

Reducing business waste – Specialised food stores



How to reduce your shop's waste costs

Retailers in NSW could recover an extra 31,911 tonnes of food waste each year instead of sending it to landfill. That's 63.8 million meals that could be saved from landfill – enough food to fill 20 Olympic-sized swimming pools each year¹.

Food waste fills over 55% of the average waste bin of a specialised food store, with paper and cardboard occupying another 25%. That means that around 80% of material currently being thrown away could be recovered instead of going to landfill².

Fifty-three per cent of businesses agree that efficient waste and recycling gives them a competitive edge³.

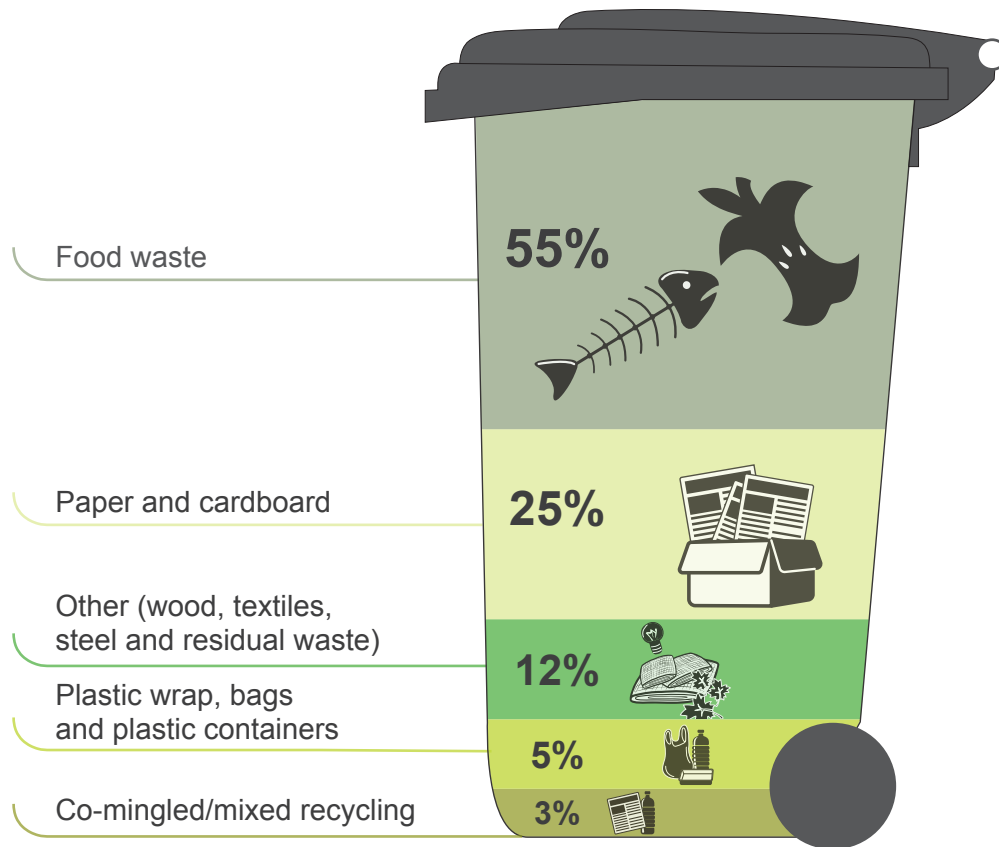
Forty-four per cent of retailers have discussed waste and recycling with their staff³.



Quick fact

Each year a typical specialised food store generates up to 2.3m³ of waste for every 1m² of floor space².

Contents of a typical waste bin in a specialised food store



Contents of a typical waste bin in a specialised food store (% weight of waste generated)²



Want to save on waste?

Join 20,000 businesses already recycling more with the EPA's Bin Trim Program. Get free advice and support to waste less and recycle more. Get up to \$50,000 back on recycling equipment.

[Find a Bin Trim assessor online.](#)



What you can do

Avoid – how can you do it?

- Improve your stock control and order exactly what is needed.
- Order smaller quantities of fresh produce more frequently to minimise spoilage.
- Consider weekly and seasonal variations and how this impacts on the quantity of stock required.
- Check stock deliveries to make sure goods are not damaged. Store or refrigerate produce straight away.
- Offer ripe fruit and stock near its expiry date at a discount rather than throwing it away.
- [Love Food Hate Waste](#) has easy-to-follow advice on how to reduce your business food waste.

Reduce – how can you improve on it?

