

# FOOTPRINT

SUSTAINABLE RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

DECEMBER 2016

## Ray of hope or pie in the sky?



Higher & Further  
Education  
Special  
in association  
with TUCO



Food industry divided over  
government's new obesity plan



# Contents

**Leader:** Responsible firms must weather tough political times

---

**Editor's review:** Shots fired but who is sticking up for foodservice?

---

**Analysis:** Fair point? FDF turns on foodservice at obesity summit

---

**Sector soapbox:** Bidvest bites back at FDF

---

**Analysis:** Can Conservatives really clamp down on corporates?

---

**Briefing:** New acrylamide regulation is a hot potato

---

**Behind the headlines:** Gig economy creates a sustainability headache

---

**Political Print:** Trump isn't tops when it comes to food policy

---

**Comment:** Why antibiotic resistance is a pressing issue

---

**Insight:** Definition of 'no deforestation' is a defining moment

---

**Sustainable diets:** Carbon labels versus carbon taxes

---

**Footprint Forum:** Obesity plan is the sector's flexible friend

---

**Feature:** Annual Review - A look back at a rollercoaster year

---

**Supply chain:** How to justify cost rises to customers

---

**Reporting:** Decoupling emissions from revenue is possible and pays

---

**Final thought:** Think like a criminal to beat food fraud

---



## Leader

# Weathering the storm

Political turmoil on both sides of the Atlantic means responsible businesses may have to go it alone.



November was a month of extremes for those engaged in climate change. It started on a high when the Paris Agreement entered into force on November 4th (remarkably quickly given that the deal was agreed less than a year ago). But that tide of optimism turned on November 9th as Donald Trump blustered his way to victory in the US presidential elections.

The US is the world's second largest emitter of greenhouse gases. "The Donald" is the man who promised to "cancel" the agreement to cut emissions. Putting two and two together, that seems like a hopeless combination for cutting emissions enough to keep global warming under 2°C. "Unless Donald Trump was lying about his proposed climate policies, we are on course for more than 3°C warming," noted *New Scientist* in a recent analysis.

Even the apparent softening of his stance – from one of fierce scepticism (global warming is a hoax "created by and for the Chinese in order to make US manufacturing non-competitive") to an "open mind" over his country's involvement in the accord – has been laughed off in some quarters as the media trying to force a wedge between Trump and his support base.

Only a fool would deny that a sustainable future looks a lot further away than it did a month ago – especially if the president-elect digs his heels in. And consider this: by the time of the next US election in 2020 the world will already have emitted enough CO<sub>2</sub> to warm the planet by 1.5°C – the limit that the Paris Agreement says the world should ideally keep to.

So Trump may be a spanner in the works but the wheels are already in danger of coming off. Look a little further ahead and the storm clouds darken further. The United Nations Environment Programme recently reported that the pledges in the Paris Agreement are nowhere near enough. "The predicted 2030 emissions will, even if the Paris pledges are fully implemented, place the world on track for a temperature rise of 2.9°C to 3.4°C this century," it noted. Hang around any longer before raising the ambitions bar and we would "likely lose the chance to meet the 1.5°C target, increase carbon-intensive technology lock-in and raise the cost of a global transition to low emissions".

It isn't only Trump (and the *Daily Mail*) that fails to understand the extent of the risks and scale of the challenge, either. In November, the Commons environmental audit committee also published the findings of its inquiry into sustainability and the Treasury. The conclusion was damning: "We heard multiple examples of where the Treasury has ridden roughshod over other departments' objectives, changing and cancelling long-established environmental policies and projects at short notice with little or no consultation with relevant businesses and industries," the MPs noted. They said the ministry "puts short-term priorities over long-term sustainability – potentially increasing costs to the economy in the future, and harming investor confidence". That the chancellor, Philip Hammond, failed to mention climate change in his first budget in what is likely to be the hottest year on record gives little reason for seasonal cheer.

The UK, EU, US and the world are in a state of political flux that threatens (among other things) to burn the foundations of a global green economy almost as soon as they've been laid. But with every new year comes renewed optimism and the question arises: should the private sector simply ignore policymakers and go it alone on climate change, slashing emissions, investing in renewable energy and even pushing more sustainable diets?

That's a "no-brainer", according to Alice Stollmeyer, an influential climate and energy policy expert based in Brussels. "Reality will trump Trump," she wrote on her blog. "Even from a strictly economic viewpoint, the US and global shift towards more resource efficiency and renewables energy is a no-brainer."

The shift isn't swift but evidence to support the benefits of more sustainable business is snowballing. As Frances Way from the Carbon Disclosure Project highlights later in this issue, some firms are already showing that decoupling emissions from revenue isn't just possible: it actually pays. J Sainsbury, for instance, achieved revenue growth of 18% over five years alongside a 22% fall in emissions.

These companies unfortunately remain the exception rather than the rule. Much like the environmental audit committee discovered when digging around at the Treasury, CDP found that "overall company targets were short-term and lack ambition: if every company achieved its current climate goals, it would still only take the group one quarter of the way to a 2°C pathway", Way notes.

Trump is hard to ignore and his presence in the White House for at least the next four years is a dangerous distraction (and not just in relation to climate change policies). However, environmentally minded, socially aware and ethically run businesses will be here long after that.





## Editor's Review

# Spider-Man's power and sticking up for foodservice

GD has forecast that the food-to-go market is set to rocket in the next five years. Sales will hit £21.7 billion by 2021, compared with a meagre £16.1 billion this year. There will be more options at supermarkets and garage forecourts, the analysts predicted, as well as an expansion in “specialist” outlets and of course coffee shops. Good news: power to foodservice. But as Spider-Man and others have noted, with such power comes great responsibility.

Having read the Childhood Obesity Plan again over the past few weeks it's become increasingly clear to me that this government is happy to lay the weight of the challenge on industry's shoulders. And thanks to Channel 4's “Dispatches”, we now know that Theresa May dismantled her predecessor's more ambitious plan leaving what is, to all intents and purposes, a Responsibility Deal Take 2 (RDT2). I for one am not a fan of sequels.

The new prime minister appears to have followed Michael Gove's infamous advice on experts, completely ignoring the likes of Public Health England and McKinsey in relation to what a successful approach to tackling obesity might look like. That's just foolish.

My reservations appear to put me at odds with those in foodservice – at least judging from the initial reactions in October's Footprint Forum. The industry-led, regulation-light plan offers flexibility, so the argument goes. The cynic in me says it offers a pass to do nothing, especially among the smaller players in the market.

The optimist says this is the last chance saloon so industry has to make it work. If this RDT2 fails, a voluntary approach in take 3 will be hard to justify – even in 2020, should there be a new government. Action needs to be swift. The inclusion of the levy on sugar-sweetened drinks in the finance bill in November just six weeks or so after the consultation had been completed suggests the wind is in the sails of that particular policy.

The plan is all a bit ‘Shoulda, woulda, coulda’ as Beverley Knight once sang – and my bet is many in foodservice will be left wondering ‘what they're gonna do’

The sugar tax is, however, the lone stick in a strategy littered with carrots. This could leave many scrabbling around the dark for solutions. Read the paper and it's all a bit “Shoulda, woulda, coulda”, as Beverley Knight once sang – and my bet is that it'll be those in foodservice left wondering “what they're gonna do”. Why? For a start the sector is more diverse than its manufacturing or retail cousins but – and perhaps more critically – there is little to no leadership on this issue.

“The dog that has not barked properly in the whole obesity debate,” is Ian Wright's (very public) impression of the foodservice sector. The Food and Drink Federation director general's dogmatic defence of manufacturers can become tiresome, but he certainly sticks up for his members (though not all of them, according to a survey published this week by the Children's Food Campaign).

The hierarchy at the British Retail Consortium appears to feel the same way. At the obesity summit where Wright made his comments (see overleaf), foodservice was noticeable only for its absence. I asked the organisers why. They admitted it was tricky to include everyone in the various panels, but in trying to get foodservice companies to attend and participate in the discussions “we found a lack of engagement or an unwillingness at this stage to get involved because they were in ‘listening mode’”.

The message is clear: if the obesity plan fails, the rest of the industry will be quick to point the finger at foodservice

And all the while the critics sharpen their knives. The message from the FDF and BRC is early and it is clear: if the obesity plan fails, the rest of the industry will be eager to point the finger at foodservice. That might not seem fair – retailers and manufacturers need to up their game considerably – but a sector without strong representation is an easy target.

Bidvest's opinion piece in this month's issue is a refreshing change: hard-hitting and honest, the firm's David Jones admits that the Responsibility Deal “fell short” for a number of reasons. Hindsight is a wonderful thing, but he is confident that the industry and government can learn from their mistakes.

Of course, it's hard to say what success or failure will look like because there's no target in the plan. “We aim to significantly reduce England's rate of childhood obesity within the next 10 years.” Depending on how you look at it, this is either a masterstroke or madness from the prime minister, but it's not an excuse to relax.

When he announced the sugar tax back in March's budget, the then chancellor, George Osborne, said that he was “not prepared to look back at my time here in this parliament, doing this job and say to my children's generation: I'm sorry. We knew there was a problem with sugary drinks. We knew it caused disease. But we ducked the difficult decisions and we did nothing.”



I am, as you may have guessed, sceptical of the plan into which Osborne's potential legacy has been shunted. There have been warm words and mudslinging in equal measure. In 10 years' time, when progress is really tested (somehow) against the government's non-existent target, will May, like Beverley Knight, be left wishing she'd done a little bit more?

**David Burrows** is editor of Foodservice Footprint.





## Analysis

# Second chance for the slackers

The government is again asking businesses to take a voluntary approach to obesity. Will the Childhood Obesity Plan succeed where the Responsibility Deal failed? By Nick Hughes.



“The dog that has not barked properly in the whole obesity debate.” That was the damning verdict on the foodservice sector from the Food and Drink Federation’s director general, Ian Wright, as he addressed the Childhood Obesity Summit at the Royal Society in November. There was no doubt an element of chicanery in Wright’s words – it is after all his job to deflect attention from his supplier members – but it’s hard to avoid the conclusion that there was more than a grain of truth in his statement.

It is widely accepted that part of the failure of the government’s Responsibility Deal was a lack of engagement on the part of foodservice businesses. Aside from the largest contract caterers such as Compass and Sodexo, and a handful of progressive high-street chains such as Subway, the out-of-home sector was largely invisible among businesses pledging to reformulate products or reduce portion sizes. And while there’s some validity in the industry’s complaint that the government misunderstood the nature of the sector and, in particular, the diversity of business models, this does not entirely excuse the overall lack of engagement.

With the government once again favouring a voluntary approach to reformulation in its Childhood Obesity Plan, there is little evidence thus far to suggest that a critical mass of foodservice businesses will fall into line this time around. Yes, there are pockets of good practice: Mitchells & Butlers, for instance, is aiming for a 20% sugar reduction in high-selling products by 2020. However, the British Hospitality Association’s line that it will support the government to reduce childhood obesity “as long as the proposals are practical, workable and likely to be effective” does not sound like a clarion call to take action.

After the unveiling of the Responsibility Deal targets, some companies did a cost-benefit analysis and decided that any media criticism was a price worth paying

A 20% reduction in sugar across a range of products is one of the central pillars of the new plan. The target, including a 5% reduction by the end of year one, is to be achieved through a reduction of sugar levels in products (by reducing portion sizes or shifting purchasing towards lower-sugar alternatives) and applies to retailers, manufacturers and the out-of-home sector. Four-year category-specific targets will be published in March 2017 and progress will be measured on the basis of reductions in the sales weighted average sugar content per 100 grams of food and drink, reductions in portion size, and clear sales shifts towards lower-sugar alternatives.

While the approach at least feels more prescriptive than the Responsibility Deal pledges, there are no apparent levers for ensuring that individual companies contribute. Public Health England has made it clear it does not intend to name and shame industry laggards, and instead favours highlighting success stories.

PHE plans to publish a progress report every six months and then do a thorough assessment of progress at 18 and 36 months. But when pressed on how it plans to enforce take-up by the out-of-home sector, Alison Tedstone, PHE’s director of diet and obesity, did not have a convincing answer. Her reassurance that “we’ll be putting huge resource and effort into engaging the out-of-home sector and putting a team together specifically for that reason” did little to assuage fears that engaging such a fragmented sector in voluntary measures is hugely challenging; particularly given the absence of a trade body dedicated purely to foodservice to coordinate efforts – a point made emphatically by Wright.

‘We are very good at going after the home-cooked pizzas in terms of reducing calories, but are we doing the same type of intervention on the Domino’s delivered pizza?’

Regrettably, there was not one foodservice representative present at the summit to counter Wright’s assertion and present a positive vision for how businesses plan to engage with the government’s plan. However, a [Footprint Forum in October](#) suggested the sector is behind the new plan and its flexible framework.

Many others are not so sure. The manufacturing sector was not alone in taking foodservice to task. Andrea Martinez-Inchausti, assistant director for food policy at the British Retail Consortium, said the fact the Childhood Obesity Plan did not set a level playing field for reformulation was a major weakness. In the run-up to the launch of the plan, the BRC was vocal in calling for reformulation targets to be mandatory so as not to give an unfair advantage to companies which refused to act.

Martinez-Inchausti gave the example of pizza delivery companies – a fast-growing segment of the foodservice sector – which were not competing on a level playing field with supermarkets because there was little pressure on the former to reformulate their products. She added that after the unveiling of the Responsibility Deal targets, some companies did a cost-benefit analysis and decided that any media criticism was a price worth paying for not investing in reformulation, while those businesses that did take voluntary action bore the costs but did not necessarily reap the commercial benefits.

If this looks like sour grapes from the retail sector then consider that Richard Dobbs from McKinsey – whose influential report [“How the World Could Better Fight Obesity”](#) mapped and assessed possible interventions – also said that for any voluntary reformulation plan to work there needed to be a level playing field between retail and foodservice. Running with the pizza theme, he commented: “We are very good at going after the home-cooked pizzas in terms of reducing calories, but are we doing the same type of intervention on the Domino’s delivered pizza?”

Both Tedstone and the Department of Health’s obesity lead, Emma Reed, were at pains to stress that if progress was not made voluntarily, the government would consider using other policy levers to effect change. Yet the same claim was made when the Responsibility Deal was in its infancy and those threats were ultimately empty.

Foodservice businesses that have not yet engaged with the obesity agenda should be grateful for a second chance to prove they can be responsible corporate citizens. With rival business sectors, as well as health lobbyists, pointing the finger in their direction, they are running out of places to hide.

**Nick Hughes** is associate editor of **Footprint**.





## Sector soapbox

# A (sizeable) step in the right direction

The Childhood Obesity Plan could have gone further but it's much better than the Responsibility Deal, says Bidvest Foodservice's David Jones.



“By 2035 almost three in four adults will be overweight or obese, with levels in the UK more than trebling in the past 30 years. Over the past decade the government has attempted to identify and tackle the obesity crisis, with schemes such as Change4Life and the Responsibility Deal. The Childhood Obesity Plan is the most recent milestone and aims to significantly reduce the rate of childhood obesity within the next 10 years, with a strong focus on sugar.

The plan takes a more assertive approach than the Public Health Responsibility Deal by using scientific research to address the root causes of childhood obesity. The deal was criticised for not driving change, despite a number of businesses across the industry pledging to make positive steps to address the areas highlighted. At Bidvest Foodservice, for example, we pledged and have made positive steps relating to alcohol labelling, salt reduction and the use of artificial trans fats, with all of our own-brand products now free from hydrogenated vegetable oils. In addition, we've focused on incorporating and promoting more products with fruit and vegetables, supporting staff with chronic health conditions, and running active travel-to-work schemes across the business.

