diversity and community - a holistic approach is required in our Creating Shared Value journey. View waste with imagination, as a resource which adds value rather than a burden to be thrown away for nothing," says Inder.



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**DUDSON**



# Thinking outside the box

Packaging innovation has been relentless in the past decade, with thinner products, more recycled content and even 'talking' cartons. But we now need to focus minds on better recycling facilities and infrastructure, says *David Burrows*

"Our lives and businesses depend on packaging and we need to help foster an understanding of that. [Food businesses] couldn't survive without packaging, so why are they so ashamed of it?"

That was Dick Searle, chief executive of the Packaging Federation, speaking after the media storm last year created by a Sainsbury's customer questioning the amount of packaging on her joint of beef.

For some time, the packaging industry has been pilloried – its ware the symbol of an over-consuming modern world. Speak to the experts and there is a tired tone in their response to the constant criticism. "It's madness," says one. "How thin do they want us to go?" asks another.

For many years packaging firms have been pushed, nay shoved, down the 'sustainability' path, by customers, policy-makers and consumers like the Sainsbury's complainant. Progress has been swift, and a lot of the most successful innovations have come in packaging: slimming down bottles; Velcro packs; removing stick-on labels and printing

directly on to egg cartons; milk bags. The list goes on.

And there is more on the way. It's now possible to make packaging that changes colour near a product's expiry date to alert consumers and help avoid food waste. Similarly, there is packaging that can 'talk' to consumers and encourage them to recycle.

"These ideas and technologies exist and they are readily available," says Stergios Bititsios, a packaging consultant for MMR Research Worldwide. "Manufacturers and brand owners ought to find ways of embedding them in packaging development."

A pack that tells you when to eat what's inside is simply extending the primary role of packaging: to protect what's inside. It's easily forgotten, but one of the easiest ways to cut food waste is to improve packaging. There are sound arguments already to support the view that packaging is, on average, carbon negative: it reduces far more greenhouse gases than are emitted in its manufacture and



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use simply by cutting product wastage.

That's if it does its job. In foodservice, this 'job' can be a little more demanding than in retail where innovation is often spotlighted and tested. In the complex supply chain of today's foodservice industry, up to four or five different operators can handle the product before it reaches the final destination. Product integrity is key. "If [what's inside the] packaging gets more damaged in transit, it is actually wasting the product – and that's 100 times worse than creating extra packaging for it," says Jenni Donato, a packaging design expert at AEA.

Once it arrives, the packaging needs to be easy to use and easy to dispose of. Keeping it simple is, for foodservice, difficult – the demands on the supply chain being very different from retail. Yet some have managed it. After several prototypes, numerous setbacks and no end of testing, Pret A Manger launched recycling facilities in most of its shops. "It's been far from easy but, fingers crossed, we think we've cracked it," the website reads.

Pret has introduced 'co-mingled' recycling – this means all of its product packaging can be placed in a single bin ready for sorting later at the recycling plant. There's no need for separate bins for cans, paper and plastic.

But what about the waste that customers take away? Some 80% of Pret food (and packaging) is taken away by customers. The company is striving to encourage recycling at work through the Closed Loop Office Recycling

Scheme – a scheme designed to divert more lunchtime office waste from landfill (where the majority currently ends up).

Others are also starting to see packaging that leaves the site, or indeed the staff canteen, as their responsibility – and this opens a whole new set of challenges. "If you operate on a client site, you don't always have the power to put recycling systems or outlets for waste packaging in place," says Sodexo environmental manager, Paul Bracegirdle. "But whilst your influence may be limited in circumstances where clients use outside waste contractors, you can still ensure your own on-site activities and operations to minimise the generation of waste, for example by using biodegradable disposals, or ensuring that disposables are made from materials that can be recycled."

*"Any voluntary agreement should do exactly what it says on the tin"*

In the Early Adopters Roundtable on waste, organised by *Foodservice Footprint*, responsibility and communication were two key themes (see page 23). There was a feeling that responsibility lines are currently blurred and there needs to be better communication over the types of materials that can, or can't be recycled. This communication should extend to beyond the café, restaurant or canteen.

