



A checklist of the best circular economy practices for restaurants

We have compiled a comprehensive list of best circular economy practices in restaurants.

Waste and waste reduction are an essential part of the circular economy in the restaurant business. In this checklist, we share best circular economy practices related to management, procurement, menu planning, food preparation, serving, customer service and the sale of surplus food.

- Before the kitchen
- In the kitchen
- After the kitchen

This checklist has been prepared as part of the international Interreg Central Baltic Ce4Re project - Development of joint circular solutions in the Central Baltic restaurant sector.

BEFORE THE KITCHEN MANAGEMENT

- ✓ Check your attitudes, because they make a big difference: do you feel that waste can be prevented?
- ✓ Do you know where waste comes from? Prevention and reduction cannot be achieved without daily monitoring and evaluation. Weighing also allows you to observe changes. Understanding the composition of food waste allows you to adapt your menus.
- ✓ Improve internal communication and communication with suppliers and customers.
- ✓ Create partnerships: all actors in the food chain have an important role to play in preventing and reducing waste and wastage.
- ✓ Regularly train and motivate staff on the right ways to prevent waste and loss.
- ✓ Set a target for waste and waste reduction.
- ✓ Don't leave measurement results in a desk drawer - make measurement review part of team meetings.

BEFORE THE KITCHEN

PROCUREMENT OF PRODUCTS

- ✓ Optimise your ordering and analyse your purchasing behaviour: which products do you buy most often and from which suppliers?
- ✓ Make as accurate a sales forecast as possible with the information you have: what, how and how much food should be produced to minimise waste and improve demand forecasting.
- ✓ Use digital tools and accumulated data from past sales to help forecast future demand.
- ✓ Order carefully and in appropriate batch sizes based on previous sales and "waste records".
- ✓ Source raw materials from local farmers and suppliers to reduce transport emissions and support the local economy. Make contracts with local farmers.
- ✓ Negotiate flexible arrangements with farmers and local suppliers to adjust the quantities ordered and delivery dates.
- ✓ Avoid packaging waste by building personal relationships with producers and telling them about your needs. Ask them to use reusable and returnable containers when buying raw materials.
- ✓ Learn how to forecast production volumes.
- ✓ Get to know the preferences of your customers. Tasty food rarely ends up on your plate!
- ✓ Precision in ordering raw materials - check stocks before you order.
- ✓ Only source raw materials that are intended to be used. Following FIFO (First In First Out) and FEFO (First Expired First Out) principles is the basis of systematic inventory management.
- ✓ Install energy-efficient appliances and furniture to reduce water and energy consumption.

BEFORE THE KITCHEN

MENU PLANNING

- ✓ Put less variety on the menu.
- ✓ Make the menu flexible by allowing customers to combine main courses with different side dishes, to personalise their order.
- ✓ Adjust the portion sizes according to your customers: sizes S-M-L.
- ✓ Use the same ingredients in different recipes and identify which ingredients can be cross-used in several dishes.
- ✓ Make a "menu of the day" with ingredients that are about to expire.
- ✓ Redesign your menu based on what local producers have to offer.
- ✓ Adjust your menu according to the seasonal products and reasonable costs.
- ✓ Also design your drinks list according to sustainable development principles.
- ✓ Take a look at your menu: what are the most difficult dishes to manage in terms of waste?
- ✓ Improve the recipes of dishes that cause a plate star to make them more palatable for diners, for example by adding spiciness.
- ✓ Consider whether dishes for special diets could be standardised into a single dish suitable for all diets.

IN THE KITCHEN

FOOD PRODUCTION BASED ON A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

- ✓ Ensure you know sustainable cooking techniques.
- ✓ Reuse leftover raw materials, be creative
- ✓ Use by-products, such as malt, to make new dishes.
- ✓ Use all the raw materials without wasting resources.
- ✓ Use all parts of the vegetable from root to leaf - with ideology. When it comes to animals, maximise their full potential from nose to tail - with ideology.
- ✓ Save energy when cooking. Can the menu include more dishes that do not require energy to prepare? Use renewable energy sources.
- ✓ Compost organic waste and use this as fertiliser. Set up a composting system to turn food waste into nutrient-rich soil for local farms or gardens.
- ✓ Consider of used coffee grounds as a fertiliser for soil, flowers, herbs and vegetables.

IN THE KITCHEN

SERVING

- ✓ Manage portion sizes, for example by using smaller plates.
- ✓ Use smaller bowls and reduce the size of serving plates. Use smaller serving utensils and make sure the holders guide to the correct portion size
- ✓ At the buffet, change to smaller bowls as you serve.
- ✓ Offer customers the opportunity to take a review. Put this information out there, and encourage customers to return to the takeaway table rather than having too much food at once.
- ✓ Give a discount to customers who arrive to dine in the last half hour if all dishes are no longer available at the takeaway table. Offer discounts before closing time.
- ✓ Serve some products, especially more expensive ingredients, in predetermined sizes, portioning the food in advance.
- ✓ Apply made-to-order production to selected foodstuffs to better control overproduction, especially for expensive raw materials.
- ✓ Tell customers portion sizes and describe the dishes and ingredients precisely: 'Enough for two', 'For a small appetite', 'Perfect for sharing'.
- ✓ Use compostable to-go packaging, returnable containers. Can customers use their own containers for takeaway?
- ✓ Provide a deposit return scheme where customers can return packaging materials for reuse. A restaurant can offer customers the opportunity to return empty glass bottles or plastic food trays for a deposit.
- ✓ Towards the end of your meal, consider topping up your line-up carefully.
- ✓ When serving coffee, it is best to use automatic instead of large thermostatic pots whenever possible.
- ✓ Focus on drinking water: use water jugs instead of single water bottles. Utilise surplus water for watering plants and as dish washing.

AFTER THE KITCHEN

CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SURPLUS FOOD SALES

- ✓ Design information campaigns for customers on the facts about food waste. Educate them and give them a new perspective on eating.
- ✓ Reward the customers if they take sustainable actions.
- ✓ Tell your story to customers. Tell customers about the food production process and the origin of the ingredients. Use pictures.
- ✓ Ask for feedback if plate waste occurs, identify unpopular dishes and adjust the menu accordingly.
- ✓ Tell us about the quality of the food, rather than the number of dishes.
- ✓ Offer the possibility to take home uneaten food.
- ✓ Use technology, such as the ResQ app, to allow customers to buy surplus food and maximise revenue.
- ✓ Donate surplus food to social causes, charities and food banks, reducing waste management costs and improving your reputation.

AFTER THE KITCHEN

OTHER

- ✓ Decorate according to circular economy principles. Decorate interiors without using new materials.
- ✓ Fostering social capital and ensuring the well-being of workers. Pay attention to the community around you.
- ✓ Think about pricing: could pricing by weight help minimise waste, making customers think more carefully about the amount of food they take.