

Love Food Hate Waste (WRAP, UK)

United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland)



Population: 63,182,000¹

Land Area: 243,610 km²²

Density: 259.4 persons/km²

Median Age: 40.3 years³

2011 UK per capita disposal rate: 514 kg per capita⁴

Program Highlights / Summary

WRAP's Love Food Hate Waste (LFHW) campaign started in 2007 to help UK households tackle food waste in response to WRAP's ground breaking research on the scale and types of food wasted from UK homes. Working with retailers and brand owners, local authorities, businesses, community and campaign groups, LFHW provides tips, recipes, messages, graphics and consumer insights as part of targeted campaigns. The program is designed to reduce the 7 million tonnes of food waste generated annually (60% which could have been eaten). Household food waste makes up almost half of all food waste in the UK.

This is a tremendously successful national program supported by the governments of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and delivered by WRAP, a non-profit organization that was set up in 2000 to help recycling initiatives take off in the UK and create a market for recycled material. The LFHW program has captured public support in the UK and created interest globally. Cities around the world are looking at ways to emulate the program, implement parts of the program or link to the rich resources for individual homeowners that have been developed as part of the program in the UK, but are universally applicable. Franchise opportunities are available internationally.

Love Food Hate Waste is one of the ways WRAP delivers the Courtauld Commitment (CC): a voluntary agreement aimed at improving resource efficiency and reducing waste within the UK grocery sector. It was launched in 2005 and is now in its third phase. The Commitment supports the UK governments' policy goal of a 'zero waste economy' and climate change objectives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. <http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/what-is-courtauld>

A powerful vehicle for change, programs undertaken as part of the CC have resulted in real reductions in packaging and food waste, and realized significant commercial savings. Over 50 major retailers, brand owners, manufacturers and suppliers signed the agreement.

¹ UK Census 2011 http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_292378.pdf

² Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom#Geography

³ CIA World Fact Book <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/uk.html>

⁴ Total waste treated per capita – unclear to what degree this captures ICI, CRD as well as residential. 2011 UK stats from Eurostat – <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

Organics Case Study 1: Waste Reduction

As a result of actions by signatories, Love Food Hate Waste, local authorities and charity partners, 670,000 tonnes of food waste and 520,000 tonnes of packaging waste (1.1 million tonnes) has been avoided across the UK, since implementation. Specifically, in terms of household food waste, an absolute reduction of 3.7% (270,000 tonnes per year) was achieved between 2010 and 2012. Avoidable household food waste was reduced by 5.3%, saving consumers £700 million and local governments £20 million a year in 2012. The carbon savings associated with the reduction in avoidable household food waste amounted to around 930,000 tonnes of CO₂ per year.

<http://www.wrap.org.uk/node/9297/>

Since 2007, avoidable household food waste in the UK has been cut by an impressive 21% (from 5 million tonnes to 4 million tonnes). Yet people still throw away a staggering 4.2 million tonnes of household food, which could have been eaten. Almost half of this food goes straight from the fridge or cupboard to the bin and doesn't even make it onto a dinner plate.

WRAP has carried out research, which shows it could be possible, based on the available evidence, to reduce avoidable household food waste by half by 2025, compared to when they started work in 2007. Given the financial and environmental benefits of such a reduction to the UK, WRAP's CEO, Dr. Liz Goodwin is calling for a "major combined effort" with retailers, brands, governments and consumers to work together towards this common goal.

Program Details

Promotion / Education

The program partners (retailers and brand owners, local governments, businesses, community and campaign groups) develop campaigns and tools for specific audiences to change behaviour to reduce food waste. These campaigns focus on food waste thrown away by households. Strategies look at why food is thrown away at different stages: planning, buying, storage, preparation and use different communications channels, either directly or through partners, to encourage behaviour change. Working with retail and manufacturing partners has resulted in changes to labelling and packaging that assist households in fully using the food they buy.

The top three uneaten foods that Britons are throwing away include every day essentials: bread, potatoes, and milk. The equivalent of a staggering 24 million slices of bread, 5.8 million potatoes, and 5.9 million glasses of milk are wasted daily. Chicken also made the top ten with the equivalent of 86 million chickens thrown away each year, despite being the nation's favourite meat. Buying more than is needed, lack of clarity around storage and labelling, and over-estimating portions are just some of the reasons for the waste, reveals WRAP's pioneering report into the actual waste we generate, *Household Food and Drink Waste in the UK* (2012).