**The Responsibility Deal fell short through its disparity and lack of focus and many companies went for easy wins**

Since then, the move to fight obesity and appreciation of how acute the problem is becoming for children have caused government thinking to evolve. The Responsibility Deal must be viewed as a learning curve. It served a purpose at the time and acted as a sounding board that helped to shape the new Childhood Obesity Plan. Despite the progress made, it fell short through its disparity and lack of focus, failing to engage the whole industry and challenge businesses to take their pledges forward – instead many companies went for the easy wins. It also didn't concentrate on childhood obesity, nor the role of sugar.

Learning from this, the Childhood Obesity Plan, which is committed to addressing specific areas within its 13 key actions, is a more focused approach with the potential to gain real momentum, facilitate change and alter attitudes. The plan is a step in the right direction, with some important measures which need to be welcomed – such as the soft drinks levy and the 20% reduction of sugar in food and drink products, as well as supporting innovations in science and technology to help businesses make their products healthier.

However, it could have gone further. One in three children leave primary school overweight or obese, demonstrating that there is significant work to do on education in schools for both pupils and parents, as well as how we address malnutrition and access to healthy food in the wider community. Yes, the sugar tax will fund healthy breakfast clubs and initiatives in schools, but what about when the children aren't in school? This isn't just a term-time problem and eating habits outside the classroom also need to be addressed.

**We need to tackle the causes head on ... we need to hold the government accountable for the promises it has made**

The obesity problem has taken over 30 years to get to this point, so it's not going to be resolved quickly. Within the foodservice sector, businesses need to work together to share best practice and make changes in order to tackle the causes head on. For targets to be met, we need firm direction from the government and its new policy. In particular we need to hold the government accountable for the promises it has made, such as the six-monthly updates, which I hope will ensure traction and help to get the whole food and drink industry interested and making changes.

Awareness of the obesity issue is at an all-time high and through the Childhood Obesity Plan the stakes have been raised. This is the next step, and although it's in the early stages it is starting to attain high levels of engagement and debate from individual companies, industry associations and campaign groups. In November this year, for example, we held the first ever summit from our sustainability initiative plate2planet, titled plate2planet Live, which included a heated panel debate on the government's strategy to tackle obesity and the role of sugar within this.

This is just the first of many, and there will be significant and heated discussions of what the food and drink industry can do to make substantial



progress in the pursuit of a healthier nation. A number of manufacturers are currently meeting Public Health England, for example, to discuss sugar levels and how to reduce these. The foodservice sector needs to work together and identify which of the key actions cited in the plan it can collaborate on to play its role in meeting the new targets.”

**David Jones is director of technical services at Bidvest Foodservice.**



# May's tough talk comes to nothing

The PM's promised crackdown on corporate excess and low pay hasn't amounted to much now that she's in No 10. By David Burrows.



Theresa May might lead an “unashamedly pro-business” government, but that doesn’t mean she is happy to let the fat cats continue to gorge while the “just about managing” head to food banks after a 12-hour shift at a Michelin-starred restaurant during which they earned below the legal minimum wage.

“There is an irrational, unhealthy and growing gap between what these companies pay their workers and what they pay their bosses,” the prime minister said in July as she pledged to ensure workers are represented on company boards. Strong words.

But that was July, when she was campaigning to get into Number 10. Last month, her government published a consultation on its proposals to tackle corporate excess. Has May delivered the clampdown on corporates she promised? Not quite.

This paper focuses on “ensuring that executive pay is properly aligned to long-term performance, giving greater voice to employees and consumers in the boardroom, and raising the bar for governance standards in the largest privately held companies”. May’s foreword makes for inspiring reading; exactly what voters will want to hear after the BHS and Sports Direct scandals.

## This early U-turn made Theresa May sound like the stereotypical bad boss

But dig into the detail and there is little cause for cheer. Companies won’t be forced to appoint workers to boards after all. At November’s annual conference of the Confederation of British Industry, May argued that workers’ voices will still be heard in the boardroom. Others are not so sure. This early U-turn made her sound like the “stereotypical bad boss”, according to the High Pay Centre, “who makes a promise at the staff meeting only to renege on it when the going gets tough”.

Still, shareholders could be given more (though still soft) powers to vote against bosses’ pay. Perhaps more controversially, plans to publish pay ratios are still on the table. The idea was first floated by Vince Cable, the business secretary during the coalition government, but then dropped because of what he referred to as the “Goldman-Waitrose issue” (whereby the bank would perform better on the ratios than the ethical supermarket because the average pay of bankers is so high).

The EU also canned the idea. “As the EU tends to be more dirigiste than Britain, this does not encourage hopes that much of the green paper will survive the consultation period,” noted the *Economist*.

At the other end of the pay scale it is all about survival. The Sports Direct story has dominated coverage of workers on low pay, while the gig economy poses a clear and present threat to workers’ rights (see later in this issue), but this is not where the issues end.

The finding by the *Guardian* that staff at Le Gavroche, the Michelin-starred restaurant run by Michel Roux Jr, were being paid almost £2 less than the national living wage of £7.20 for over-25s is deeply concerning, if not completely surprising. “Roux gets coverage because he is famous but this is endemic,” said Dave Turnbull, a regional officer for the hospitality sector at the trade union Unite.

Underpayment at the bottom, overpayment at the top: May is finding it tough as the champion of working-class voters.



# Acrylamide: a hot potato for the EU

Commissioners are trying to untangle a messy situation regarding rules for the food contaminant – and neither industry nor health campaigners are happy.



The European Commission wants to introduce new regulations to reduce levels of acrylamide in certain foods. The food industry has been pretty happy with the proposals so far, but critics have said they are “meaningless” and may even fail to comply with some facets of EU law. It’s turning into a bit of a bunfight and foodservice companies will need to watch things closely given the foods involved. Here’s the story so far.

## What is it?

Acrylamide is a contaminant that’s generated when the sugar and amino acids in starchy foods transform through the Maillard reaction during heating. The changes enhance the taste of the cooked food and will often give it a brownish colour. Roast or bake and you’ll get acrylamide forming, but it’s frying that contributes most to consumer exposure to the substance.

## Is it a problem?

Humans have seemingly been exposed to acrylamide since learning to toast bread, fry potatoes and roast coffee beans. However, studies in Sweden in 2002 showed that high levels of acrylamide formed when frying or baking potatoes and cereals. There were also studies on animals suggesting that the contaminant has the potential to cause cancer in humans.

## What’s the official advice?

Last year, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published an updated opinion on the issue; this confirmed its previous evaluations that acrylamide in food “potentially increases the risk of developing cancer for consumers in all age groups”. EFSA’s little cousin, the UK Food Standards Agency (FSA), has funded several research projects and surveys on the substances, but its website states that it’s not yet clear what the risks are from acrylamide in food. Of course, that doesn’t diminish the responsibility of food producers and regulatory bodies to properly investigate and understand the consequences of exposure.

## Which is why there’s talk of new regulations, right?

Exactly. The food industry says levels are being lowered all the time through voluntary codes of practice – and there is evidence to show that this is the case. On the flipside, there’s concern that levels are not falling fast enough or far enough. The European Commission therefore decided to formalise the approach with new rules.

## What’s the deal with the new law, then?

The FSA website explains that the proposal is to place the new regulation under article 4 of regulation 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs. This will give food businesses a mandate to take account of strict new industry codes of practice for mitigating acrylamide formation as part of their food safety management systems.

## Sounds good. So why are campaigners grumbling?

For a start the proposals refer only to “indicative values”, so the onus is on industry to follow codes of practice that have already been developed for a range of products, including coffee, baby foods and potato-based goods such as crisps and french fries. But Safe Food Advocacy Europe and other consumer groups say this “soft approach” has been in place for almost a decade now and “has failed to reduce acrylamide levels in food”. New data released in November further supports their case: about 12% of 25,000 samples sent to EFSA between 2007 and 2014 contained more acrylamide than the indicative levels set by the EU.

## What’s the industry’s response?

It has a different view, of course, and points to an analysis of 40,000 samples of fresh sliced potato crisps from 20 European countries which found that mean levels of acrylamide fell 53% between 2002 and 2011. A study in the UK last year also showed four of the five varieties of potatoes tested had levels of acrylamide lower than the 1,000µg/kg value for potato chips. But that leads us neatly to another of the campaigners’ concerns.

## Which is...?

The indicative values are not low enough. Denmark is actually looking to lower the levels that its food industry works to because the EU guidelines – the same ones being used in the new regulation – don’t protect consumers enough. Ready-to-eat french fries should have levels of no more than 600µg/kg for example but Denmark says it should be 550µg/kg. In potato crisps the EU’s marker is 1,000µg/kg but Denmark says it should be 750µg/kg. Campaigners also want the targets to be legally binding.

## What does industry say?

The likes of FoodDrinkEurope maintain that maximum levels won’t work – industry will progress to them and look to go no further, so their argument goes. The EU health commissioner, Vytenis Andriukaitis, seems to agree and the fact he is seemingly siding with industry hasn’t gone unnoticed. Campaigners have argued that the commission is a little too close to industry for comfort on this one and has watered down proposals after intense lobbying. Let’s not forget that cutting acrylamide will affect costs, cooking and processing practices and taste.

## It all seems a bit of a mess, then?

Indeed. This was never going to be an easy regulation for the commission (something that industry and campaigners do agree on) but now it’s in the kitchen it has to stay and stand the heat. In November the latest draft was circulated. It contained additional requirements on testing and monitoring performance at member state level. There’s also the threat that maximum levels will be set if there’s not enough progress. This wasn’t enough to satisfy consumer health groups.

## What’s the latest?

Campaigners have teamed up with law firm ClientEarth and sent a(nother) letter to Andriukaitis, this time pointing out what they see as major legal flaws with the draft proposals. They claim the regulation, as it stands, doesn’t necessarily comply with “higher ranking law” and the commission has even got the legal basis wrong (it has joined the new regulation to laws pertaining to the hygiene of food when it should be within contaminants laws, they warn). The threat is clear: if the proposals don’t change then we’ll challenge you in court – and we reckon we’ll win.

## So what happens next?

There’s a long way to go but next up is a vote on the proposals in January. Until then campaigners will keep campaigning, industry will keep lobbying and the European Commission will be left wondering why it decided to pick up this hot potato in the first place.





# Backlash over workers' rights

Amazon, Sports Direct and 'gig economy' firms such as Deliveroo and UberEATS are seeing their reputations suffer after accusations of labour exploitation.

By Tom Idle.



There is nothing like a piece of legislation to focus the minds of corporate executives. The UK's [Modern Slavery Act](#) – designed to protect vulnerable workers in parts of the world where forced labour and human trafficking often trump basic employee rights – has certainly made CEOs sit up and take notice since it was introduced last year.

However, moving to ensure that supply chains are free of human rights abuse and that workers' rights are protected is nothing new. Responsible sourcing certificates issued by the likes of the Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade have long sought to tackle the issue. More and more companies – particularly in the food sector, with its complex supply webs – are investing in building stronger and closer relationships with suppliers and agents.

But when it comes to keeping those workers closer to home happy, protected and empowered, current corporate strategies leave a lot to be desired.

According to the Economist Intelligence Unit's [latest report](#) looking at global resource challenges for business, access to good labour remains a constant challenge, with 70% of survey respondents saying they faced labour challenges and half pointing to a lack of skilled people as a top risk. Meanwhile, improving overall working conditions was the most cited response (27%) as an effective solution for dealing with those challenges, along with innovative human resources policies.

Yet the survey results present absolutely no correlation to a spate of recent examples of companies treating their staff poorly.

By classifying drivers as independent, self-employed workers, an increasing number of companies are able to offset their employment responsibilities

The high-street retail chain Sports Direct has been accused of paying temporary workers [below the minimum wage](#) thanks to lengthy security checks at the end of each shift, for which they were not paid. And workers were regularly docked 15 minutes' pay for being one minute late.

At Amazon, many delivery drivers claim to have worked illegal hours, receiving less than the minimum wage in return. A [BBC investigation](#) in November found that drivers were regularly expected to deliver 200 parcels a day, often having to break speed limits to stay on schedule and barely finding time for a toilet break. Amazon, of course, has now entered the foodservice sector with its usual gusto.

Deliveroo, another new food delivery service that works for thousands of restaurants across the UK, faces a [backlash](#) from many of its couriers, bemoaning their payment of £3.75 a delivery. In the absence of an hourly fee, they are not paid anything when there are quiet times. Now, a group of workers are taking legal action to boost their rights.

The success of Deliveroo, UberEATS and the like is built on the so-called "gig economy" – where "workers" start when an app is opened on a smartphone and end when they swipe out. The flexibility these set-ups offer has disrupted traditional working patterns, but they are also fast becoming a byword for exploitative practices. By classifying drivers as independent, self-employed workers, an increasing number of companies are able to offset their employment responsibilities, such as paying a decent wage or giving people sick pay.

Deliveroo is nothing but a fancy app; without the people doing the driving, it has no business whatsoever

Deliveroo said it was "committed to providing great opportunities for UK riders, with the flexible work riders value, and a payment model which is fair, rewarding and better matches riders' time with customers' orders". While that may be true – and a large, happy workforce is testament to that – the whole episode highlights how the disgruntlement of just a handful of people can seriously damage corporate reputations.

Ministers have also become increasingly uneasy with the rapid growth of this new labour force. In October, HMRC announced that it was launching a specialist unit to investigate companies which opt out of giving workers employment protections.

"The government is girding its loins for a serious fightback against those companies trying to wriggle out of their obligation to pay the minimum wage by enforcing 'self-employment' on their workers," said the influential Labour MP Frank Field recently. "The prime minister has set companies the task of delivering a decent minimum for their workers, and companies now know they will be caught out if they jeopardise this effort."

The situation also poses questions regarding the sustainability of these business models. Being at the mercy and whim of legislative changes is not a happy place for any business to be in and Deliveroo execs will no doubt be watching the court reaction with bated breath.

But what is a business without its people? Deliveroo is nothing but a fancy app; without the people doing the driving, it has no business whatsoever. Yes, staff pay and benefits make up a huge chunk of company expenditure. But ignoring the rights of workers – many of which make up the community in which companies serve – is no way to build a strong, resilient and trustworthy organisation fit for the future.

**Tom Idle** is a journalist and content creator specialising in sustainable business storytelling.



Less water used  
Biodegradable  
Detergents  
Improved MPG  
Green Earth  
Technology

Enjoy a fresh approach  
to linen hire.

- Highest quality linen  
and chefs wear
- No-contract
- Reliability and quality  
as standard

t. 0800 093 9933  
STALBRIDGE-LINEN.COM

*CLEANING  
WITH A  
CONSCIENCE*

SUPERIOR LINEN SERVICE  
WITH SUSTAINABILITY  
AS STANDARD



Johnson's  
**STALBRIDGE**  
Linen Services

STALBRIDGE-LINEN.COM



# Looking for the bright side

His campaign rhetoric suggests President Trump will be bad news for the planet, but is there cause for optimism?



What will a Donald Trump administration mean for food and the environment? It's a sentence the Print never anticipated having to write, but then 2016 has been the year the political rulebook wasn't just rewritten but trampled on, set alight and burned in an oil drum.

A pithy analysis based on his campaign rhetoric is that President Trump will be good for American farmers and bad for the planet.

The reality will surely be more nuanced – if indeed there is still room for nuance in political debate – but Trump's stated positions on global trade and fossil fuels leave little room for manoeuvre for fear of betraying his voters, many of whom live in rural areas where farming and mining are part of the fabric of local society.

