



we're piloting a programme to address the industry's food waste

Each year, Aotearoa's cafes and restaurants discard nearly 25,000 tonnes of food waste, with a startling 61% of it being avoidable. This not only hinders our industry's sustainability efforts but also results in millions of dollars in annual losses for operators. The Restaurant Association, in collaboration with Edge Impact, are committed to address this and develop guidance for the industry to reduce food waste.

To reduce the volume of food waste in the café and restaurant sector we have co-developed a Food Waste Behaviour Change Project which will involve cafes and restaurants across the Auckland and Bay of Plenty regions in a total of four pilots (in two phases) across a two-year period.

The project will measure current food waste in RA member kitchens, and test behaviour change interventions that can help reduce food waste. Learnings will be reported and used to inform a nationwide industry roll-out.

Businesses who are interested in doing a deep dive into the sources of their food waste and ways to reduce wastage, or who want to prioritise environmental sustainability, are invited to take part in the pilot. For more information, either [email us](#), or, [fill out contact details here](#).

Overarching project purpose

This Project will reduce food waste and emissions from food waste in the cafe and restaurant sector in Aotearoa New Zealand. We will help our members to address and make changes to reduce their food waste, advancing their sustainability commitments and introducing cost benefits to the business.

Our goals are to contribute towards

1. Reducing food waste by 10% from the hospitality sector
2. Increasing our knowledge and understanding of the quantity and causes of food waste in NZ
3. Increasing our knowledge and understanding of the effectiveness of different interventions to reduce food waste.

The scope of this pilot project

- Sector: NZ restaurants and cafes – a range of different types of establishments and sizes.
- Regions for pilot: focused on Auckland and Bay of Plenty (and including areas in between these two areas), including smaller townships such as Paeroa, Waihi, Ngatea, Katikati, Tirau.
- Pilot size: 120 (60 in Auckland, 60 in BOP/elsewhere) – pilots will be run in phases, consisting of 30 businesses in each pilot phase.
- Food waste targeted: This programme targets and measures total food waste generated: from preparation, plate waste, or spoilage.

What is involved/required in being a pilot participant?

We need to conduct a **baseline assessment** (1 -week duration) and then **test interventions** (4 -week duration) – participants need to commit to being involved in both.

To minimise disruption to the business and improve data accuracy, a 60L smart bin will be provided to all pilot participants ([find out more about the bins here](#)) - pilot participants will need to use the bin to collect their food waste over the two pilot periods.

- **Step 1:** Participants will take part in a 1-week pilot to measure their food waste, starting February 2024. Participants will be in one of the following baseline assessments:
 - Baseline 1 = (end of) February, Baseline 2&3 = March, Baseline 4 = (start of) April 2024
- **Step 2:** Participants will take part in 4-week food waste pilot trialling different interventions to test the most impactful results in reducing food waste. Participants will be in one of the following pilots:
 - Pilot 1 = July 2024, Pilot 2 = August 2024, Pilot 3 = October 2024, Pilot 4 = November 2024, or February 2025.



Methodology

We will be using a 'control-test methodology' for the pilot to assess the effectiveness of food waste behaviour change interventions.

- The **control group** represents the baseline, or the way people typically behave in terms of food consumption and waste. They do not receive any special interventions.
- The **test group** is exposed to the behaviour change intervention or strategies being tested. These interventions could include educational material, preparation workshops, or other methods aimed at reducing food waste.

We will gather Qualitative research through surveys, photos and/or phone calls with participants and Quantitative data will be gathered through smart bin monitoring (grams/kilograms). We then compare the amount of food wasted by the control group vs the test group. This comparison helps to determine whether the interventions had a significant impact on reducing food waste and should be rolled out into our nationwide programme.

This is a unique opportunity to take part in a significant project to help the industry. The Restaurant Association, along with project partners Edge Impact, will be alongside you through the pilots, will provide training on using the smart bins and be there to answer questions or visit you to assist. The pilot is being developed to minimise disruption to business but will deliver some key insights on food waste and provide guidance on where businesses can make some changes / improvements.