Organics Case Study 1: Waste Reduction

Six Local Partnership Advisers (LPAs) have been working since April 2011 to promote food waste prevention and support the Love Food Hate Waste (LFHW) campaign. The LPAs specialise in 'cascade training', i.e., training groups of individuals who then pass this information on to others. The core approach involves a three-hour 'Trainer Support' event (involving up to 30 attendees), although there are also shorter 'Awareness Raising' events. Cascade training has a strong grounding in the literature and came to the fore with the publication of Malcolm Gladwell's *The Tipping Point* which explained how social trends spread through society like contagions, often driven by individuals called 'mavens' who have specialist knowledge.

Supporting Policies and Regulations

On September 20, 2011, The European Commission released a report called: 'The Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe', which defines medium and long-term Europe-wide objectives on resource efficiency, and how the Commission plans to achieve them. The European Commission represents the interests of the EU as a whole.

The objectives set out in the Resource Efficiency Roadmap ([see letsrecycle.com story](http://letsrecycle.com/story)) requires member states to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill and to maximize recycling and reuse. The UK is viewed as the leader globally in food waste prevention.



Supporting Systems / Drivers

The need to decrease GHGs, water use and ensure food security; the need to save both consumers and local authorities costs (both food and waste).

Program Results⁵

Financial Data

Operating Costs

Partners: retailers and brand owners have spent over £15 million to help their customers reduce food waste. However, for every £1 spent on LFHW, WRAP estimates that £500 of food is saved from being wasted.

Staffing Implications

At the start, there was a campaign manager, a PR manager, a web and social media specialist and two technical people, and many contractors. Currently, most of the work is done through program partners and there are ~11 FTE, mostly trainers, to train organizations and communities to deliver LFHW and build up people's skills in the community.

Cost Recovery

A program partner received lottery funds to extend their community engagement to another target group. The decrease in food waste achieved represents £3.3 billion in consumer food purchases avoided. £85 million saved in tipping fees and landfill charges by local authorities.

⁵ Data in this section from http://www.wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Information%20sheet%20-%20reducing%20household%20food%20waste%20in%20the%20UK%202012_0.pdf and personal communications covers the time period between 2007 until November 2013.

Organics Case Study 1: Waste Reduction

Environmental

Reduction and Diversion

Overall since 2007, household food waste decreased by 1.1 million tonnes (2.3 million tonnes total waste prevented). Focused trials of the community engagement approaches led participants to reduce their food waste by 50%.

Disposal Impact / Landfill Space Savings – 2.3 million tonnes total waste prevented between 2007 and 2013

GHG Reduction – 4.4 million tonnes

Water – 1 billion tonnes saved

Social

Political Acceptability

Fully supported by the governments of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and delivered by WRAP, a non-profit organization. The UK Government funded a voluntary Courtauld Commitment with the UK grocery retail sector to help them become more efficient with resources. 52 major retailers, brand owners, manufacturers and suppliers have signed the agreement. The retailers represented over 90% of the UK's grocery supermarkets. Over 300 local governments support LFHW with workshops and working with community groups, housing associations and businesses.

Community / User Acceptability

Retailers have developed their own initiatives to reduce their own and their customers' food waste with the support of WRAP. LFHW has partnered with community groups to develop community engagement methods to help consumers reduce food waste. Individuals have also started their own initiatives to use leftovers, and redesign recipes to prevent food waste. Data shows that the number of people reporting that they use specified behaviours has increased over the program duration.⁶

Community Economic Development

Most EU and UK programs and policies make a direct link between reducing waste and increasing economic growth. Referring to the Resource Efficiency Roadmap, Environment Commissioner said: "Waste is too valuable to just throw away, and if you manage it right you can put that value back into the economy. Six member states now combine virtually zero landfilling and high recycling rates. Not only do they exploit the value of the waste, they have created thriving industries and many jobs in the process. This report shows how they achieved it: by making prevention, reuse and recycling more economically attractive through a selection of economic instruments. We now have a common responsibility with the member states and local authorities to ensure that these instruments are effectively used and spread across the EU. This is one of the central goals of the Resource Efficiency Roadmap."



⁶ WRAP presentation at Metro Vancouver 2014 Zero Waste Conference
<http://www.metrovancouver.org/zwc/presentations/Presentations/RichardSwannell.pdf>

Lessons Learned

- Need to raise awareness of waste
- Partnerships are critical to success (working from the inside, generating better campaigns through learning partners' perspectives, reaching different and more numerous audiences, sharing resources)
- Working together it is possible to make a real impact on daily food waste.
- Need to keep building on existing program to reach new households and continually progress, which can be hard in tough economic times
- Need to monitor progress and adapt program based on new data
- Make it easy to act and keep it positive
- Use every communications approach possible
- It takes time to change behaviour
- Changes in the retail environment support behaviour change and initiatives should be integrated in this way

Communities with Similar Programs

- Food – Too Good to Waste in King County, Washington
- Program planned for York Region, Ontario

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