Trump appears to view protectionist trade policies as a means of ensuring a prosperous future for American workers. Few sectors are as protected as farming, or as averse to market liberalisation unless it's on their own terms, and so “Trumponomics” is sure to curry plenty of favour with the corn farmers of Kansas and the cattle ranchers of Texas.

On the day Trump was elected president, no fewer than four American cities voted to introduce a soda tax on high-sugar drinks

Less clear is how farms – and indeed restaurants – will fare without access to cheap migrant labour if and when the president-elect builds his infamous wall along the Mexican border.

Trump has already announced his intention to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership on his first day in office, while the US-EU trade deal TTIP looks dead in the water too. The vote for Brexit means the completion of TTIP has become somewhat incidental to the UK. However, for domestic food businesses hoping to gain a foothold in the US market or take advantage of cheaper imports there seems little prospect of a decisive breakthrough on bilateral trade any time soon, despite positive spin from Number 10 that the UK is no longer at the back of the queue for a US free trade deal.

There are good reasons to view free trade deals with a critical eye, not least when, like TTIP, they risk lowering food and environmental standards. Yet it seems unlikely Trump's opposition to free trade is based on concerns for public health or animal welfare. On the contrary, Trump's hostility towards the US Environmental Protection Agency is well known – he threatened to scrap it during the election campaign – and it would be little surprise to see a bonfire of regulations paving the way for more widespread industrial farming methods and a lowering of standards on key environmental indicators such as air, soil and water quality. The Food and Drug Administration, responsible for food safety and public health, is also in the line of fire having previously been referred to by Trump as “the FDA food police”.

On climate change, Trump is even more bombastic. He is on record as claiming global warming is a hoax created by China to make US industry less competitive, and has already threatened to pull the US out of the Paris climate accord. And while he appeared to soften his position in a recent interview with the New York Times in which he said he had an “open mind” on the link between human activity and climate change, he also suggested he would give as much credence to the 7% of (mostly industry funded) scientists who deny climate change as the 93% who confirm its existence.

A Trump presidency is also likely to encourage a renewed dash for gas, while approvals for new oil exploration and efforts to revive the coal industry are set to be high on the priority list.

If this all sounds unimaginably bleak then consider two points that should give cause for optimism. First, the international consensus on tackling climate change is stronger than it's ever been with well over 100 countries having ratified the Paris Agreement (including the UK) and businesses across the globe committing to long-term action to reduce emissions.

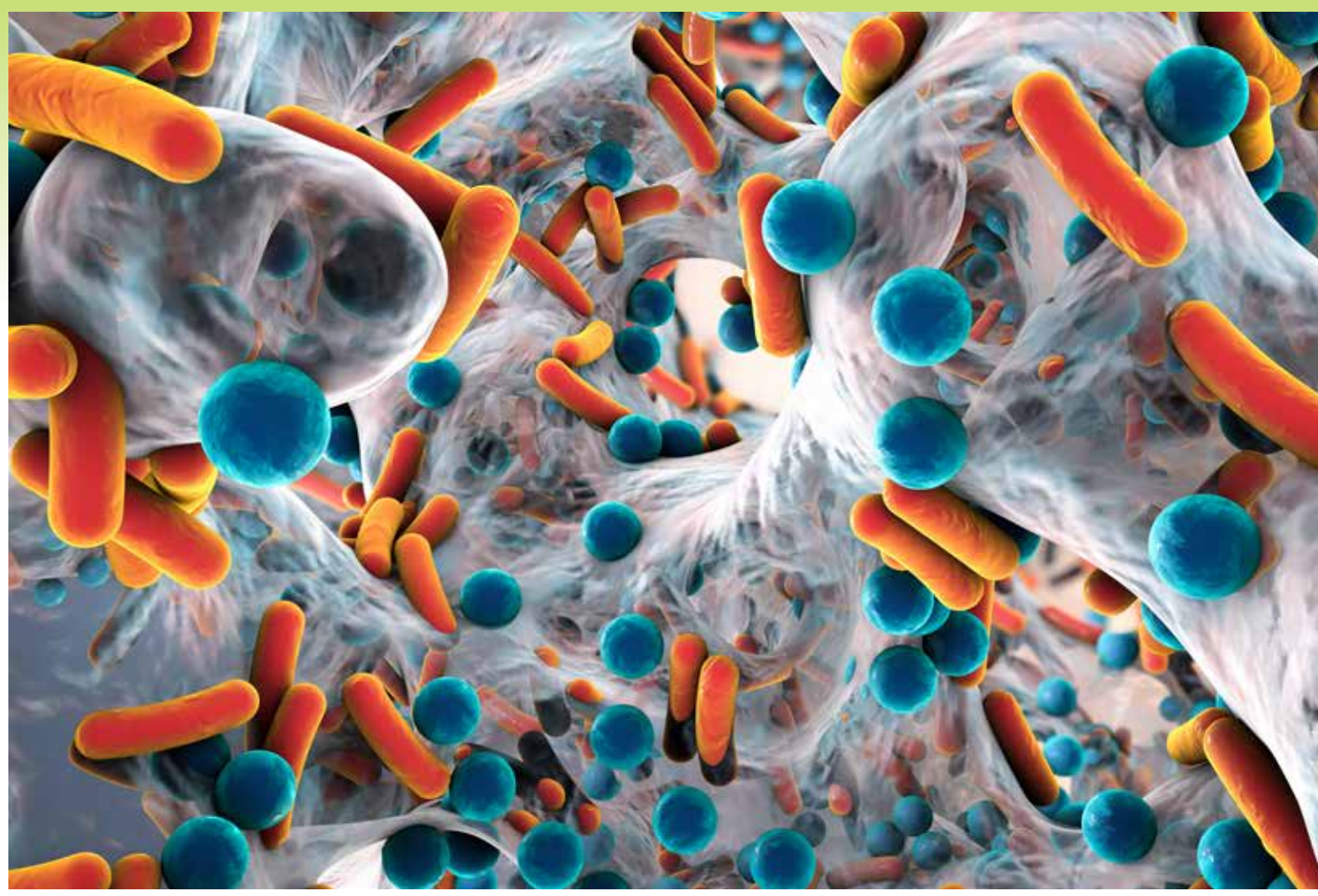
And second, on the day Trump was elected president, no fewer than four American cities voted to introduce a soda tax on high-sugar drinks, demonstrating how US food politics is shaped at local as well as regional and national levels.

The US will not completely divorce from a progressive food and environmental agenda just because Trump is in the White House. But it's hard to deny that a sustainable future looks a lot further away than it did a month ago.



# My viewpoint

As the world faces an antibiotic resistance crisis, foodservice firms are under pressure to address overuse of the drugs by their suppliers, writes Emma Rose.



“Until fairly recently, efforts to tackle the global antibiotic resistance crisis have focused on improving prescribing practices in human medicine. Pushy patients demanding drugs to treat colds and other ailments on which antibiotics have no effect, remiss GPs handing out antibiotics like sweets: these practices have been held responsible for fuelling antibiotic resistance – and sometimes justifiably. But lately, it’s the use of antibiotics in farming which has been making the headlines.

A number of factors lie behind the growing scrutiny of veterinary prescribing. Crucially, the scientific evidence linking farm antibiotic use with resistance in human infections is becoming indisputable. The recent UK Review on Antimicrobial Resistance stated that the evidence is compelling enough to warrant “significant reductions” to farm antibiotic use – a view shared by organisations such as the European Medicines Agency and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation.

With GPs, doctors, dentists, and livestock farmers now taking steps to curb antibiotic prescribing, the paucity of publicly available policies on antibiotic use from food businesses is coming under fire. In October, [58 MPs called on UK supermarkets](#) to ban the routine mass medication of livestock in their supply chains. This practice – common in pig and poultry farming and permitted by most UK supermarkets, restaurants and food businesses – is increasingly seen as incompatible with efforts to preserve our dwindling antibiotic supplies.

The key request of the Alliance to Save our Antibiotics, which represents 63 EU-wide organisations spanning medical, health, animal welfare and civil society sectors, is for an end to the routine preventative mass medication of groups of livestock, before any disease has been diagnosed within the group.

Recent reports suggested that Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture (RUMA) and others had dismissed our efforts to prohibit the routine mass medication of animals as an attempt to “[push the organic agenda](#)”. They would do well to realise that popular, scientific and official policy opinion is increasingly aligned on this issue.

While the call for a ban to such practices has drawn criticism from industry bodies such as RUMA, these demands are fully in line with the UK government’s official position. Even RUMA’s European parent, EPRUMA, has publicly announced its support for an EU-wide ban on these practices. Recently 16 of the UK’s leading medical figures added their voices to the call for such a ban.

Rising consumer concern is also increasing the pressure on food businesses to act. Public expectation is rapidly shifting, and purchasing habits threaten to follow suit. And with veterinary prescribing policy across Europe set to tighten substantially in the next few years, foodservice businesses must get ahead of the curve.

Some businesses are taking action. [Waitrose recently clarified](#) that it will ban the routine preventative mass medication of livestock in its supply chain, and limit use of “critically important” drugs. The Restaurant Group has announced similar goals. This issue is edging its way into the sustainable procurement narrative, with award bodies like the Sustainable Restaurant Association now asking applicants about supply-chain antibiotic use.

The case for action is strong. Companies that invest in antibiotic-reduction strategies could see significant return on investment in the form of increased operational resilience. By supporting farmers to reduce antibiotics, businesses can help to insulate themselves from the effects of forthcoming regulatory restrictions, and from inevitable contractions in the availability of veterinary medicines. Importantly, those seen to be taking action could benefit from greatly improved public perception.

So what can foodservice companies do? First, engage supply chains on this issue. Find out whether suppliers have policies in place or are already taking steps to reduce antibiotic use. Work together to adopt a policy and timeframe for phasing out the routine mass medication of livestock. Set goals on restricting use of critically important drugs to instances where they are a genuine last resort to treat individual animals. Prioritise a shift towards higher-welfare systems where the need for antibiotics is greatly reduced.

Also, and critically, talk about these improvements, make policies publicly available, encourage questions and open dialogue. Food businesses have remained too silent on this issue and this doesn’t build consumer trust.



Veterinary antibiotic use is on the threshold of huge change. This provides real business opportunities for those who are prepared to prioritise good welfare and responsible farm antibiotic use. Most importantly, by using its purchasing power for the public good, the foodservice sector can do its bit to safeguard antibiotics for future generations.”

**Emma Rose** is campaigns, lobbying and communications specialist at the [Alliance to Save our Antibiotics](#).



# How to define ‘no deforestation’

After years of debate companies have finally agreed on a standard for forest protection. Now it’s time to turn words into action, writes Deborah Lapidus.



Over the past three years, thanks in large part to responsible sourcing policies adopted by leading consumer goods manufacturers and retailers, several of the world’s largest agribusinesses that once destroyed rainforests to cultivate palm oil, wood products, soy, and cattle have committed to sweeping “no deforestation, no peat, no exploitation” (NDPE) policies.

To put these policies into practice, a multi-stakeholder group called the High Carbon Stock Approach (HCSA) Steering Group was set up to establish protocols for determining which lands should be prohibited for development under NDPE policies and which lands are suitable for expansion. Last year, the HCSA Steering Group put out its first toolkit on how to implement the standard (available at [www.highcarbonstock.org](http://www.highcarbonstock.org)). The HCSA incorporates several values into one methodology: stopping climate change, protecting biodiversity and respecting the right of local communities to give or withhold their free, prior and informed consent to development on their lands.

But despite the strong NGO and company consensus on the HCSA standard, there emerged a new group of companies which sought to develop an alternative definition of deforestation. To add to the confusion, this group carried a very similar name to the other, calling itself the High Carbon Stock Study Group, and the standard they developed was called HCS+ (which we always thought might better be referred to as HCS Minus). Their methodology primarily emphasised carbon over other social or ecological values and allowed significantly more leeway for clearing forests.

## Some companies used the debate over the standards as an excuse to delay implementation of forest protection altogether

For far too long, some companies used the debate over the standards as an excuse to delay implementation of forest protection altogether. Our worry was that by the time the discussions were over, the forests would be gone.

But now it appears the light at the end of the tunnel is near. In November, companies on all sides and key NGOs reached an agreement that will bring all the standards together, following a year-long convergence process. The details are described in the [agreement statement](#) and organisations’ and companies’ [joint press release](#).

Organisations reaching this agreement are major palm oil traders Asian Agri, Cargill, Golden Agri-Resources, IOI, KLK, Musim Mas, Sime Darby, and Wilmar; the world’s largest buyer of palm oil, Unilever; and leading NGOs including the Forest Peoples Programme, Greenpeace, Rainforest Action Network, Forest Trust, Union of Concerned Scientists, and World Wildlife Fund. The convergence team deserves praise for their achievement in working through thorny and complex issues and being able to bridge differences for the sake of forests and communities.

Now, time and energy can be focused on the real work of implementation, which means that companies need to be conducting HCS assessments before any new plantings or expansion take place, and training all suppliers on how to implement the standard. Companies that haven’t yet joined the HCSA Steering Group should do so, including those in other sectors at risk of deforestation, such as pulp and paper, rubber, soy, and cattle. Companies which took advantage of the debate to delay forest protection are out of excuses.

Food retailers, foodservice providers and consumer goods manufacturers with forest conservation policies should be breathing a sigh of relief because now any suppliers that are committed to the HCSA standard will be speaking the same language when they commit to “no deforestation”. There will be a common set of criteria by which to evaluate supplier compliance. And there will be fewer circumstances in which suppliers can try to explain away deforestation due to differences in understanding of what the word means.



Food retailers and service providers can help foster even greater industry alignment by calling upon the 3,000-member Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) to adopt the HCSA standard into the RSPO criteria, which currently still allows for deforestation. Adopting the HCSA standard would provide clear directive to companies and assessors, restore RSPO’s legitimacy and end marketplace confusion. It’s time to finally turn the corner on defining deforestation and start actually saving forests.

**Deborah Lapidus** is campaigns director at US environmental campaign group **Mighty**.



# Labels v taxes: which way to cut carbon?

Politicians need to encourage a shift to sustainable diets in the fight against climate change. The big question is how.



What does a kilo of greenhouse gases buy you in the supermarket? Researchers at Lancaster University and RMIT in Melbourne, Australia, analysed 1,718 global warming potential values in 168 fresh foods to find out. The results are interesting if not entirely surprising.

“The meta-analysis indicates a clear greenhouse gas [GHG] hierarchy emerging across the food categories, with grains, fruit and vegetables having the lowest impact and meat from ruminants having the highest impact,” they explain in [their paper](#) published in the *Journal of Cleaner Production*.

## Carbon counting

That kilo of GHGs will buy plenty of fruit and veg: 5.8kg of onions, 3.5kg of apples, 2.6kg of oats and 1kg of lentils, for example. However, you’d get far less meat: 270g of chicken, 160g of UK pork and just 40g of UK beef or lamb.

“You would have a hard time arguing that you can replace beef with onions as they serve very different culinary and dietary requirements,” admits Dr Stephen Clune, one of the authors. “However, it is possible to substitute red meat with other meats, or plant-based protein sources such as lentils and nuts that have a lower impact.”

This would make a considerable difference to the footprint of the average family of four’s weekly shop. The researchers show that switching beef and lamb for non-ruminant meat such as duck, rabbit or (as it’s an Australian family) kangaroo and to fish such as pollock reduces the amount of carbon embedded in their groceries by 30%. Stick to a diet of plants and fish that still matches the recommended protein intake and there’s a 52% reduction in GHGs.

Clune says the results could be used “with confidence to plan menus for individuals and catering companies who want to reduce their carbon footprint, by selecting foods from different categories”.

But how many caterers or consumers will print out the table and stick it to their fridge? Not many. And fewer still would remember to take it when they visit the local wholesaler or supermarket.