Discussions have already taken place between the waste industry and government advisors at WRAP – the Waste and Resources Action Programme – about how to recycle more waste 'on-the-go'. Tri-Star Packaging MD, Kevin Curran, says packaging is not the problem – it is the lack of infrastructure to deal with it after use.

Of course, some of the packaging, in fact a great deal of it, is accepted in household recycling collections. The paper cups used for coffee are the same as the cartons in the supermarket – in fact, they're less coated. The question, says Neil Whittall, Huhtamaki commercial and contracts director, is why are we not telling people that they can be recycled, either at home or in the office?

"As an industry we need to promote these services better," he says.

Festival sites and events are beginning to get to grips with on-site recycling. The Glastonbury festival "does it very well" says Whittall, and there will also be much interest around the Olympics waste management programme. These events have the advantage of controlling what is coming on and off site, but then so do caterers in on-site canteens...

It will be interesting to see how such issues are handled within the context of the proposed voluntary agreement to help reduce packaging and food waste from the foodservice sector. WRAP is leading the discussions, but admits that it is too early to say what the agreement might look like, suggesting only that any targets will be simple, measurable, realistic and within timescales.

The quango will certainly have its work cut out. The success of the Courtauld Commitment for the food retail sector will be a heavy burden. Huhtamaki's Whittall is confident the industry will come together on this issue. However, he feels there needs to be a real focus on what happens to packaging at the consumer end and not just what is happening at the design phase. "Any agreement should do exactly what it says on the tin: a voluntary agreement to improve performance." So long as the tin is recyclable of course.

For a recent feature on milk packaging, see [www.foodservicefootprint.com/features-2/packing-it-in](http://www.foodservicefootprint.com/features-2/packing-it-in)



JUST 26% OF HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES RECYCLE PLASTICS (WRAP)



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# SPECIAL REPORT: WASTE



## Are we united against waste?

**STATISTICS ON the amount of waste generated in the food chain rarely make for comfortable reading. Yet the mood at the launch of Unilever Food Solution's United Against Waste campaign was more bullish than it was reflective. Attendees from across the industry agreed that the time for self-reproach had passed and now was the moment to take positive action to tackle the issue of waste in the foodservice supply chain, which is estimated to cost the catering industry £722m in lost revenue each year.**

The fundamental message from the event was that together as an industry we can do more. UFS managing director Tracey Rogers laid down the gauntlet to over one hundred of the industry's leading operators and associations to join forces to look at the issues of avoidable food waste and come up with strategies to tackle them. "We can't carry on the way we are," said Rogers. "The challenge is to get everyone reading off the same page."

Rogers used the occasion to launch a waste reduction toolkit, *Wise up on Waste*, which offers simple solutions for caterers to monitor and measure food waste. The findings from UFS's second World Menu Report, which offers a global insight into consumer concerns around the issue of food waste, were also unveiled.

If World Menu Report II proves there is a clear desire on the part of consumers to address food waste, speakers at the event stressed that there is a similar appetite on the part of industry. Sodexo's corporate citizenship manager Thomas Jelley said his company had committed to reducing organic waste in all the countries in which it operates by 2015. "It's out there in black and white. Now we really have to get on with it," he added.

Sheila West, waste & recycling manager at Whitbread Group, talked about the company's work with anaerobic digestion specialist BiogenGreenfinch and environmental services company Veolia to send food waste from Whitbread sites to anaerobic digestion plants. A trial that began in April 2009 with 18 sites has now been rolled out to over 400.

As well as providing practical examples of how waste can be reduced it was agreed that stronger communication - both within the industry and with customers - could really help cut food waste.

"Real progress comes from serious levels of engagement," said Jelley. "The range of people we get to interact with on a daily basis represents a myriad of opportunities for engagement. Schools, universities, colleges, workplaces, factories, leisure and sporting facilities, prisons and more, each person is

an opportunity and the sum of them is not the total opportunity, it's the opportunity multiplied by their friends, family, colleagues, even the next eating opportunity they walk into."