- Buy in bulk to reduce the quantity of packaging.
- Keep your work areas clean, tidy, labelled and organised.
- Check the temperatures and seals on fridges and freezers regularly. Maintain correct temperatures: fridge 3–4°C and freezer less than minus 18°C.
- Keep dry storage areas dry and clean.
- Rotate stock: first in, first out!
- Check food labels regularly: 'use-by' and 'best-before' dates.
- Consult the Environmental Health Officer at your local council or the [NSW Food Authority](#) for specific advice on food storage techniques to avoid spoilage and preserve food-safe conditions.

Reuse – how can you use it again?

- Return pallets to your suppliers for reuse.
- Ask suppliers to deliver goods in reusable containers.
- Clean, undamaged polystyrene packaging and waxed cardboard boxes can be returned to local markets.
- Offer to pack perishables in cardboard boxes for your customers.

Donate – how can someone else benefit from it?

- If you have surplus, edible food you can [donate](#) it to a food distribution charity. These charities will collect the food from your business and distribute it to those in need.

Recycle – how can you do more?

- Ask your waste/recycling service provider how they can help you to recycle more. Many have services to educate your staff and can help with signage to support your recycling program.
- Compost bins or large in-vessel composters process food organics on-site. This reduces the volume of waste and also creates a useful soil enhancer (compost).
- Separated food waste can be collected by a commercial contractor for transport to a processing facility or it can be collected directly by the processor.



Big benefits at one of Sydney's oldest family-run fruit shops

With help from a \$5000 [rebate](#) from the EPA's [Bin Trim](#) Program, Galluzzo Fruiterers in inner Sydney purchased a baler to reduce their cardboard waste.

The cardboard baler has delivered substantial waste and cost reductions, increased available shop space and given staff more time to focus on customers. The baler is helping Galluzzo Fruiterers recycle 25.74 tonnes of cardboard and 8.76 tonnes of paper annually. [Join Bin Trim now.](#)



- Recycle more packaging materials like cardboard and plastic wrap. Consider using a baler for these.
- Make sure staff, contractors and cleaners follow your recycling program and that they put materials in the correct bins.
- Install clear [recycling signs](#) in the bin room, staff areas, stock rooms, and in-store.
- Keep bins and bin rooms clean and uncluttered.
- If you are a tenant in a shopping complex, ask the centre management to set up a recycling service for you.
- Consider sharing recycling bins and equipment with neighbouring businesses.

You are responsible for making sure your waste is transported to a facility that is lawfully able to accept that type of waste. Make sure you understand [your responsibilities under the law](#).

What else can you do?

- Train your staff in how to handle produce correctly so they reduce or minimise damage.
- Encourage customers to use their own shopping bags.
- Gain commitment from your senior managers to reduce waste and increase recycling.
- Appoint a staff champion to drive your waste reduction and recycling program.
- Regularly [check](#) the amount and type of waste you are putting in the waste or recycling bins.
- Put together a [plan](#) to improve your waste and recycling.
- Reward staff for reducing waste, recycling more and using the correct bins.

How can you get more information?

Contact the EPA Business Recycling Unit, Waste and Resource Recovery. Phone: 131 555 | Email: info@environment.nsw.gov.au

References

- ¹ EPA 2015, *Disposal-based Audit Commercial and Industrial Waste Stream in the Regulated Areas of New South Wales – Main Report*, NSW Environment Protection Authority, Sydney (www.epa.nsw.gov.au/resources/warrlocal/150209-disposal-audit.pdf).
- ² EPA (unpub.), 'Final Report and Attachments: Industry Specific Data Analysis of Bin Trim Round 1, 2016', Environment Protection Authority, Sydney.
- ³ EPA 2016, *Social Research on Small to Medium Enterprises (SME) Waste and Recycling: Summary Benchmark Study*, NSW Environment Protection Authority, Sydney (www.epa.nsw.gov.au/resources/waste/small-medium-business-recycling-research-160139.pdf)

Photos

page 1: Galluzzo's fruiterers, Nathaniel Marsh, TVU Productions
 page 2: Galluzzo's fruiterers, Nathaniel Marsh, TVU Productions
 page 3: Galluzzo's fruiterers, Nathaniel Marsh, TVU Productions
 page 4: Shutterstock image



Fish offcuts saved from landfill

Through participating in the EPA's [Bin Trim](#) Program, Shellharbour Fish Market reduced their waste by 182 tonnes per year. Cleanaway, worked with Shellharbour Fish Market and Stockland Centre Management to introduce three 330-litre food waste bins for recycling fish off-cuts. Each year 172 tonnes of food waste is now reprocessed into compost instead of going to landfill. [Join Bin Trim now.](#)



Find a recycler or equipment supplier

Visit BusinessRecycling.com.au or phone the Business Recycling Hotline on 1300 763 768 to find a recycling service to suit your business. Use the Planet Ark resource on [choosing the right recycler.](#)

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