## A paucity of policy

How to encourage a shift towards more sustainable (that is, lower carbon and often healthier) diets is the elephant in the room for policymakers. There appeared little discussion of the issue at November’s COP22 climate summit in Marrakech, Morocco.

The talks were positive, but a UN Environment Programme report published beforehand showed the scale of the challenge ahead. Even with the pledges in the [Paris Agreement](#), which came into force in November, global emissions are forecast to reach 54 to 56 gigatonnes by 2030 – which translates to a temperature rise of somewhere between 2.9°C and 3.4°C by 2100. To stay within the 2°C threshold world leaders committed to last December, emissions need to be no more than 42 gigatonnes by 2030.

That’s a considerable gap to plug. The 200 nations gathered in Morocco affirmed their “highest political commitment” to combating climate change. Fine words, but will this commitment extend beyond the sexier solutions such as renewable energy and electric cars to tough issues such as meat consumption?

## Carbon tax: what’s your beef?

With Brexit to deliver and the climate change sceptic Donald Trump to deal with as US president-elect, environmental policymakers in the UK and EU have plenty on their plates already. A carbon tax on foods, say, is unlikely to be a priority. Research published in the journal *Nature Climate Change* in November should turn a few heads, though.

Experts at the Oxford Martin programme on the future of food at Oxford University calculated that a carbon levy on foods could help [slash GHGs by a billion tonnes and save half a million lives](#). “If you’d have to pay 40% more for your steak, you might choose to have it once a week instead of twice,” says lead researcher Dr Marco Springmann.

Livestock products, like meat and dairy, would be taxed hardest due to their higher emissions, while the price of fruits and vegetables would remain pretty much the same. The beef surcharge would be 40%, while milk would be 21% more expensive. The price rises would result in consumption falling 13% and 8% respectively. Consumption of high-carbon foods overall would fall by about 10%, they estimated.

There would also be health benefits from the subsequent shift in diets, a finding that runs contrary to fears that the policy would have a harmful effect on food and nutrition, especially in low-income regions. “Food prices are a sensitive topic,” admits Springmann, but “we show that pricing foods according to their climate impacts could not only lead to lower emissions, but also to healthier diets in almost all countries around the world.”

## Eyes wide shut

Is such a policy realistic? As Tim Lang, a professor of food policy at City, University of London, put it, food is a climate policy blind spot “because tackling food emissions means tackling consumers. And consumers vote.” Some are starting to see the need for more radical ideas.

The Danish Council on Ethics, for example, has said that food is “an obvious place to start” when it comes to tackling climate change, and consumers need to be pushed rather than nudged towards ethical diets: “If we are to live up to the Paris Agreement target of keeping global temperature rise ‘well’ below 2°C, it is necessary to act quickly and involve food.”

A [tax on beef is a good place to start](#), members said. “It will clarify the issues for consumers and lead to restricted spending.” It worked for tobacco, after all, and there are signs (depending on who you talk to) that it can work and is working for sugary drinks too. Still, the council’s senior consultant Anne Lykkeskov isn’t expecting politicians to line up in support of the recommendations. Judging from the political reactions it is “very unlikely” there will be any political initiatives in this area in the foreseeable future, she says.

## Labels revisited

Rather than taxing high-carbon foods, perhaps labelling them is worth another shot? Labels, as *Footprint* associate editor Nick Hughes [noted in an article for TIFSIP last year](#), matter precisely because of their ability to influence how people shop. However, “there are just a few seconds ... to give the shopper a compelling reason to buy the product over that of a competitor”.

Awareness of the big ethical labels such as Fairtrade, organic and MSC (for seafood) is increasing all the time, but beyond those it’s very hard to gain traction. Tesco, for one, has tried. However, [a huge project to carbon label all its products came unstuck](#) once the retailer realised how much it was going to cost, how long it was going to take and, critically, that none of its competitors were doing the same.

Even the brands that are investing heavily in creating low- or zero-carbon products are treading carefully before marketing them as such. Heineken’s Brewed by the Sun range – beers produced at sites powered by solar energy – has gone down well. Would a zero-carbon beer from its new zero-carbon brewery in Austria have a similar pull? It is a bigger leap, admits the brewer’s director of sustainability, Michael Dickstein, but there is a small group of customers interested and it’s a “very relevant” topic.

Having said that, he is wary of research showing how most consumers are already making sustainable purchasing decisions. “They leave the interview and by the time they’ve got to the supermarket they’ve forgotten,” he says. If only they’d remembered to bring that list of carbon footprints with them.

Note: This article was first published on [www.tifsip.org](http://www.tifsip.org) in November 2016. It has been published here with permission.



# No more excuses on obesity

A Footprint forum agreed it's time for foodservice to get stuck in to tackling children's health – before the government forces businesses to act. By Amy Fetzter.



Think of it like your in-laws: it's flawed, but the Childhood Obesity Strategy is what we've got, and it's time for foodservice to start getting on with it. That was the conclusion of October's Footprint Forum: Fat Load of Good?: Foodservice and the Childhood Obesity Strategy, in association with CH&Co Group.

The Childhood Obesity Plan might have been widely panned for being a watered-down version of Public Health England's (PHE) original recommendations. But the forum concluded that it does have value in bringing the industry together in a shared framework. And it isn't an option to do nothing. PHE has heard too much about the problems – now it wants solutions.

The Department of Health has therefore created a flexible framework to allow foodservice to innovate and develop its own own solutions, explained audience member Jo Newstead from the Department of Health. The alternative, she suggested, was a potentially weaker, one-size-fits-all approach.

The government's new action plan is a first step, but there will be more to come on overall calorie intake and promotions, for instance. And if businesses are slow to start, the carrot offered now could quickly morph into the stick many others (including retailers) wanted already.

## Whose responsibility?

Today, nearly a third of children aged two to 15 are overweight or obese. Young people are becoming obese earlier, and obesity can be a death sentence – it doubles the risk of dying prematurely, the audience at October's forum heard. It's also hugely expensive, costing more than the police, fire and judicial services combined. In fact, a McKinsey & Company study estimated that it costs the UK nearly £47 billion a year.

Obesity is a serious economic, social and ethical issue, but is it foodservice's responsibility? Given that Brits now eat one in six meals and get a quarter of their calories outside the home, the answer has to be yes.

**Foodservice has a responsibility to act: Brits now eat one in six meals and get a quarter of their calories outside the home**

While many of the reductions are likely to come from reformulating products and menus or smaller portions, the most interesting and potentially far-reaching health benefits could come from shifting consumer preferences. “If we can shift people willingly away from high sugar products to lower sugar ones that are equally profitable, it's a win-win situation for industry and the consumer, and nobody suffers,” explained the nutritionist and broadcaster Amanda Ursell.

Social norms can also be hugely powerful in this area, added Caroline Fry, the deputy chief executive of CH&Co Group. In one trial, the caterer increased consumers' uptake of vegetables by 7%, simply by putting out posters and table talkers telling customers that most people took a vegetable with their meal.

Plate sizing, and other components of the food environment can also be hugely influential and often inexpensive ways to shift consumers to eat more healthily. But these are often overlooked by foodservice. A forthcoming *Footprint Intelligence* report will therefore set out a blueprint for how industry can use the psychology of behaviour change and the food environment to encourage healthier eating to stimulate more action in this area.

## Can good news sell papers?

There is also a feeling that industry needs to bring the media onside, focusing on efforts to improve public health rather than screaming “ripoff” or “nanny state” every time a portion size is reduced or a product reformulated. When portion sizes are reduced price doesn't automatically fall too, with the cost of ingredients often dwarfed by costs in production, packaging and distribution.

**The industry must find the positive health angles that surprise and generate interest and communicate them**

Controversial, surprising and counterintuitive stories sell, Ursell said. So find the positive health angles that surprise and generate interest and communicate them. That's often easier said than done, but it is certainly not impossible – look at the positive headlines drummed up by retailers selling ugly fruit, for example.

The Childhood Obesity Plan has received plenty of flak. But even if companies achieve the sugar reductions it calls for, existing policy means they won't be able to shout about it, explained speaker Jenny Pflieger, a regulatory consultant at Leatherhead Food Research. This is because only reductions that reach 30% can be advertised. Policy change in this type of area is important to ensure industry efforts can be rewarded.

## Think sugar but think bigger

With a single 330ml can of drink able to exceed a child's daily limit of five to six cubes of sugar, and 11- to 18-year-olds consuming 40% of their calories from sugar, mainly in the form of soft drinks, it's understandable why the new plan has such a sweet focus. But to really tackle the problems the scope needs to be much wider. “As a nutritionist, I see things come and go,” said Ursell. “But we must think of our food in a much more holistic way and sugar is part of that.”

**‘We could spend a lot of time and money on nutritional analysis – but is it not better to give chefs greater knowledge of how to make food healthier?’**

However, the approaches taken must be handled carefully or creativity could be stifled, argued Fry. “We have a big responsibility as a food provider to inform and advise our customers when we are feeding people several times a week. We could spend a lot of time and money on nutritional analysis – but is it not better to give chefs greater knowledge of how to make food healthier?” she asked.

“Nutritional analysis only works in highly controlled scenarios such as factory production; as soon as you add in variables such as self-service to the mix, the analysis becomes irrelevant. Through buying the best products and producing food in the right ways, we can create the healthiest food offers possible. We also don't want to exclude people – so if someone wants chips and lasagne, let's make it the healthiest possible.”

This is why ensuring chefs have nutritional training is key. A recent *Footprint Intelligence* report found that nutritional training is not mandatory on catering syllabuses, highlighting the need for industry to sponsor pilot modules and to educate their working chefs internally.

## Attack it from all angles

Eretia O'Kennedy, the head of nutrition at the Jamie Oliver Group, shared the challenges of trying to create food that meets people's expectations when they are going out for a treat while also helping people to eat healthily. The solution for Jamie's Italian has been to provide calorie information online, set strict nutritional criteria for 30% of the menu, reduce the sugar in desserts and use strict nutritional guidelines for children's meals.

Not everything has gone smoothly. Following advice from the Soil Association's Out to Lunch campaign, calorie information was added to children's menus, allowing parents to make informed choices for their offspring. However, some parents said they didn't want their children to see the calorie information so the chain is now looking at what to do next.

With Kantar Worldpanel research showing that 40% of food is bought on promotion, it surprised many that the Obesity Plan didn't include PHE's original recommendations to reduce and rebalance the number and type of price promotions in retail and foodservice.

But with clients such as supermarkets and foodservice changing their attitude, a responsible approach to promotions and product formulation will become a “point of difference and a competitive driver” argued panellist Julian Hunt, the head of public affairs and communications for Coca Cola Enterprises. “If companies aren't looking at reformulation, promotions, food provision and the choices that they offer, two things will happen: first, you will fall behind your consumers and second you will come under a lot of scrutiny from civil society,” he said.

All eyes are now on how the industry – perhaps especially those in foodservice – react to the government's new policy. Action needs to be swift, effective and positive, because the critics will be waiting for any opportunity to force the government into (another) rethink.

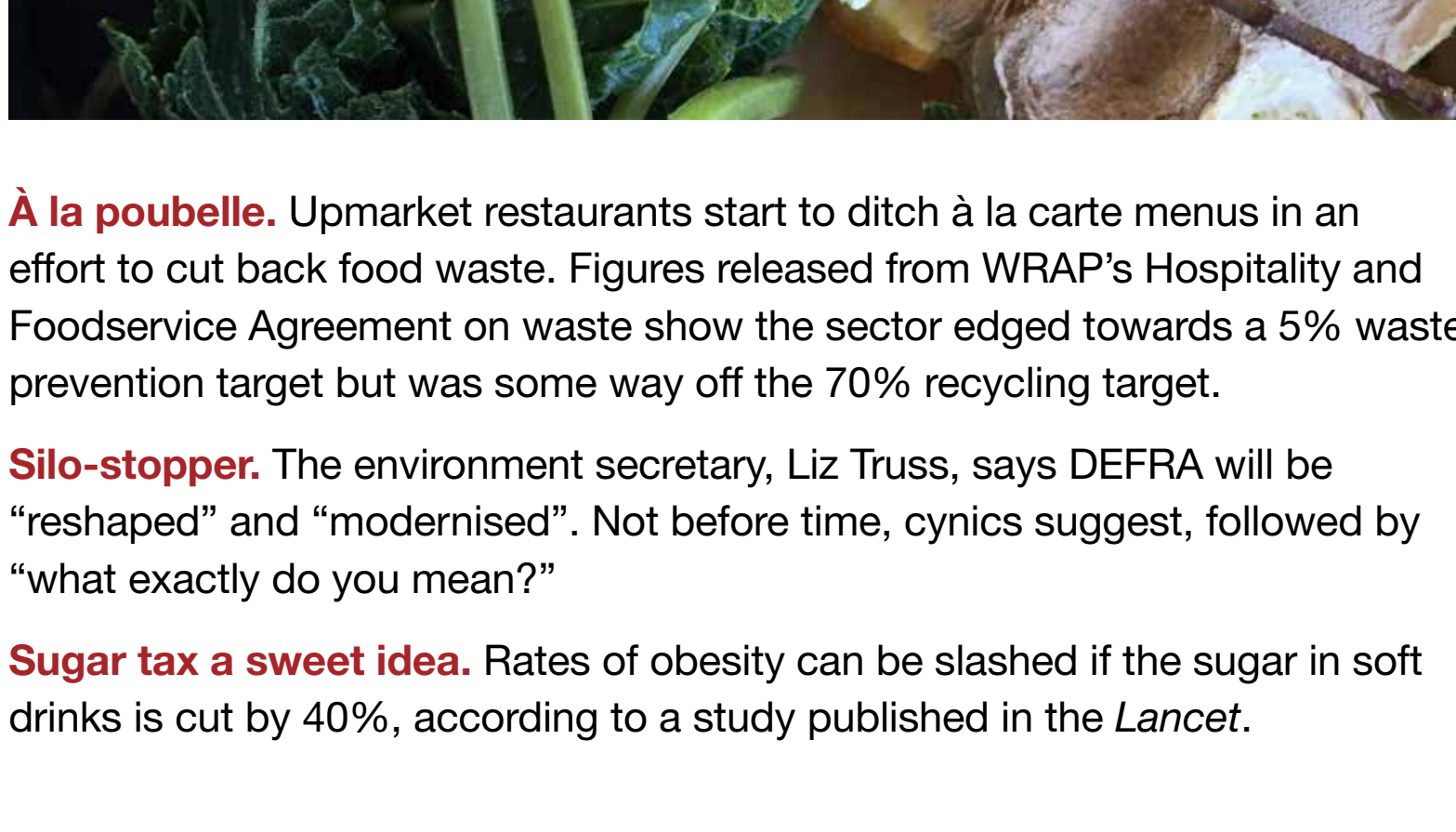
**Amy Fetzter is head of research and analysis at the Footprint Media Group.**



# Annual review 2016

From the Brexit vote to Jamie's sugar tax jig it's been a topsy-turvy year.

