
Consumer food waste – Evidence and action

Andrew Parry

WRAP

What I'll cover

- Why focus on consumer food waste?
- Some insights from WRAPs research
- Learnings from taking action
- Opportunities going forward





Helping you maximise resource efficiency

Find out how to achieve **economic benefits** and transition to a **circular economy**

[More about us >](#)

REPORT

Outcome of Courtauld 2

A total of 1.7 million tonnes of waste was prevented through the influence of the Courtauld Commitment 2, saving £3.1 billion



Our four strategic areas



Action since 2007 to reduce food waste

**THE COURTAULD
COMMITMENT**



Why focus on consumer food waste?

- Household food waste = ca 50% of the total arising in the UK:
 - 4.2 Mt avoidable; £700 per average family
 - 13 billion “5 a day” portions; 17 Mt CO₂e
 - Associated with 4% of the total UK water footprint
- 1/3 of out of home food waste is from customers plates (0.3 Mt)
- Ca 4 Mt more food needed by 2025
- Unintended consequences of moves to a healthy, sustainable diet
- Only ca 15% of household food waste is collected/used in a way that minimises impact

60% avoidable



17% 'possibly' avoidable



23% unavoidable



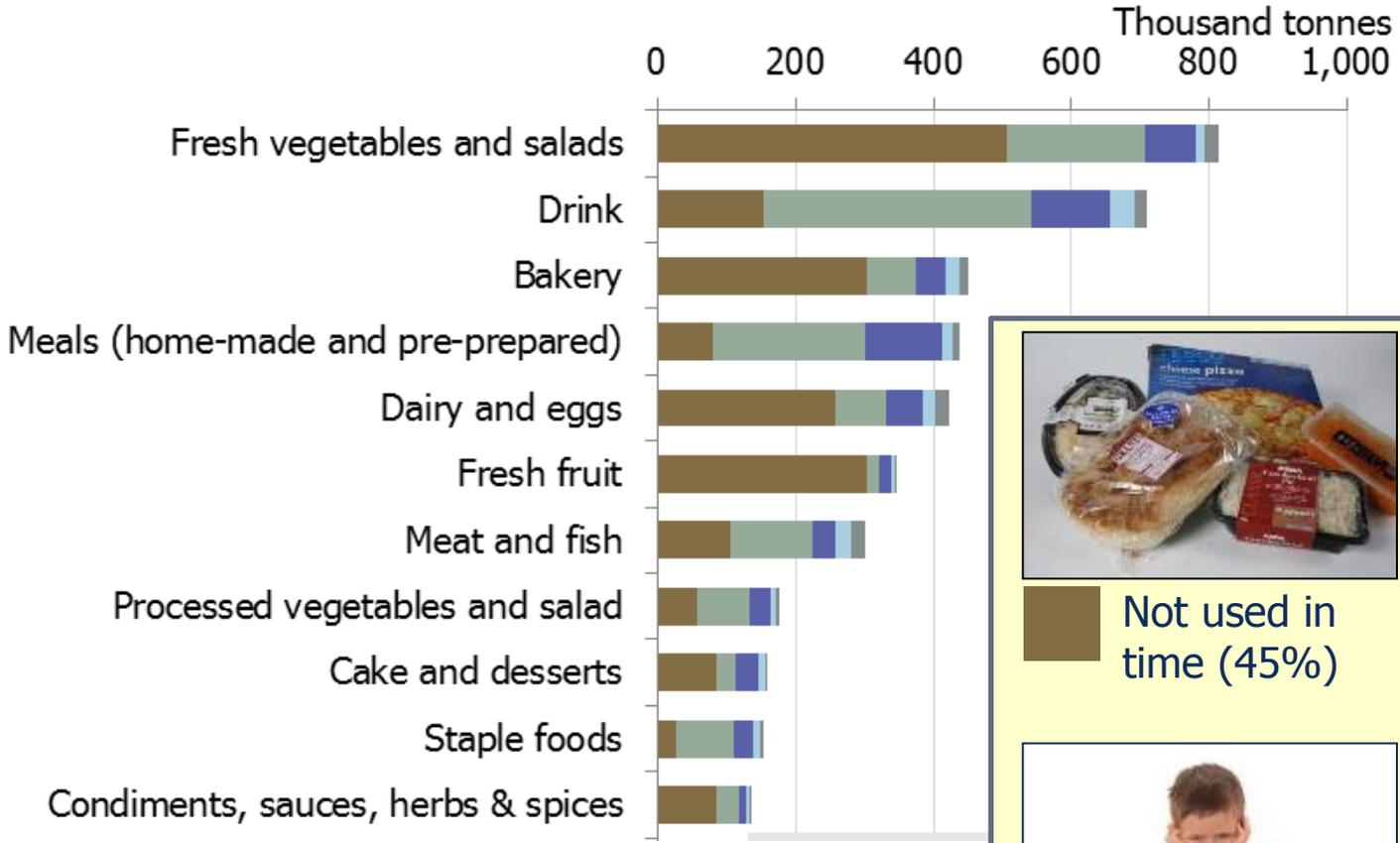
Importance of robust and relevant evidence

