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THE LEAN STORY

Latest Trend: The Growing Importance of Food Waste Audits

Many chefs remember a time, long ago, when they spread out the contents of kitchen waste bins in front of employees to highlight the value of discarded items. This messy ritual raised awareness and saved lots of money, but today it's a relic of the past.

However, the same underlying concept has begun to return in a different format: **waste auditing**. Operators and consultants have realized that any waste management effort needs to begin with good data: **How much waste do we have? What is it? Where is it coming from?** Armed with this information, it's possible to measure progress: **Is total waste decreasing? What percentage of food waste are we diverting to compost? What is the cost of this waste?**

In fact, the recently-released standard for "[Green Foodservice and Restaurant Operations](#)" from Green Seal formalizes this practice by requiring a "[Total Waste Audit](#)" as a mandatory requirement to achieve certification

- **The reality:** If an operator wants to achieve financial or environmental benefits from waste reduction, a food waste audit is the place to begin.
- **The challenge:** Waste audits take time, often involve sorting through garbage after many items have been mashed together, and it's easy to misrepresent the overall waste stream by measuring on only one day.
- **The solution:** Avoid the mess by measuring waste at the source, before it gets commingled. Capture data for at least a week. And use automated tools to make this process much less time-consuming.

LeanPath is pleased to announce the availability of our Waste Audit Toolkit. This low-cost, rental solution provides access to tracking scales and touch-screen terminals that automate data entry while food is still source-separated. The data is automatically transferred to software that provides push-button reports. Waste audits are faster, cleaner and more accurate because you can easily measure a week of waste. Learn more about the Waste Audit Toolkit by [contacting LeanPath](#).

What is the difference between "Diversion" & "Reduction"?

Diversion: *the act of diverting from a course, activity, or use.*

In waste management, this means diverting food waste from a landfill to an environmentally preferable alternative such as food donation or composting. You can think of it as changing the path of that food waste. Instead of allowing it to fester in a landfill for many decades, producing methane, the waste can be donated or composted into a soil amendment. This is great for reducing the amount of food waste that goes into a landfill, but you are still generating waste

Upcoming Events

June 29
School Nutrition
Association Conference
"[Save Money Through
Energy and Waste
Management](#)."
Las Vegas, NV

July 9
National Association of
College & University
Foodservice, National
Conference: "[ABC's of
Food Waste
Management](#)".
Milwaukee, WI

July 9
Farm to Fork:
[Introduction to Food
Waste Tracking](#)
Milwaukee, WI

August 9-11
[Northwest Sustainability
Discovery Tour](#), "Waste
Management Overview"
Portland, OR

BUZZ WORTHY

– diversion makes a bad situation better but doesn't solve the core problem.

Reduction: *the act or process of reducing*

Reduction is a conscious effort to prevent and minimize the amount of food waste produced in the first place. Often referred to as “source reduction”, this is better than diversion. Reducing or minimizing the amount of food waste reduces environmental impacts in numerous ways. Upstream, there is less demand on the food system and downstream less demand on processing facilities. All along the way, there are carbon reduction benefits due to less hauling and refrigeration. PLUS: the added benefit to source reduction? **Less food purchased = less food wasted = lower food costs!**



WASTE WATCHER

**Profile: Jim Cooley, Executive Chef, Seattle University
Seattle, Washington**

Jim Cooley is Executive Chef with Bon Appetit Management Company at Seattle University. He oversees culinary operations for five locations on this urban campus, anchored by the busy and modern Cherry Street Market.

Seattle University has been using food waste tracking tools from LeanPath to track all pre-consumer food waste for 1.5 years. **He says "I always have good food cost here even with very high [product costs]. I attribute it to ValuWaste."**

[Read more about Jim Cooley](#) and his team's food waste reduction success.

**FOOD WASTE
REDUCTION TIPS**

Low-Waste Merchandising: Smaller Vessels on Buffets Will Improve Quality, Reduce Waste and Save You Money!

One way operators can reduce pre-consumer food waste is by reducing the size of serving vessels, either permanently or progressively during the course of a meal service period. An item does not need to be presented in a 6" deep hotel pan to look bountiful and appetizing to guests. In fact, a 4" or even 2.5" will often look much better and lead to a decrease in leftovers at the end of the meal period. This also gives the operator more flexibility to redeploy small batches of leftovers that never reached the serving line and gives customers fresher, more appealing product.

A notoriously high waste area to review vessel sizes is the salad bar. Start with larger pans of lettuce and as you move through the meal period install progressively smaller pans as demand wiles. Track the containers of proteins and starches, what is left over? Could a smaller crock be used to reduce waste or increase the opportunity for re-use? Remember, if you don't put out the food you have it for the next meal period which saves you food cost.



Jim Cooley
Executive Chef
Seattle University

Welcome, New
LeanPath
Customers!

[Riverside Methodist
Ohio Health
Columbus, OH](#)

[Johns Hopkins
Bayview
Baltimore, MD](#)

[Intel & Bon Appetit
Hillsboro, OR](#)

[Swedish Medical
Center, Cherry Hill
Campus
Seattle, WA](#)

Waste Tracker:

% Waste Reduction for all ValuWaste locations in Missouri:

February 2008:
10,058 lbs.

January 2009:
5,847 lbs.

Percentage Decrease:
41%

Great job everyone!

DISCOVERING POWERFUL DATA

Waste Tracking Helps with Employee Recognition

Employee recognition is a powerful tool that costs little or nothing for managers to do. Employees gain great satisfaction from recognition and this reinforces positive job performance and, ultimately, customer satisfaction. Unfortunately, food waste is an uncomfortable topic for many managers to raise with staff. They don't want to sound critical or punitive, but they want the staff to pay more attention to food waste control. There's a simple answer: get employees engaged in the process of tracking food waste and celebrate their involvement for being part of the solution rather than part of the problem!

ValuWaste Advantage "Employee Recognition" reports makes it easy and automated for operators to identify their more engaged employees and thank them for helping to reduce waste. Only through exceptional participation can chefs and managers get the data needed to reduce pre-consumer waste. Recognition of the top employee participants will show respect and gratitude and may cause others to become more involved in the process.

Want printable reference guides on waste management?

1. Read LeanPath CEO Andrew Shakman's [recent article in The Consultant Magazine](#) and

2. Download a free [Waste Management Guide](#).

Employee Recognition				
2009				
Facility:				
ReportingPeriod: 01/25/2009 - 05/09/2009				
Employee Awards:				
Week	Employee	Award	Criteria	
15-Feb		Salami	Idea Cheese	
29-Mar		Steak	Idea Soup	
12-Apr		Hot Dog	Idea Burgers	
3-May		Pizza	Idea Strawberries	
10-May		Fish	Idea Tots	
17-May		Pizza	Idea Sauce	
24-May		Sandwich	Reduction Idea Deli Meat	
31-May		Hot Dog	Reduction Idea Soup	

Visit the [Food Waste Focus Blog](#) to learn:

1. [Why is it so important to reduce waste](#)
2. [Operator Sentiment Report: Cutting Waste is a Top Priority!](#)
3. [Saving Money on Garbage Hauling Through Waste Reduction](#)

LeanPath consultants post updates 2-3 times a week on waste-related topics, so sign-up for a free subscription!

Learn more about how food waste tracking can help you cut costs! [Contact us](#) for more information or visit www.leanpath.com.



LeanPath -- the experts in food waste tracking systems -- provides software and automated tracking tools to help foodservice operators reduce waste and save money. We offer flexible purchase and service options, enabling customers to start controlling waste **without making any capital investment**, while using food cost savings to cover costs and **put operating dollars back in the budget**.

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