## JANUARY

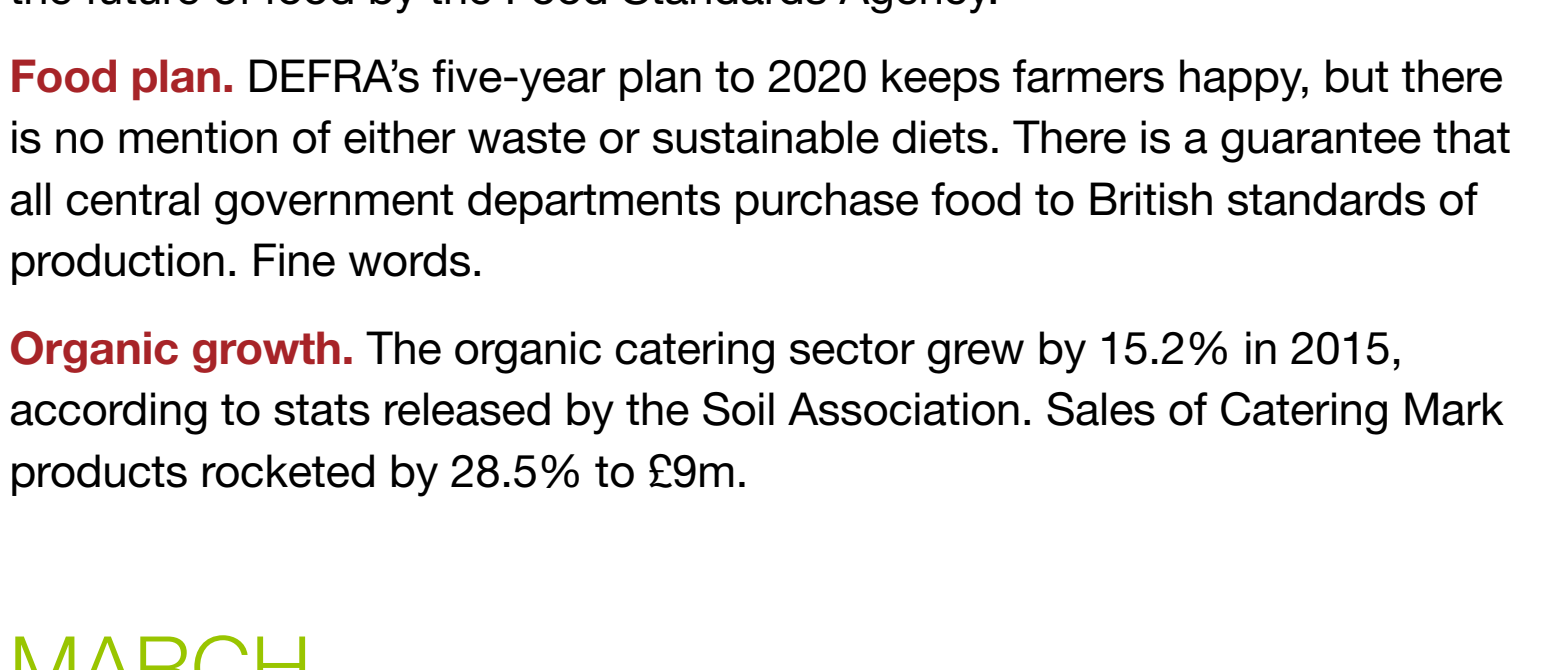


**À la poubelle.** Upmarket restaurants start to ditch à la carte menus in an effort to cut back food waste. Figures released from WRAP's Hospitality and Foodservice Agreement on waste show the sector edged towards a 5% waste prevention target but was some way off the 70% recycling target.

**Silo-stopper.** The environment secretary, Liz Truss, says DEFRA will be "reshaped" and "modernised". Not before time, cynics suggest, followed by "what exactly do you mean?"

**Sugar tax a sweet idea.** Rates of obesity can be slashed if the sugar in soft drinks is cut by 40%, according to a study published in the *Lancet*.

## FEBRUARY



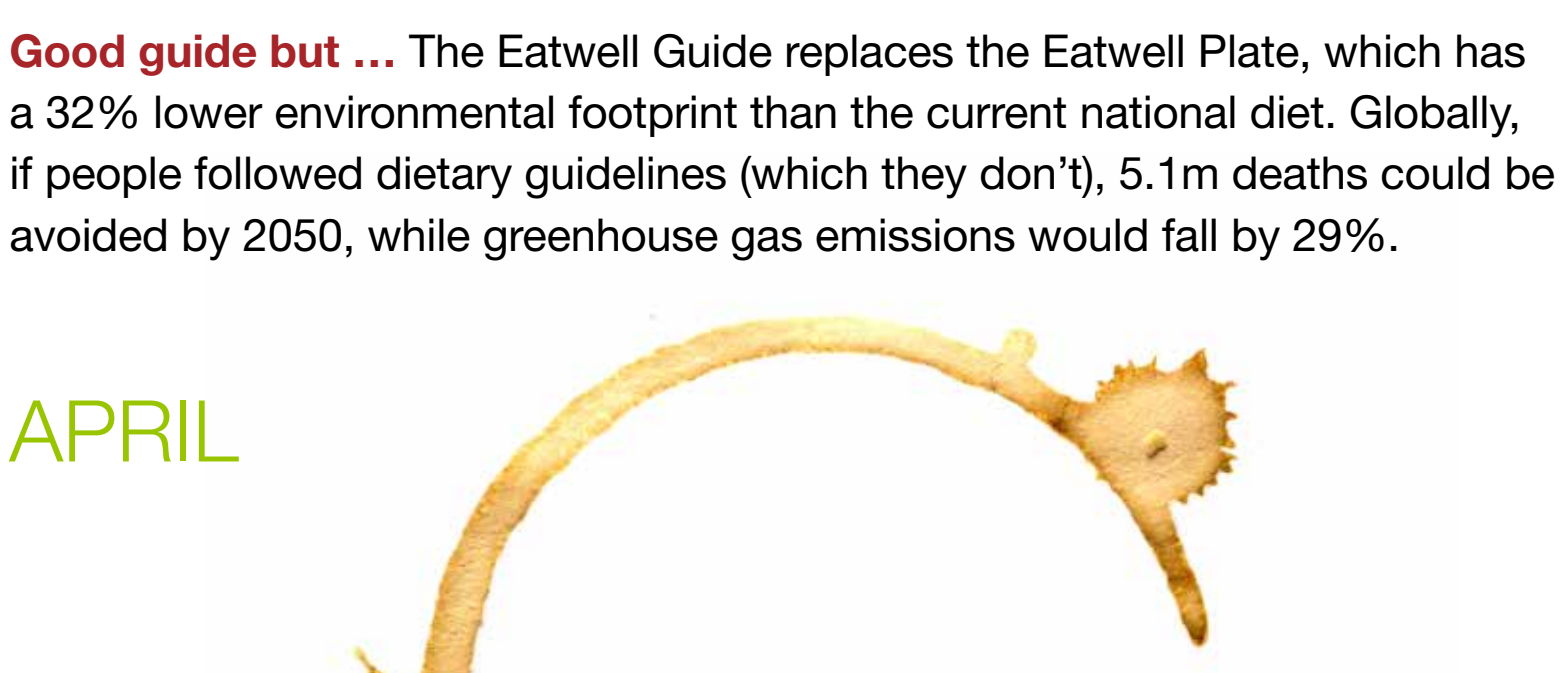
**Forgetting about food.** The UN Environment Programme claims food has been an afterthought for the hospitality sector's work on sustainability. Businesses have sought to save energy, for example, but their food-related impacts "appear not to have had the profile they deserve".

**Poor connectivity.** Consumers crave convenience but they're worried that they're losing touch with food as a result, according to an extensive report on the future of food by the Food Standards Agency.

**Food plan.** DEFRA's five-year plan to 2020 keeps farmers happy, but there is no mention of either waste or sustainable diets. There is a guarantee that all central government departments purchase food to British standards of production. Fine words.

**Organic growth.** The organic catering sector grew by 15.2% in 2015, according to stats released by the Soil Association. Sales of Catering Mark products rocketed by 28.5% to £9m.

## MARCH



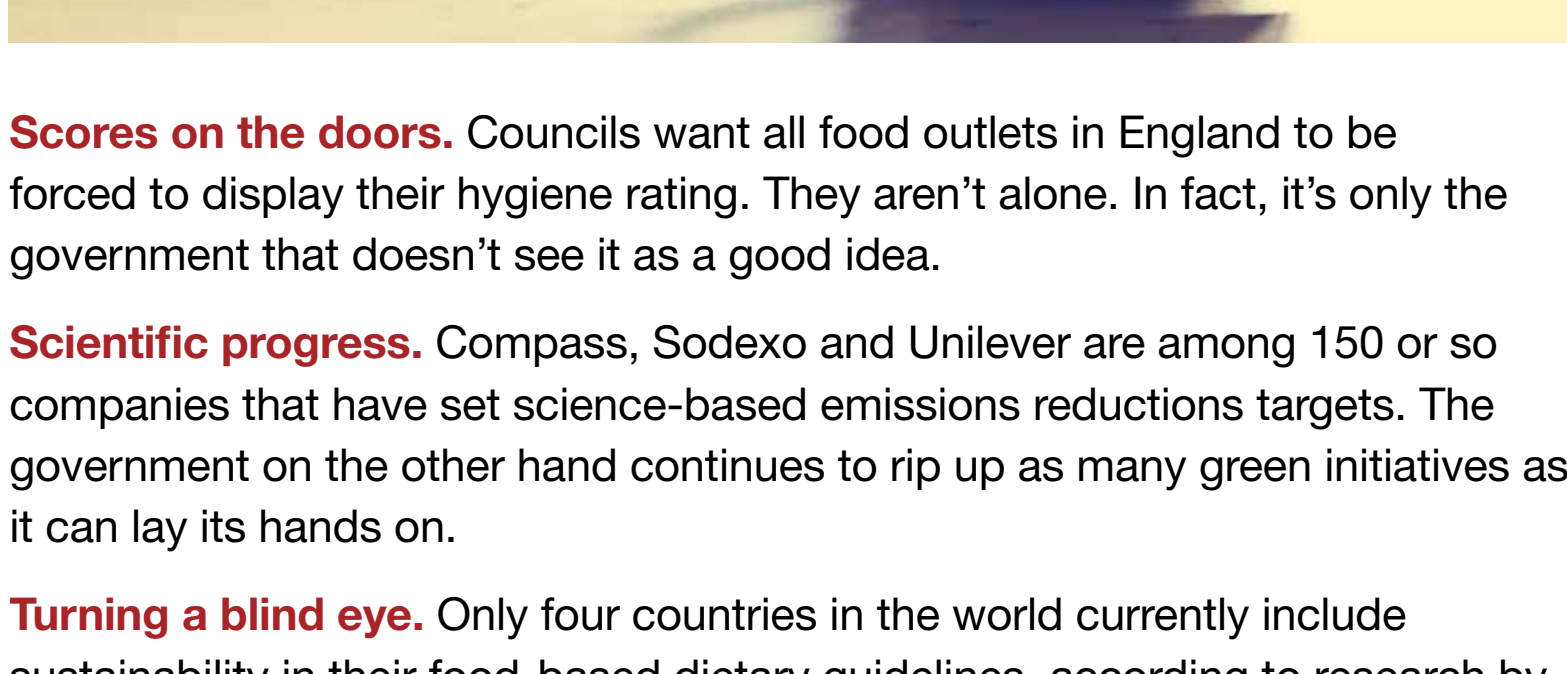
**Jamie Oliver's jig.** The celebrity chef (rather serendipitously) finds himself in Westminster as the chancellor, George Osborne, announces a tax on sugary drinks in his March budget. He is happy. The Food and Drink Federation's boss, meanwhile, is not. It's a "piece of political theatre", says Ian Wright of the new levy.

**Waste deal.** The Courtauld Commitment and the Hospitality and Foodservice Agreement on waste are merged to form Courtauld 2025 – a plan to cut the resource intensity of the food industry by a fifth within 10 years.

**Criminal lack of activity.** The Food Standards Agency publishes its first ever assessment of food crime in the UK. The conclusion: the industry isn't doing enough to help the National Food Crime Unit do its job.

**Good guide but ...** The Eatwell Guide replaces the Eatwell Plate, which has a 32% lower environmental footprint than the current national diet. Globally, if people followed dietary guidelines (which they don't), 5.1m deaths could be avoided by 2050, while greenhouse gas emissions would fall by 29%.

## APRIL



**Cup controversy.** Celebrity chef turned waste campaigner Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall targets the coffee-shop chains and their trumped-up claims over "environmentally friendly" cups – only one in 400 of which are recycled. The resource minister Rory Stewart annoys his team at DEFRA HQ by suggesting a tax might be in order.

**Sore point.** Hospital admissions for serious reactions to food have shot up almost 75% in the past years, according to Trace One. The growing complexity of processed foods has increased the potential for unlabelled allergens to be introduced, either by accident or as a result of food fraud, the consultancy suggests.

**Reason for cheer.** Oxfam throws a curveball when it says "significant improvements" are being made by food brands to improve their ethical and environmental policies. Unilever and Nestlé topped the table, while Danone and Associated British Foods propped it up.

**British is best.** 55% of consumers want to buy British whenever they can but 45% feel it's more expensive than imported goods and only a third are happy to pay the premium, according to Mintel. And that was before they voted to leave the EU.

## MAY



**Scores on the doors.** Councils want all food outlets in England to be forced to display their hygiene rating. They aren't alone. In fact, it's only the government that doesn't see it as a good idea.

**Scientific progress.** Compass, Sodexo and Unilever are among 150 or so companies that have set science-based emissions reductions targets. The government on the other hand continues to rip up as many green initiatives as it can lay its hands on.

**Turning a blind eye.** Only four countries in the world currently include sustainability in their food-based dietary guidelines, according to research by the UN and the Food Climate Research Network.

**Ethical tipping point.** The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills unveils new plans to end unfair tipping practices. But why not just offer staff a decent basic wage instead?

## JUNE



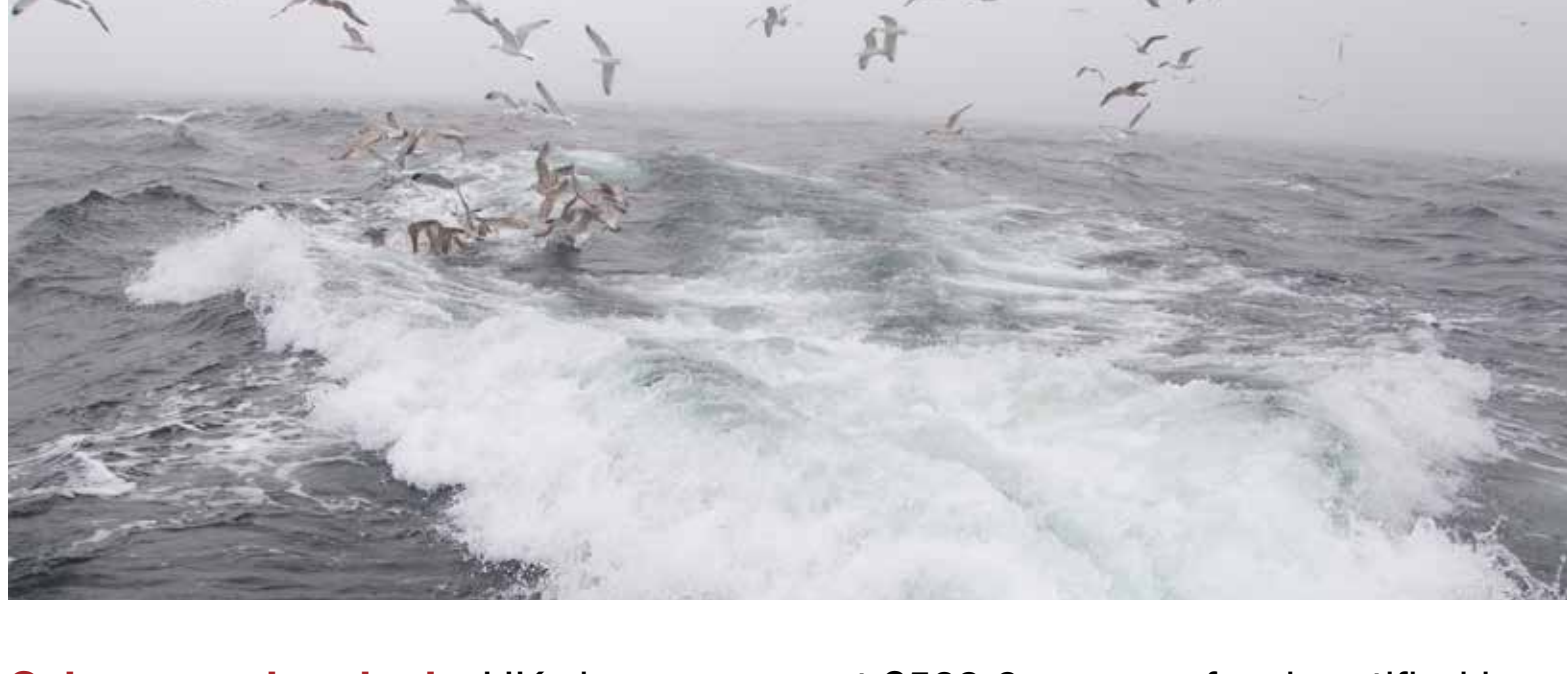
**Leaving EU.** The UK public vote for Brexit, triggering David Cameron's resignation as prime minister. Boris Johnson does a runner and Theresa May, almost by default, becomes the new resident of Number 10. She tries to put the country and the continent's minds at ease: "Brexit means Brexit." Regretful leavers may have been heard saying: "Why didn't you say that before we voted?"