Waste activist and author Tristram Stewart pointed out that consumer responses to the questions posed by the World Menu Report II showed that waste is an issue they care deeply about. "What we should be looking at is the business opportunity that arises when you have solved a problem that matters to your consumers," he said.

Stewart cited the example of doggy bags, which are taken for granted in the United States, as a solution to the problem of what to do with leftover restaurant food. "Restaurants very often don't have a facility to take home your leftovers, but I've seen on an anecdotal level consumers being very satisfied when they are asked in a restaurant whether they'd like a box to take their food home in."

Rogers agreed that the industry needs to adopt a more can-do approach to post-consumer waste. "As consumers, Brits are very shy and they'd be shy to ask for a doggy bag or for a smaller portion so I think in the industry we should be more proactive and ask what size would you like or what would you like left off your plate?" In order to empower caterers to reduce avoidable food



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waste in their operations, UFS has developed a waste toolkit that offers practical advice for back and front-of-house employees to follow. "Using our guidelines caterers really can make food waste reductions of up to 20%," said Rogers.

Employee engagement with waste reduction initiatives was identified by West as a key element of any waste strategy. "Engaging teams is important, not just at the start but keeping the interest up as and when new initiatives come on stream there is a tendency to forget the old ones," she said.

For businesses like Sodexo, which often don't have operational control over the sites they serve, bringing clients on board presents one of the greatest challenges, said Jelley. But that's no reason to shy away from the task, he added. "It's about communication and it's about engagement. It's about bringing the client in and looking at it from our collective perspective. Some of our clients are way ahead on the sustainability journey and we learn from them, others we're helping to get to the right place."

Ultimately, the aim of the United Against Waste initiative is to get all the industry pulling in the same direction towards the goal of waste reduction. As Jelley concluded, "Today is about how can we do it? Being united is absolutely fundamental if we're to tackle food waste."

## Unilever Food Solutions World Menu Report: key findings

- 82% of UK respondents said it was important that 'places to eat' aim to reduce the amount of food waste that is thrown away every day
- 40% would be prepared to pay more for meals in places that have a commitment to reduce food waste
- 48% of consumers globally believe food waste is a government responsibility. In the UK 30% of consumers think food waste is the responsibility of caterers. Only 4% think it's the government's responsibility

## What they said...

### Tracey Rogers, managing director, Unilever Food Solutions

*"As an industry we've got a real opportunity to act now and respond to consumers expectations and make some real commitments that we're all prepared to work towards. It's clear that this is a global issue. Consumers around the world are all worried about the amount of food waste we're creating out of home. Those caterers that positively shout about what they're doing to reduce food waste will surely reap the benefits. There's clearly a strong business case for making this a priority."*

### Tristram Stuart, award winning waste campaigner

*"As far as the catering industry is concerned, this is vitally important. Why do shops waste food? For the same reasons restaurants do. It's essentially very difficult to predict demand and obviously if you're a manager or a chef, this is something you're going to have to face every day. But also, what about the impact further up and down the chain? If your own forecasts can help your suppliers predict their own supplies, then everyone can start working together to help reduce waste."*

### Andy Dawe, head of programmes for food and drink, WRAP

*"One thing we have been doing over the last few months is we have been engaging with stakeholders in the foodservice and hospitality sector on the subject of food waste and are in the process of developing a structure [for a plan], potentially including agreements and targets. That process is ongoing and we are working towards a launch in spring 2012. It may well be that there are alternative routes to achieving the same goal but that is the route we are proposing at the moment."*

### Sheila West, waste & recycling manager, Whitbread Group

*"In April 2009 we started a trial with 18 sites sending food waste for anaerobic digestion. The trial was run for a year and we had lots to learn. We had to understand the different site restrictions and requirements and the different individuals in the business and their willingness to make this a success. Clearly working in the hospitality sector we have a dynamic workforce, we have some team members who have been with us for many years, but also students who join us for the summer whose perspective might be slightly different from those who only work full time."*

# SPECIAL REPORT: WASTE



We are putting in to practice what we preach. Over the last year the chefs have achieved a 50% reduction in kitchen waste going to landfill. Our chefs have also embraced our food composting system - and they also enjoy

not having endless rubbish bins around the place. Being passionate about local produce it was also great to see this waste working to improve the ground our vegetables are then grown in around the Essex area.

