

Good Management Practices on Food Waste Reduction

Introduction

Owing to the increase of population and the dining-out habits of Hong Kong people, food waste production is continuously on the rise. About 3,000 tonnes^(Note 1) of food waste are disposed of each day, contributing up to 30% of municipal solid waste. If food waste generated from restaurants is not handled properly, it will not only lead to environmental hygiene problems but also increase loadings to the scarce capacity of our landfills. Hence, there is an imminent need to take appropriate measures to reduce and properly handle food waste.

This leaflet aims to provide a concise guidance to help the restaurants and food & beverage industry understand and apply good management practices and practical measures to reduce food waste

DID YOU KNOW ?

Food waste can be broadly classified as:

Pre-consumer Food Waste

- Expired or spoiled food
- Food waste generated from mishandling that required disposal
- Surplus ingredients and stuff being disposed of before cooking (scraps)

Post-consumer Food Waste

- Leftover food
- Inedible parts of food (e.g. fruit peels)
- Food used for garnishing (e.g. "ornamental flowers" made from carrot)

Waste Management Hierarchy: ^(Note 2)

A three-tiered approach is adopted in the waste management hierarchy, which involves, in descending order of priority:

Avoidance and Minimisation

Reuse, Recovery and Recycling

Bulk Reduction and Disposal

Waste Hierarchy(Figure)

Reduce waste in the first place	Avoidance and minimization	Least effort but maximum return
Low		
Costs to taxpayer	Reuse, recovery and recycling	Strategy optimisation(shifts with time)
High		
Diminishing landfill space and building new infrastructure	Bulk reduction and disposal	Most effort but minimum return

Sources of Reference Information:

(Note 1) Monitoring of Solid Waste in Hong Kong - Statistics in 2009

(Note 2) A Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)

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Practical Tips

- ✓ Reduce wastage during food preparation
- ✓ Avoid or reduce unnecessary garnishes
- ✓ Always adopt the “first-in-first-out” principle to avoid rotting of food due to expiry
- ✓ When hygiene condition allows, consider giving surplus food to people or organisations in need
- ✓ Monitor the amount of food waste to be disposed of and assess their values
- ✓ Educate and provide training to staff on waste reduction and its merits
- ✓ Carefully use food materials to minimise wastage
- ✓ Wisely plan to avoid over-purchasing, excessive storing and producing food
- ✓ Suitably advise customers to order food appropriately and encourage them to take home unfinished food to avoid wastage
- ✓ Separate food residues from other wastes to facilitate subsequent recycling and recovery, such as composting
- ✓ Establish systems and appoint dedicated staff to implement waste reduction measures
- ✓ Offer incentives to staff encouraging them to implement waste reduction measures

Using Composter to Handle Food Waste

Restaurants and food & beverage industry can consider using composters to treat food waste in order to minimise the amount of waste for disposal.

How food waste composters work? The composter provides a suitable environment to allow the micro-organisms inside the compartment to decompose, ferment and convert the food waste into organic fertilizer.

Input of Food Waste	Mixing	Decomposition	Fermentation	Odour Removal	Organic Fertilizer
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Extended Reading

- ① A Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)
- ② Guideline on How to Promote Green Lunch in School
- ③ Testing Guideline on the Degradability and Food Safety of Containers and Bags
- ④ Non-Exhaustive List of Local Suppliers of Electric Composters

The above-mentioned information can be downloaded from the following websites or obtainable by calling to the Compliance Assistance Centre:

Hong Kong Waste Reduction Website (www.wastereduction.gov.hk)

Green Restaurant
環保食肆

Compliance Assistance Centre: 2838 3111 [Press “5” after choosing language]

Green Restaurant Website : <http://www.greenrestaurant-hk.org>

Environmental Protection Department Website <http://www.epd.gov.hk>

Environmental Protection Department