**University challenge.** Food waste is a sustainability priority, finds new research by The University Caterers Organisation and Footprint, but front-of-house and student engagement are a major challenge. Almost three in four (74%) managers want food waste laws.

**Less meat, more money.** Businesses that provide a greater range of sustainable menu choices can expect to enhance their brand reputation, win new customers and improve staff motivation and retention, according to a report by Sodexo UK & Ireland, WWF-UK and the Food Ethics Council.

**Death by chocolate.** Greater portion size control, more reformulation and marketing restrictions on junk food would help prevent 250,000 premature deaths by 2025, say health campaigners.

## JULY



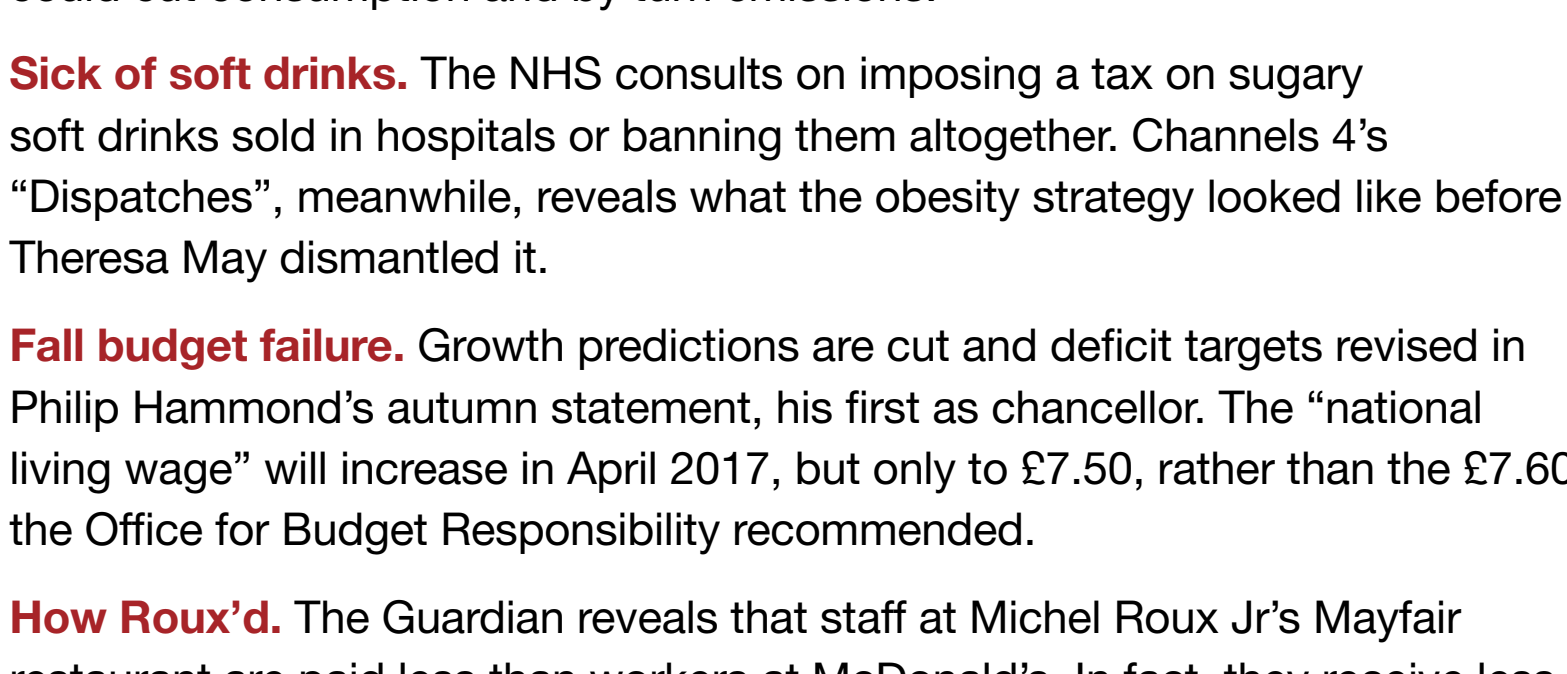
**Soy story.** Many foodservice firms are hiding from their responsibility to source sustainable soy, according to a WWF scorecard. Elior and Pret A Manger scored zero, for instance, while Compass, Nando's and Sodexo managed a few points but are far behind their retail counterparts.

**Pesticide approval.** Glyphosate, the world's most widely used herbicide, is either "probably" or "unlikely" to be carcinogenic to humans. Despite the doubt (between the World Health Organisation and European Food Safety Authority respectively) the European Commission extends the chemical's licence, but only for another 18 months so more research can be done.

**Mission possible.** Impossible Foods launches a meat-free burger that bleeds. Reaction to the new food is mixed.

**Politics and paper cups.** More than 45 companies, including fast-food chains and contract caterers, launch a manifesto to increase the collection and recycling of paper cups. Critics have a point when they say the collaboration is light on detail.

## AUGUST



**Call that a plan?** The government's long-awaited Childhood Obesity Plan is published. It pleases no one. Campaigners say it is weak with pointless targets, while food manufacturers say the targets are not workable and retailers feel it isn't tough enough. The foodservice and hospitality sector, meanwhile, makes no comment at all.

**Taxing issue.** Accountants and other enablers of tax avoidance could have to pay considerable fines under new plans proposed by HMRC.

**Antibiotic use.** The Food Standards Agency vows to tackle the use of antibiotics in livestock farming after new research found growing levels of resistant *E coli* bacteria in supermarket meat. FSA research also shows that consumers believe food businesses should go beyond mandatory targets for reducing the incidence of *campylobacter* in chickens.

**Cage-free flying.** A flurry of retailer commitments to source cage-free eggs represents a seismic shift for the sector and puts pressure on foodservice operators to follow suit, according to Compassion in World Farming. Sodexo and Compass are among those to make commitments.

## SEPTEMBER



**Brexit balancing act.** The British Hospitality Association chief executive, Ufi Ibrahim, tells the Daily Mail that any clampdown on immigration after Brexit risks pushing foodservice and hospitality businesses "off a cliff edge".

**Poor palm show.** McDonald's and Sodexo are "carrying" the sector when it comes to sourcing sustainable palm oil, says WWF.

**Fat stats.** The National Diet and Nutrition Survey shows young children are consuming almost three times more sugar (13% of their food energy) than the recommended daily maximum (5%). The government announces that it will develop "clearer visual labelling" to show the sugar content in food.

## OCTOBER



**Sales go swimmingly.** UK shoppers spent £509.6m on seafood certified by the Marine Stewardship Council in 2015-16, up 27% on the previous year. UK consumers are "some of the most ethically minded", says MSC.

**Innovative idea.** A new government-backed Food Innovation Network will provide industry with access to first-class facilities, such as test kitchens and laboratories to help businesses launch new products.

**Hard to stomach.** Families after unhealthy options, "dodgy" ingredients and no idea where the food comes from should look no further than the UK's top visitor attractions, according to the Soil Association's Out to Lunch league table. And consider: what's on offer at the top-performing sites is £1 less expensive than the bottom.

**Brexit price battle.** Tesco and its supplier Unilever go to war after the latter imposed a 10% price rise for products including Marmite. Cue copious analogies linking the yeast extract people love to hate with the country's EU opinion split.

## NOVEMBER



**Carbon tax.** Plonking levies of 40% on beef and 21% on milk could go a long way to meeting carbon emissions targets. Researchers at the Oxford Martin Programme on the Future of Food said higher prices on high-carbon foods could cut consumption and by turn emissions.

**Sick of soft drinks.** The NHS consults on imposing a tax on sugary soft drinks sold in hospitals or banning them altogether. Channels 4's "Dispatches", meanwhile, reveals what the obesity strategy looked like before Theresa May dismantled it.

**Fall budget failure.** Growth predictions are cut and deficit targets revised in Philip Hammond's autumn statement, his first as chancellor. The "national living wage" will increase in April 2017, but only to £7.50, rather than the £7.60 the Office for Budget Responsibility recommended.

**How Roux'd.** The Guardian reveals that staff at Michel Roux Jr's Mayfair restaurant are paid less than workers at McDonald's. In fact, they receive less than the legal minimum, which could lead to investigation by HMRC. The issue is "endemic" in the sector, suggest experts.



# Price rises on the menu in 2017

Suppliers face rising costs as sterling falls in the wake of the Brexit vote – but clever tactics can keep things under control, says Prestige Purchasing CEO David Read.



**A**s we near the end of 2016 the media is overflowing with commentary about impending inflation. Purchasing offices throughout the country are packed with queues of suppliers asking for double-digit percentage increases. Yet food prices as measured by the consumer price index (CPI) are still falling, albeit more slowly than in the recent past.

How can this be? What is going on? And how can operators protect themselves from cost increases that will be difficult to pass on to the consumer in the current low-inflation environment?

The good news is that the fall in the sterling exchange rate triggered by the leave vote in the EU referendum has caused the resultant inflationary pressures to be the most heralded in recent memory. As recently as quarter three of 2008 we had food inflation of almost 5%, and we survived for the whole of 2011 at above 4% with remarkably little of the political hype we are now seeing.

There's little doubt that prices are already increasing, and will continue to do in 2017. However, a careful examination of the facts will help minimise the impacts while ensuring that suppliers are still treated with respect and critical relationships are maintained.

**There's an aggressive price war going on in retail but there's no similar competitive pressure in the foodservice supply market**

The first clue is in the difference between CPI and what is happening with the price of food delivered to caterers. In the retail market an aggressive price war is going on, with the major supermarkets going toe-to-toe with the discounters. By contrast there is no similar competitive pressure in the foodservice supply market. When we compare CPI with our CGA/Prestige foodservice price index (FPI) there is now a four-point gap between them – with CPI at -2% and FPI at +2%. So for caterers inflation is already a reality.

There are two reasons why exchange rates are affecting food prices. The first is that imported products now cost more as the pound buys less. The second, albeit less significant for now at least, is that in some categories UK products are now extremely competitive overseas, making less available for UK consumption, which in turn drives up prices. It's sensible therefore for buyers to have all the facts at their fingertips about the origin of products, recent changes to market pricing and suppliers' hedging strategies – and to be prepared to examine UK sources as an alternative if the product is imported.

In addition to the exchange rate challenges there are a number of major product categories in which prices are rising exceptionally fast – and for a variety of reasons. These include coffee, chocolate, salmon and British lamb (see box).

There are of course a number of other potentially much larger factors that could affect food pricing in the mid-term, such as the introduction of new tariffs and the enforced changes to farmer support after Brexit, but as these are at least two years away I shall ignore them for now.

The market is still a rising one, though, and as well as the pointers above buyers should definitely use the following tactics:

- If you see a good price then take it.
- Don't hang on hoping for the price to improve – it won't.
- Negotiate longer price holds if you can because they will almost always pay off.
- Contract with the supplier and quickly, before the price increases.

It's also worth accepting that some prices will inevitably have to rise, and to start seeking other ways of driving value. The simple ones are rationalising the number of products that you buy, reviewing delivery frequency and time of day, and consolidating deliveries.

Reviewing the specification of products is another option. Say a supplier is asking for 7% increase on a steak costing £5; then the price will be £5.35. Negotiation may make a higher-spec steak come in at £5.50, but then there is a story for you to tell the customer about why the price has increased.

**A good tactic is also to look for ways to add value to the product so it justifies a cost increase to the customer**

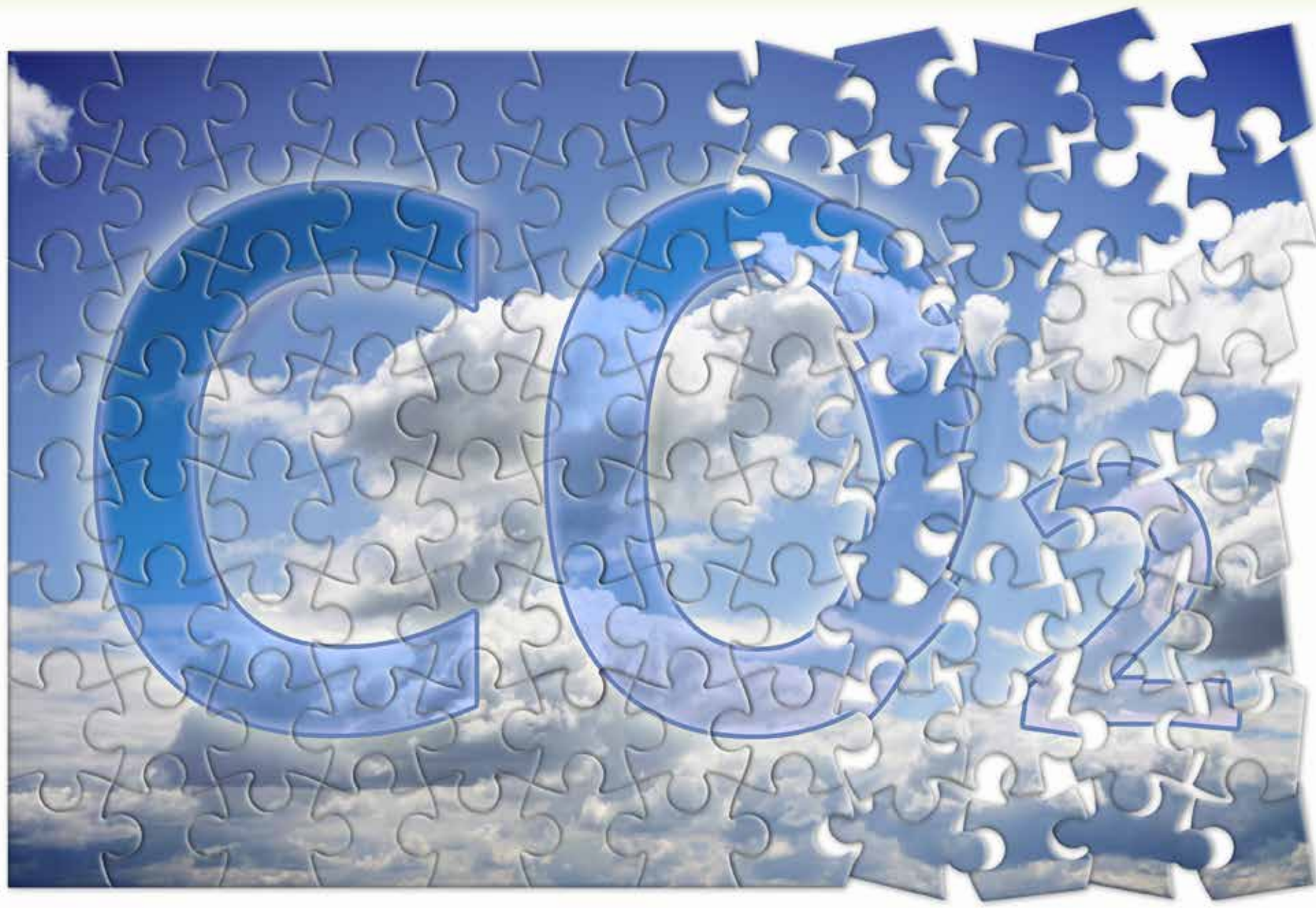
But in this kind of market a good tactic is also to look for ways to add value to the product so that it justifies a cost increase to the customer. This can be done by increasing the specification, or by introducing environmental standards or certifications that can be promoted to customers.