Steve Munkley, executive chef, Royal Garden Hotel and vice president, Craft Guild of Chefs

While we fully support the move towards zero waste, we have concerns about the main focus for food waste being kerbside collection. We also criticise concerns about the 'potential adverse effects' of food waste disposers and other food waste treatment systems.

In larger kitchens, onsite food waste equipment can actually contribute to the establishment's income. For example, a large composting system in London, processing 50 tonnes of food waste a year, achieved payback in under 12 months. Established food waste treatment technologies are a better way to achieve Zero Waste targets and provide a solution that's more environmentally-sound and costs less than kerbside collection.

Mick Shaddock, chair, Catering Equipment Suppliers Association (CESA)



'United Coffee has taken a 'small steps to make a big difference' approach to reducing waste within our organisation. In the past 18 months, we've audited our business to identify where we can reduce waste and implemented changes to help tackle it, such as: recycling old machines, reviewing our logistical operations, looking at packaging innovation and equipment distribution, reusing coffee grinds as fertiliser and engaging with our stakeholders.

Our new coffee machines are more energy efficient and we recently worked with our suppliers to reduce the size of the sugar packets. Based on last year's sales, this alone will eliminate over 3,500 kg of paper waste from the supply chain.

Elaine Higginson, managing director, United Coffee



We are already meeting targets outlined in the Voluntary Agreement for a reduction of waste going to landfill and aim to both minimise our transit packaging, thereby lessening the need to recycle, and, where possible, reuse packaging before recycling.

In addition, our returnable crate scheme reduced our carbon footprint by 5.5% in 2010 and we also work with some customers to collect our products' waste cardboard.

Fresh produce is extremely vulnerable to extremities in weather such as frost and we are currently working with a national charity to redistribute produce that fails to meet our strict criteria.

Ian Booth, technical director, Reynolds



"Brakes Group's commitment of zero waste to landfill by 2015 has led us to use mechanical recycling and anaerobic digestion at our Torquay manufacturing facility. We also donate the equivalent of 97,000 meals a month to FareShare.

Since March 2010, over 1.3 million 'equivalent meals' (912 tonnes of food) equating to £1.2m of food stock (good food that would otherwise have gone to waste) has been donated. This is 27% of the group's monthly food waste, which has prevented 8,259 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> from being released into the atmosphere and saved thousands of pounds in landfill costs.

Ken Mulholland, environment and sustainability manager, Brakes Group



Warewashers use a lot of water; it is a fact. Responsible manufacturers are reacting to this with technologies that can cut water usage dramatically. The use of better filtering processes means water can be reused many times before it needs to be changed and for example, the wash arms on Winterhalter machines have been angled to deliver less water more forcefully for optimum cleaning. One of the greatest aids to efficient water use is to fit a water conditioner even in the softest water areas. This ensures clean first time results, so water is not wasted by re-washing items.

Stephen Kinkad, marketing development manager, Winterhalter



A Better Tomorrow starts Today



## Committed to a better tomorrow

Sodexo's sustainability strategy to 2020, the Better Tomorrow Plan has been developed to consolidate its corporate citizenship efforts across the world and is built around three pillars: 'We are' - which embraces values and ethics, 'We do' - which sets out 14 commitments to action on sustainability challenges, and 'We engage' - which recognises the dialogue required to translate commitments into action.

In 2010 Sodexo has received silver status for the fourth consecutive year in Business in the Community's Corporate Responsibility Index and Tillery Valley, its prepared foods business, was awarded the Carbon Trust Standard.

For more information on Sodexo's actions visit [www.sodexo.com](http://www.sodexo.com)

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# A springboard into foodservice

Every industry needs talent, and foodservice is no different. Here, *Anne Pierce*, Springboard chief executive, explains how the education charity is finding a pipeline of talented young people from a variety of backgrounds.



**T**ALENTED AND committed young people really are the life blood of our industry – and regardless of their background we have to ensure that people get the chance to find out what the foodservice sector has to offer. There are myriad opportunities and we all have to keep banging the drum to let the world know about them.