For more than five years we have been in a stable or falling market on food and drink pricing, and buyers have found it easy to apply the simple logic of the market to keep pricing under control. The inflationary market that is with us now necessitates a more intelligent and creative approach to the delivery of value and an even heavier reliance on good market data to drive decision-making.



# Cash in on the climate revolution

The landmark Paris Agreement on climate change offers big opportunities for businesses that move fast, writes Frances Way.



**T**he low-carbon revolution is here. That's the message sent to the private sector by the landmark Paris Agreement on climate change, which became international law in November after ratification at unprecedented speed by the international community.

The low-carbon transition is one of the biggest economic opportunities the world has ever seen. Game-changing technologies and new ways of working and doing business will open the door to growth and innovation, and the companies that move fast will be the ones that thrive.

Recent research from CDP, in partnership with We Mean Business, shows that many companies are already racing to seize the opportunities that await. Some 85% of a thousand or so major global companies analysed in our [“Out of the Starting Blocks”](#) report have emissions reduction targets in place – a significant improvement on previous years and a clear sign that business is on the low-carbon path.

Consumer companies are among the best-performing, with higher than average numbers of businesses reporting an emissions-cutting goal (86% in the “consumer discretionary” group and 91% of “consumer staples” companies). Moreover, these companies are leading the way in terms of aligning their targets with the world's new climate goals, showing they realise the growth opportunity this presents and are ready to take bold steps to adapt.

Across all sectors, 9% of companies we analysed have committed to setting a target in line with what's required by science for a below 2°C pathway; this rises to 16% for consumer discretionary companies and 19% for consumer staples, with companies such as Danone, Nestlé and Unilever committing to set targets via the [Science Based Targets initiative](#).

Walmart recently became the 26th company to have its emissions reduction targets approved by the initiative. The world's largest retailer has committed to reduce its absolute emissions by 18% by 2025, from 2015 levels; it has also pledged to work with suppliers and customers to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the manufacture and use of its products by 1 billion tonnes between 2015 and 2030.

By targeting emissions in its supply chain, Walmart is addressing a significant part of its carbon footprint and incentivising its suppliers (some of which, such as Diageo, General Mills and Kellogg's, already have science-based targets) to do the same. By setting targets in line with the goal that governments have signed up to via the Paris Agreement, these companies are placing themselves well ahead of the pack and showing their customers and investors that they are ready for the low-carbon future.

## We found that decoupling emissions from revenue isn't just possible, it also pays

Our research also showed that the companies starting to reduce their emissions are already seeing the financial benefits. In a historic shift, we identified a group of 62 major companies that are successfully decoupling their emissions from revenue. What's more, we found that this isn't just possible, it also pays: those 62 corporations cut their emissions by an average of 26% while increasing average revenue by 29% over five years. The remaining companies, whose emissions went up by an average 6%, saw their revenues drop by an average 6%.

One company that successfully decoupled, Sainsbury's, achieved revenue growth of 18% over five years alongside a 22% fall in emissions. Carbon-cutting measures included the introduction of low-carbon energy technology at stores and depots, liquid natural gas and liquid bio-methane in its dual-fuel vehicle fleet, and LED lighting on its sales floors.

## If every company achieved its current climate goals, it would still only take the group one quarter of the way to a 2°C pathway

A momentous global effort is required to keep temperature rises below dangerous levels. Businesses have a vital role to play, and a growing number – including many food and hospitality companies – are already playing their part. But while the majority of businesses we analysed are planning to reduce their emissions, overall company targets are short-term and lack ambition: if every company achieved its current climate goals, it would still only take the group one quarter of the way to a 2°C pathway.

There is every reason for business to act fast to ramp up ambition. Hundreds of companies have disclosed to CDP that they anticipate big changes to their operations as a result of the Paris deal, and the business case for speedy climate action has never been stronger. More than 800 institutional investors, representing more than \$100 trillion (£80 trillion) in assets, backed CDP's disclosure request to companies this year. As the Paris Agreement is implemented, they are increasingly interested in knowing which companies look likely to be the winners and losers from the low-carbon transition.

Firms from all sectors are showing that [bold and meaningful climate action](#) is not only possible but makes sound business sense; from science-based targets, to setting an internal price on carbon, to committing to 100% renewable energy. An exciting era has begun for the global economy, and the race is on to see who will grasp the opportunities on offer.




**Frances Way** is co-chief operating officer of the Carbon Disclosure Project (@FrancesWay, @CDP).



# Think like a criminal to beat food fraud

Since the horsemeat scandal, health and safety offences can bring big fines or even prison. Businesses have to be cunning to stay safe, writes Tony Hines.



The scandal over undisclosed horsemeat in food products in the UK forced businesses, the government, auditors, the media and consumers to sit up and take note of what appeared to be a widespread issue in our food and drink industry. The fallout from “horsegate” has led to an acute focus on food authenticity. Businesses are required to have sufficient procedures in place to not only detect fraud but prevent it from occurring in the first place.

In fact, a “good practice” guide to countering fraud was published by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) in November, joining the wealth of existing guidance on the subject of food fraud. The CIEH’s guide suggests companies calculate the financial cost of fraud to their business and invest proportionately depending on the nature and scale of the fraud risk. It also gives importance to establishing a culture of anti-fraud where employees feel confident to whistleblow. It recommends measuring outcomes rather than activities; so, for example, rather than measuring the number of tests undertaken, it recommends having key performance indicators on the financial benefits of counter-fraud work.

The CIEH’s guide can be read as strategic advice for food and beverage businesses in their fight against fraud. It’s then vital to identify the tools that can be used on a tactical level. Within a company’s toolbox there are vulnerability assessments as well as the ability to audit, inspect and to conduct some end-product testing.

Hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP) is an internationally recognised food safety management system that is an essential tool for ensuring that commercial food processors make a safe final product. After cases of deliberate food contamination, TACCP (threat assessment critical control point) was developed to defend against intentional contamination.

TACCP alone, however, left companies exposed to broader unidentified risks in their supply chains as a result of intentional contamination. VACCP (vulnerability assessment critical control point) was therefore developed, and, alongside TACCP and HACCP, the three form a comprehensive set of management processes to ensure the consumer receives a safe and authentic final product.

## Food fraud’s time in the spotlight has coincided with budget cuts at local authority levels

Food fraud’s time in the spotlight has coincided with budget cuts at local authority levels, putting pressure on enforcement resources. The FSA has discussed plans to move to a system where the top 20 or 30 “super food businesses” (which cover the majority of the food supply chain) have regulatory agreements in place with the FSA. As part of this proposed new system, the FSA is trialling a technology-based model for food safety across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Tesco and the restaurant chain Mitchells & Butlers will be part of a three-month pilot starting in December.

The FSA’s plans demonstrate the fact that, from a regulatory point of view, responsibility for food fraud lies with food and beverage businesses. And the stakes are high for those companies that don’t accept their responsibilities.

Since coming into force in February this year, sentencing guidelines in the UK relating to health and safety offences, corporate manslaughter and food safety and hygiene offences show how serious the authorities consider food adulteration offences to be. Fines are levied on a case-by-case basis, up to an unlimited maximum, based on the size of the company and the level of harm caused. For the first time courts can sentence perpetrators to imprisonment in cases of corporate manslaughter.

The case of horsemeat substitution was not shown to be a safety issue. However, just because the scandal didn’t have food safety implications, it doesn’t mean the next case of food fraud won’t either. The consequences of another scandal could be very severe indeed.

Spanish toxic oil syndrome is an example of a devastating food poisoning incident in modern European history. In 1983, 12,000 people required hospital admission after consuming cooking oil that was later found to contain industrial-grade aniline. By May 1983, 339 people had died; by 1992 that figure had increased to more than 800.



As we’ve often said, food businesses need to “[think like criminals](#)” to tackle intentional adulteration and substitution. And current thinking on food fraud recommends that businesses borrow tools and techniques from counter-fraud operations to stop criminals in their tracks. Prevention is key.

**Professor Tony Hines is VP of global regulatory services and crisis management at [Leatherhead Food Research](#). December’s [Footprint Forum](#), in association with Leatherhead, will focus on food fraud.**



# Coconut shy? Don't be.



 tastes good, does good



# Fighting food waste, one step at a time

For our 2016 research we decided to concentrate on one of the biggest issues within the Catering Industry – waste. Where does it come from, what do we do with it and crucially, how do we reduce the amount produced to a sustainable level? This is not only from a budget perspective, but importantly an environmental one. With populations rising, the amount of food waste we produce as a whole simply can't continue.



It's not rocket science that this is one of the biggest issues that we face as an Industry. We've known this for a long time, yet it's a topic that is seen as almost too big to tackle as a whole. The Food Industry throws away almost 920,000 tonnes of food every year, 75 per cent of which is avoidable, but what to do about it? Reasons for not tackling the problem effectively range from 'it's too hard' to 'every solution costs yet more money'.

However, we don't believe that this is a problem without a solution and when broken down into more manageable sectors, we can all work together to make food waste a thing of the past.

When carrying out this research we questioned those working directly in university catering teams, as well as experts in the field of food waste. We also spoke to university graduates and you, our members, to see what is already being done to address the issue and what should be done in the future.

The findings were very interesting. Food waste costs £250m a year in the Education Sector, an area in which operators already have unbelievable tight margins. Students are a tough consumer sector to please and, although university caterers are working hard to reduce waste, it's often difficult in an area where people complain about prices, yet are willing to go to high-price branded competitors if they don't like what is on offer.

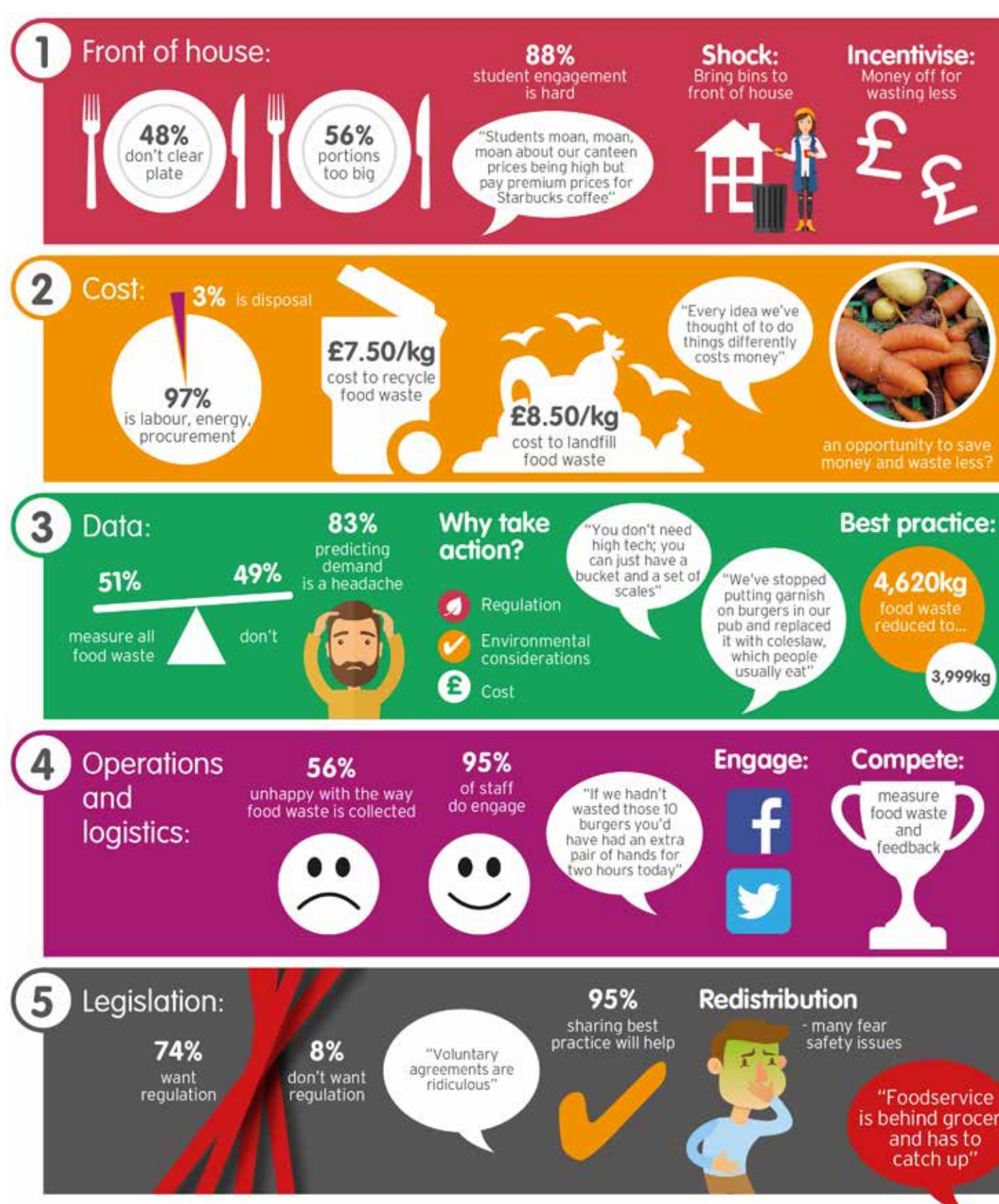
The research report identifies five key challenges facing catering professionals when it comes to managing – and critically, reducing – food waste. This supplement goes into these in detail and looks at how, through being part of the solution, we can help to address the issue of waste and make sure we reduce its impact on future generations.

**Matthew White, Chair, TUCO**

<http://www.tuco.ac.uk>



# Key challenges facing caterers – what did our research discover?



Waste has emerged as one of the defining sustainability issues of our modern food system. Up to half the food produced globally is never consumed. In the UK, 12 million tonnes of food is thrown away annually – yet most of this is avoidable. Over 10 per cent of food waste produced comes from the Education Sector, this is despite the fact that food waste ranks as a sustainability issue of high importance among universities.

The fact that we have a problem is not up for debate. However, what to do about it is far less clear cut, not least in England where there is a lack of legislation, leaving it lagging behind Scotland and Wales. In fact, Scotland has announced a food waste reduction target of 33 per cent by 2025, making it the first country in Europe to do so.

In England, there are proposals for a new food waste bill with plans to force supermarkets, manufacturers and distributors to cut food waste by 30 per cent by 2025. It isn't yet clear whether caterers would be included in this, but our research suggests that voluntary agreements are not working.

So what are the challenges that we face when attempting to cut food waste?