At Springboard, we do our bit. We might not be the first name on everyone's lips when it comes to UK charities, but we are in our 21st year now and have worked with around 8,000 young people.

We run an extensive Youth Programme that has, at its core, our FutureChef initiative; this includes a cooking competition for 12-16 year olds and highlights food provenance, seasonality and all the opportunities from a career in the kitchen. Given that this area has the greatest skill shortage, then we need a pipeline of talented young people coming into the industry every year.

We need industry support to achieve this; with your help we can continue making a difference to young people's lives – people like Luke, Ellie, Liam and Tung. Our Youth Programme has been supported by mentors from the likes of Eilor, Compass, Sodexo, Nestle Professional, Aramark and many, many more.

It was great to see [in the last issue] that Nestle Professional has had the vision to sponsor a student to help the company work on its zero waste target by 2015. I was impressed by the Footprint Awards, which I believe are pointing the way through a totally on-line judging format, locally sourced food and drink and a sustainable theme – even down to the table decorations.

We also run the Springboard Awards for Excellence, which rewards people for their innovation in helping sustain the initiatives that help people enter the sector. To provide



## Springboard spotlight

Springboard is an education charity that has been helping young, unemployed and disadvantaged people get sustainable careers in hospitality, leisure and tourism for more than two decades. It was borne out of a real skills crisis in terms of recruiting enough home grown talent to meet the needs of this vibrant sector.

advice and guidance we have developed a suite of CareerScope publications, and have recently completed one on the hotel sector. There's also a 24-hour helpline with access to a careers advisor with the chance to get one-to-one advice.

With the current visa regulations and the economy not being as attractive to others in Europe, it's absolutely essential that we grow and nurture home-grown talent. Our other work is in ensuring that education establishments involved with vocational courses in food get demonstrations on preparing dishes, advice about nutrition, recycling food and culinary skills from a bank of industry mentors who give up their time to help students get a better understanding of what working with food will be like.

The Resource Gateway website that we've constructed is going to be the first port of call for teachers wanting to access state of the art resources to support the curriculum. It's full of case studies and access to DVDs in foodservice management and food tourism, for example, and we link these to the different levels that are being taught.

Our Summer School experience places young people onto a three week internship with Springboard and their Business Partners, who reap the benefit of a highly motivated group of youngsters who have been hand-picked by us to undergo a realistic placement. The interns arrive having already gained base-line qualifications in food safety, health and safety and customer care and having had an extensive overview of the employment opportunities.

We know that employers really value participation in the Summer School as they get the chance to hire people aged 16-19 who are looking for that first step on the career ladder. With this type of structured work experience they are more likely to get a job and be retained further down the line.

### Ellie Taylor

#### (Summer School beneficiary)

Ellie was not sure what career she wanted to pursue. Her school received a presentation from Springboard on what the hospitality sector had to offer and from this she was compelled to find out more. Ellie enrolled in Springboard's Summer School in Cardiff to discover what the industry could offer her, and after a really enjoyable experience at the Parc Thistle Hotel in Cardiff she decided to get more qualifications to progress quickly within the industry, so returned for A Levels. Through her experience, it enhanced her self confidence in dealing with people of all ages and all personalities, her practical skills and the enjoyment of working with a team. The Parc Thistle has offered her a job if she doesn't progress to University.

*"It's helped me mature and get an insight into an industry I didn't really know anything about. Springboard has given me a great experience that I'll never forget."*

### Liam Frederick Waterman

#### (Galvin's Chance beneficiary)

Liam had a difficult background – he had been in prison and was finishing his community service when he was referred to Springboard by London Probation. Liam began the training at The Springboard Charity and completed pre employment hospitality focussed training. He completed certificates in food hygiene, welcome host and health and safety. After completing all his training, he was offered two weeks' work experience at RAC Club and then offered three days (paid) per week on a casual basis. Liam was then given full time employment in January 2011 and now works as a lounge/buffet attendant. He also attends Westminster Kingsway College completing a NVQ Level 2 Food & Drink Service part time.