1. **Front of house and student engagement** – overwhelmingly the greatest challenge is encouraging students to change their behaviour.
2. **Cost** – financing infrastructure or student engagement campaigns can be prohibitively expensive for universities on tight budgets.
3. **Data collection and analysis** – capturing data on waste can be complex and is often dismissed as being too time-consuming.
4. **Operations and logistics** – the diversity of operations can create logistical barriers to initiatives.
5. **The legislative landscape** – there is currently no one model, with some countries favouring regulations and other voluntary agreements to reduce waste. There isn't a decision on which is best.

These are not easy challenges to overcome, however, some universities are deploying innovative solutions and taking steps in the right direction. From getting students to realise how much food they are throwing away to running campaigns that encourage staff to talk to consumers about what they really want to see on their plate, it all helps to cut down what goes in the bin.

<http://www.tuco.ac.uk>



# The devil's in the detail



## Front of house: the biggest obstacle

The top thing we uncovered is the urgent necessity to challenge and change the attitudes of both staff and students in the ‘throw away’ culture of waste.

There will be some environmentally-conscious students who actively think about the food they waste, but 88 per cent of universities said that student engagement remains a major challenge. This is particularly acute when meals are pre-paid, with the attitude that more food equals better value. Compounding the issue are situations where caterers are required to provide several options, resulting in more waste if one or more isn't popular.

So what approaches can we use to reduce the food waste from students' plates?

- Talk more and waste less

Ask customers if they want more rather than presuming that they do, but it's not about telling them to eat less, more asking them not to waste food.

- Shock tactics

Students, like most people, want to do the right thing. Bad habits are often the result of a lack of awareness rather than lack of responsibility – ask them to scrape their own plates, they'll soon realise how much goes in the bin.

- Translate less waste into better deals

Setting waste reduction targets will save money, some of which could be translated into discounts for students.

## Cost: investing in change

Next on the list is cost, ranking highly as a prohibitive factor to cutting waste. Whether it be employing more staff, developing campaign materials or investing in new machinery, it is often putting management off making changes.

Through talking to you, we know that intentions are good but this often clashes with budget realities. What needs to be clearer are the cost implications that are attached to waste in the first place, both the cost of surplus ingredients and the high cost of disposal. The price of food waste per tonne in the Education Sector is £2,100. This is less than hotels and restaurants, but still a huge amount considering the wafer-thin margins involved.

There will always be reasons to resist change, but we know from talking to caterers that there is a desire to change, it's about working out what the first steps should be and taking the plunge.

So how can we start to make changes in a way that won't cost the earth? The easiest thing to do is look for the low-hanging fruit. This includes portion control and running staff training in best practice when it comes to waste management. It's also important not to be blinkered to long-term savings by up-front costs, perhaps now is the time to invest in that composter!

## Data collection and management

No matter how good your intentions are, it's almost impossible to make any real difference unless you know exactly how much waste is being produced. This can, however, at times be a complicated task.

Over half of those we spoke to said that they measure all waste, however, many are unable to tell exactly where it originates from, given there are often 20 or more food outlets to consider. In fact, 83 per cent said that predicting demand is the single biggest front of house waste challenge.

Predicting demand hotspots requires an investment of time and resource to carry out the analysis, but there are initial steps which caterers can do to get things started. Communication and collaboration between sites is key, with buy-in essential from everyone, from management to front of house staff. Simply talking to customers and encouraging people to take notice of the food they are throwing away can work wonders.

The thing with data analysis is that it will take time, but the advice from WRAP is to keep it simple, all you need to start is a bucket and some scales. As a next step, engage your waste contractor to see what they can offer in terms of analysis. One university is even getting students involved, with undergraduates from the Business School undertaking a project to look at where waste is produced and how this can be reduced.

## Operations and Logistics

The diversity of the food choices offered is great for students, but often a huge obstacle in terms of waste management.

What are the main challenges?

- Multiple outlets - often there is no one central policy across sites.
- The distance between sites often makes it hard for central waste facilities to be effective.
- Contamination of bins due to lack of staff awareness, or as one university reported, night staff transferring waste between bins without consideration of contents in order to stay under the waste weight limit.

Environmental initiatives can be a hard sell to time-pressed staff in our sector. However, 79 per cent of respondents said they thought it would be relatively easy to get most employees on board.

The key is to keep reminding, retraining and re-inspiring teams on the importance of reducing food waste, otherwise early improvements can soon tail off.

## Legislation: bring it on

Legislation is the latest tool that some countries are using to force a reduction in the amount of food that is wasted. Scotland has recently declared that businesses producing more than 5kg of food waste per week need to separate it for collection. In France, supermarkets have to repurpose unsold food by giving it to charities or other groups. England on the other hand, has traditionally favoured voluntary agreements. This has been met with a mixed response, but our survey respondents overwhelmingly believe that legislation is the only way to force people out of their inertia when it comes to food waste.

We all need to press for legislation, such as the pending food waste bill which will help create a level playing field in terms of food waste. In the meantime there are voluntary agreements such as WRAP's Courtauld 2025 and there is very little to stop institutions collaborating with local partners to redistribute surplus food.

<http://www.tuco.ac.uk>



# This is how they did it...



This study shows, for the first time, the true picture of the challenges faced in our sector when it comes to tackling food waste. Members are already making practical changes to the way they approach food waste and are achieving some brilliant results. Below are two examples of where catering outlets are helping to drive sustainability and change attitudes in universities.

## Swansea University

Home to 16,000 students and 2,500 staff, Swansea University's campus catering operates a variety of restaurants, coffee shops and hospitality outlets. It implemented its first sustainable food policy in 2010 and has since won a number of awards. As part of its commitment to continuous improvement, the University undertook a review of its catering operations, combined with waste monitoring procedures. This showed up key areas of food and packaging waste.

One of the major sources of waste was identified as the over-filling of plates. This is combined with the over-production of food - a common problem that many catering outlets have. The University also has a commitment to making the most of existing ingredients to contribute to its sustainability ethos.

So what measures did campus catering take to solve the issues identified by its review? The first thing was to reduce the size of the serving plates to 10 inches, which in turn had a positive impact on serving size. Alongside this it also trained staff in portion control and made sure they undertook periodic refreshers. Secondly, it introduced a food waste audit procedure which monitors operations and identifies major waste issues. Both these tactics led to the food offering becoming more sustainable, increased savings and consequently, the ability to maintain prices when raw material costs are on the rise.

Since putting these measures in place along with others, such as a greater use of batch cooking, making fresh gravy and stuffing from existing ingredients and cooking food closer to service times when customer numbers can be more accurately determined, there has been an overall reduction in food waste by 20 per cent. This translates into £9,500 per year saved in food procurement costs alone.

Next steps for the team include the sharing of best practice and looking into the redistribution of surplus food through local charities. The University is also opening a city centre café using surplus food from its outlets and educating the local community on health and nutrition.

## The University of Manchester

The University of Manchester, ranked 5th in the UK and 35th in the world<sup>1</sup>, has set a number of aspirational and environmental sustainability targets. Social Responsibility is at the heart of these aims and as a result, the University has developed an award-winning food waste reduction scheme, resulting in a dramatic reduction of food waste and associated costs...

In order to increase perceptions of satisfaction and value for money, catered students at the University were previously able to return for second helpings. Unfortunately, this freedom often resulted in excess food left on plates and students appeared to be somewhat disconnected from the issue of waste. Last year, a four week audit quantified the scale of food waste that was being generated from catered halls - and student plate waste totalled a massive 1.3 tonnes per week.

Following the results of the audit, a new strategy was implemented in September 2015 in order to reduce the amount of unnecessary food waste. Using insights from a study which showed that removing food trays from canteens can lead to a 20% reduction in food waste, the university's catering team took the trays away and began to offer a variety of portion sizes, whilst still offering the same amount of choice to students.

To find out the students' position on food waste and to help raise awareness of the issue, a questionnaire to 200 'catered' students was carried out, which found that 88% of respondents would use facilities to recycle food waste if they were available. Responding to this, the University introduced a food waste-only recycling stream, which is then treated and used to produce gas for energy and fertiliser for crops. Students are also required to scrape their own plates into a new bin area, making them feel more accountable for their waste and freeing up members of staff to help the team in other areas.

These new strategies have been a huge success. The average weekly student plate waste has decreased from 723kg in 2015 to 527kg in 2016 - a massive saving of 27% - and the 2015/16 academic year has been predicted to reduce the amount of food waste by 6.7 tonnes. Although students in catered halls are still welcome to return for second helpings, they are taking less, eating their meal, and often finding themselves too full to want more food.

For this reason, the number of 'general waste' bins needed for catered halls has fallen from 30 to 18, and the overall monetary cost associated with the collection of general waste has fallen. The kitchen food waste is also weighed daily, to ensure staff are monitoring and actively seeking to reduce excess wastage. As a result, the average weekly kitchen food waste has also decreased from 532kg to 511kg per week.

Looking further ahead, the University is currently developing more strategies, including a catered hall food waste competition where the total amount of food wasted by each catered hall is recorded every week, with a competition leader board at the entrance of each hall. The hall that wastes the least amount of food over a term will win a themed dinner service of their choice! The development of 'Eco Hero', an adult sized cardboard character, holding the leader board is also currently underway to add personality and fun, helping the initiative to stand out to the students.

<http://www.tuco.ac.uk>

<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Academic\\_Ranking\\_of\\_World\\_Universities](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Academic_Ranking_of_World_Universities)



# It's a start - practical solutions from members



## Front of house

From talking to students to moving bins to the front of house and asking them to scrape their own plates, there are many schemes aimed at showing diners just how much food they are wasting.

Some universities are going further and looking at their pricing policies, offering students smaller portions or splitting up meals to encourage them to just take what they want. One member stated “We used to charge £4.50 for a roast dinner, now we charge only £2.50 for a main course then students can add sides on top. They can have all sides for £2”.

One university has also tackled this issue by letting students know that they don’t need to overload their plates and can instead return for more, this has reduced food waste on a nightly basis by over half, from 25-30kg to 10-15kg.

## Cost savings

One of our group tackled the issue of portion control by convincing a yoghurt supplier to introduce a smaller pot because they found out too much was being wasted with the larger sizes. Lids on containers for pasta and salad have also been implemented by another university to emphasise portion control.

## Data analysis

Better menu planning benefits from in-depth data analysis and remains a massive opportunity to cut food waste. In order to tackle this, here are some ideas from our members:

- “We monitor very closely dishes that generate more plate waste and then we will tweak or remove the dish.”
- “We’ve replaced salad garnish with coleslaw in our pub, which is generally eaten.”
- “Staff ask students at bins or at tables what was wrong with their food if they’ve left something on their plate.”

## Operations and logistics

The pure diversity of food on offer can mean more waste generation than is necessary on a daily basis. Many universities say that the key to tackling this is communication. In those universities where progress has been most impressive, regular communication with stakeholders shines through. Chefs, students and catering staff will all be involved to assess everything from student feedback on Twitter and waste data from contractors, to new menu ideas.

Some managers conduct spot checks on the bins, whilst others quantify waste in terms of labour costs. For example – if those ten burgers hadn’t been wasted, we could have had extra help for two hours.

## The war on waste – winning one battle at a time

Through conducting this research study, it has become clear that food waste is a huge issue for many universities and one that TUCO members care deeply about. The majority of catering professionals in our sector are extremely environmentally conscious and want to ensure that the lasting impact of their operations on the planet is minimised.

Significantly reducing food wastage will take time, with data analysis and perhaps legislation key factors in achieving truly meaningful results. However, everyone can take steps in the right direction with relatively little investment. These include changes to the way waste is managed both front and back of house, encouraging customers to think about how much they throw away and educating them about waste separation. In addition, asking staff to talk directly to students about the food on offer as well as thinking more about portion size will enable more efficient planning.

Tackling waste is a long-term war; together we will get there – one battle at a time.



Available at  
**Bidvest**  
Foodservice

# +TATE LYLE®

## OUR FAIRTRADE SUGAR HELPS IMPROVE FARMERS' HARVESTS IN COROZAL

By investing in re-planting, farmers in Belize can improve yields by as much as 3 times, and increase their income as a result.

*"They gave me the fertilizer, seed and machinery to re-plant 1 acre of my crop. It has massively improved the productivity. I now get almost three times the sugar from that same acre as I did before."*

Senor Timoteo

Read more Fairtrade stories:  
[www.tasteandsmile.com/fairtrade](http://www.tasteandsmile.com/fairtrade)



Tate & Lyle Sugars is part of

**ASR**  
GROUP



# Meet the team



## David Burrows,

editor

A graduate in agriculture and environmental sciences, and a postgraduate in periodical journalism, David has spent the past 10 years as a writer and editor in B2B publishing. He has been editor of *Footprint* for three years, a role he combines with freelance writing for other titles including *Ends Europe*, *Retail Week*, *Marketing Week* and *Recycling & Waste World*. He has also worked for *The Grocer* and *Farmers Guardian*. Earlier in his career David spent time working for both DEFRA (on waste) and WWF-UK (as part of the One Planet Food team).

[david@footprint.digital](mailto:david@footprint.digital)



## Nick Hughes,

associate editor

Nick is a freelance journalist and editor specialising in food and environmental affairs. He previously worked for *The Grocer* and writes for a variety of trade and business titles including *The Grocer*, *Footprint* and *Retail Week*. During a spell at DEFRA, Nick worked as an adviser on the Elliott review of the integrity and assurance of food supply networks, commissioned by the government in the wake of the horse-meat scandal, and also works for WWF-UK as a food sustainability adviser. Nick has a master's degree in food policy from City University.

## James Eagle

chief subeditor

James has subedited on national newspapers since 2003 and is currently on the Guardian's night news team. He is also a freelance magazine subeditor and book designer. He has been subediting *Footprint* magazine for the past two years.



## Amy Fetzner

head of research & analysis

Amy is a journalist, author and consultant specialising in sustainability. Amy's work focuses on creating engaging communications – from environmental white papers, research reports and articles to her book, briefing documents, case studies and workshops – that inspire, entertain and inform. Amy has an MSc in sustainable development from the University of Surrey.

Amy also co-authored the book "Climb the Green Ladder: Make Your Company and Career More Sustainable".



## Anya Hart Dyke

analyst

Anya has been working in sustainability for more than five years, specialising in the food industry since 2012. She also works on responsible procurement in the public sector and campaigns for greater transparency in company supply chains. In a previous life she worked on small arms control in the former Yugoslavia and latterly researched barriers to integration for ethnic and religious minorities in the UK.



## Catherine Edser

analyst



## Nick Cracknell

analyst



## Trevor Marshall

Design & Art Direction

Trevor is a graphic designer and photographer that has worked with *Footprint* from its conception developing the style and branding through all of *Footprint Media's* marketing items.

## Nick Fenwicke-Clennell & Charles Miers

founders and joint CEOs



We launched *Footprint* in 2007 when concerns for the environment were just becoming mainstream with consumers being encouraged to turn lights off, recycle and buy local. The word "sustainability" was barely on the radar.

Like many ideas, *Footprint* came about as the result of a conversation. The conversation we were having revolved around the futility of encouraging individuals to make small changes to lifestyle when the wider impact would be minimal. What was needed, we reasoned, was for the world's biggest organisations to take this on board, so that small changes would make major gains by the very nature of their size and volume of output. For our own interest we looked around for sources of information for interested companies and found none. *Footprint* was born.

When we went to market with the proposition, many thought it was a fad and a temporary marketing wheeze, while some paid lip service. However, a handful of forward-thinking businesses really got it and supported our quest. As soon as other businesses began to realise that "going green", as it was referred to then, actually fell within the realms of business efficiency with a resulting benefit to the bottom line, the penny began to drop.