*"I love speaking to people and enjoy this job very much. I am working in a private members club and speaking to affluent people. I am also studying for an apprenticeship at WKC. How my life has changed."*



### Luke Thomas

#### (Springboard's FutureChef National Final Winner 2009)

Luke is a young man working his way to becoming the youngest Michelin starred chef and has recently been crowned VQ Learner of the Year in Wales. Luke has also been made a Springboard FutureChef Ambassador which includes mentoring other young people about the skills needed to achieve the level required by the best restaurants. He was crowned Springboard Future Chef of the Year 2009 and as a result has since secured placements at some of the best rated restaurants in the world, including two and three Michelin-starred restaurants in Denmark, the USA and the UK. He's worked alongside some of the most famous faces in food including Heston Blumenthal, Gary Rhodes and Gordon Ramsay and cooked for none other than Prince Charles. His next port of call is Dubai, where he plans to hone his seafood skills. His ambition is to open his own top-quality establishment in the next two years. Astonishingly, he has achieved all of this and is still only 17.

### Tung Thien Nguyen

Tung took part in this year's Summer School Programme; he worked as a chef at the Thistle and Guoman Hotel, The Tower. He is now working at the hotel as a chef. This year, Tung also played an instrumental part in the Springboard 21st Anniversary Party which took place at the Grosvenor House. This was, in fact, the biggest fundraiser event ever at Springboard with 800 guests in attendance. Tung worked alongside prestigious industry chefs at the Grosvenor working within the kitchen to help produce a high class three course meal.



# Dining in the dark

42 East Str  
Holcombe  
Somerset  
BA3 5AJ

Dear Sir,  
I run a small restaurant in the south-west and have the dubious honour of being an NPower customer. Last month the company sent me a lovely letter announcing an 8% rise in their electricity prices. Given the margins my company works at, this could ruin the business I've spent my life building. How can I cut my electricity bills without affecting my customers?  
Yours in anticipation

Dear Sir,

After a thorough investigation of your business over the last hour, I have made several observations on ways to improve the efficiency of your establishment. I have to say you are making some basic mistakes.

First of all, every letter of your restaurant sign is lit up. Many restaurateurs, particularly establishments like yours, choose to save money by not lighting up a number of the letters on their frontage. It may look less glitzy to have the U missing from DOUG'S DINER, but it will save you hundreds of pence in the long term.

Given the 8% rise in energy prices, you will want to make more savings than that though. However, you'll be pleased to know that there are plenty of low-cost, or even free, solutions at your disposal. In fact, the Government reckons if all restaurants followed these steps, it would save the economy £864bn, approximately (almost as much as money as we spend on environmental consultants and quangos).

Allow me to elaborate. Currently your dining area is lit up like a kebab shop, using energy and throwing an unnecessarily revealing light on dishes. A suggestion I make to all clients is the installation of new 'light switch technologies'.

The most revolutionary of these is the dimmer switch, which can be used to get the exact amount of lighting needed. Just how much depends on natural light from windows, how much you want diners to see of their food and the size of your last electricity bill. When using a dimmer, I would suggest that it should be set somewhere in the region of "ambient" (It is an industry secret that candles are not put on tables in classy restaurants to encourage an intimate atmosphere, but to help customers read their menus given the mood lighting).

Technology moves so fast and it is often hard to keep up. Lightbulbs are no exception and the best option would be to use these new-fangled LEDs, which I believe stands for Low Emission Diodes. They require less energy and are a great alternative to energy-saving lightbulbs because they don't take five minutes to light up before offering less light than the glow of an alley-cat's arse on a dark Scottish night. The downside is that they also generate less heat, and this could mean a rise in your heating bills. Swings and roundabouts.

Of course, the best solution to lighting inefficiencies is not to use any. Indeed, with your chef's presentation skills perhaps the restaurant should be dark. I know of a restaurant in Clerkenwell, east London, where the diners eat in the complete darkness. This focuses their minds on the flavour of the food, but more importantly it is an excellent way to save electricity costs.

If you have any further queries you can find additional rates information from my secretary.

Yours sincerely,

H. Coleman

Chief technical advisor  
Wasted Consultants





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