 <p>The food we waste</p> <p>A report of the amount of food and drink that is wasted in the UK and the impact of this on the environment. The report provides information on how to reduce food and drink waste and how to recycle it.</p>	 <p>Down the Drain</p> <p>Quantification and exploration of food waste by households in the UK</p>	 <p>Household Food and Drink Waste in the UK</p> <p>A report containing quantification of food and drink waste in the UK. It forms studies covering all major disposal routes and local governments and the food and drink waste to help us all reduce the amount we purchase but don't eat.</p>	 <p>New estimates of food and drink waste</p> <p>A report presenting updated estimates of food and drink waste, alongside supporting evidence.</p>	 <p>Helping Consumers Reduce Food Waste - A Retailer's Role</p> <p>In 2009, WRAP undertook a survey across a range of factors believed to be responsible for food and drink waste. In 2011, the work was repeated to see if any changes had occurred.</p>	 <p>Household Food and Drink Waste in the United Kingdom</p> <p>This report provides estimates of food and drink waste generated by UK households, why it is wasted, and how to reduce it. It updates WRAP's 2009 waste.</p>	 <p>Econometric modelling of household food waste</p> <p>Using an econometric model to estimate the relationship between food waste and food purchase.</p>	 <p>Household food and drink waste: A product focus</p> <p>This report provides extensive details about waste including detailed research about individual instances of waste and the group packaging. It also provides details of what the most waste and the percentage of people who will help WRAP to help people waste less food.</p>	 <p>Household food and drink waste: A people focus</p> <p>This report explores the relationship between the level of avoidable food and drink waste from households in the UK and factors including socio-economic status, behaviour and others relating to food, such as health eating and time available for food-related activities. These insights will support WRAP and its partners to develop more effective ways to help people waste less food.</p>
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Download our research at: www.wrap.org.uk/waste-resource-listing

2007

2014 



Not used in time (45%)



Cooked, prepared, served too much (33%)



Personal preference (15%)



Accidents (4%)

Other (3%)

Avoidable food waste: amounts and reasons

Influences: Cultural, Governmental, Demographic, Technological, Economic, Industrial

Retail Supply Chain

Product

- Shelf life / formulation
- Production methods & location

Packaging

- Functionality
- Labelling

Retail

- Portioning & storage 'devices'
- Marketing
- Price promotions
- Communications campaign

The Individual

Attitudes
Values
Motivation
Habit

Knowledge & skills related to behaviour
Awareness of the issue
Facilities & resources

Food-waste specific behaviours

Planning

Buying

Storage

Preparation

Use

Intermediate Outcome:

Quantity of household food waste

Final Outcomes: Environmental and economic impact of food waste

The broader context



Food Waste Collections



Food Provenance



Packaging

Food Safety



Food / food waste

Food Inflation



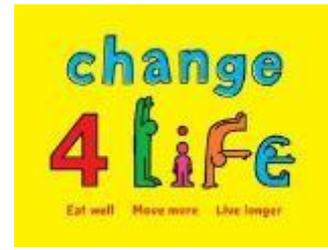
Climate Change



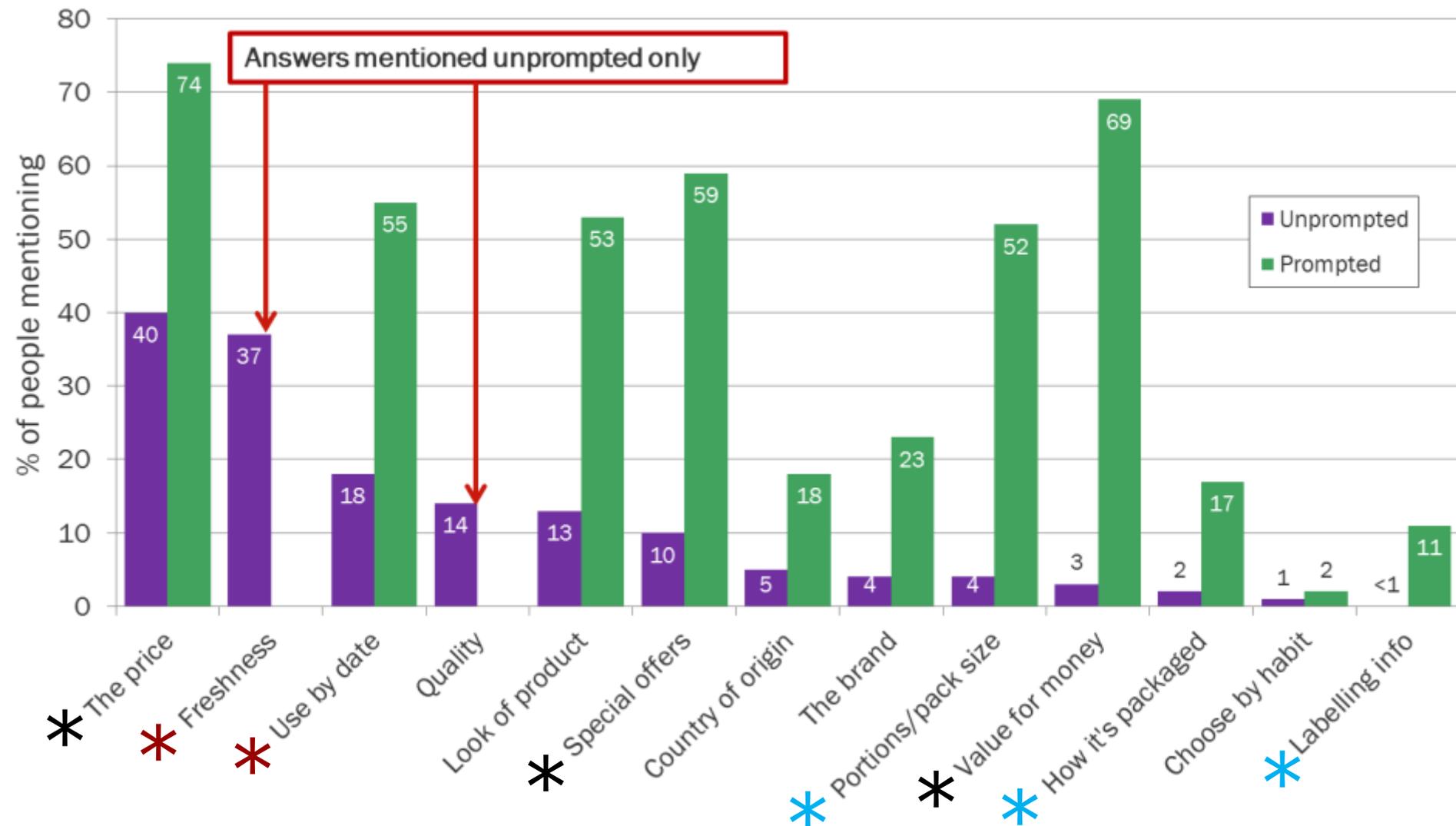
Water Scarcity

Food Security

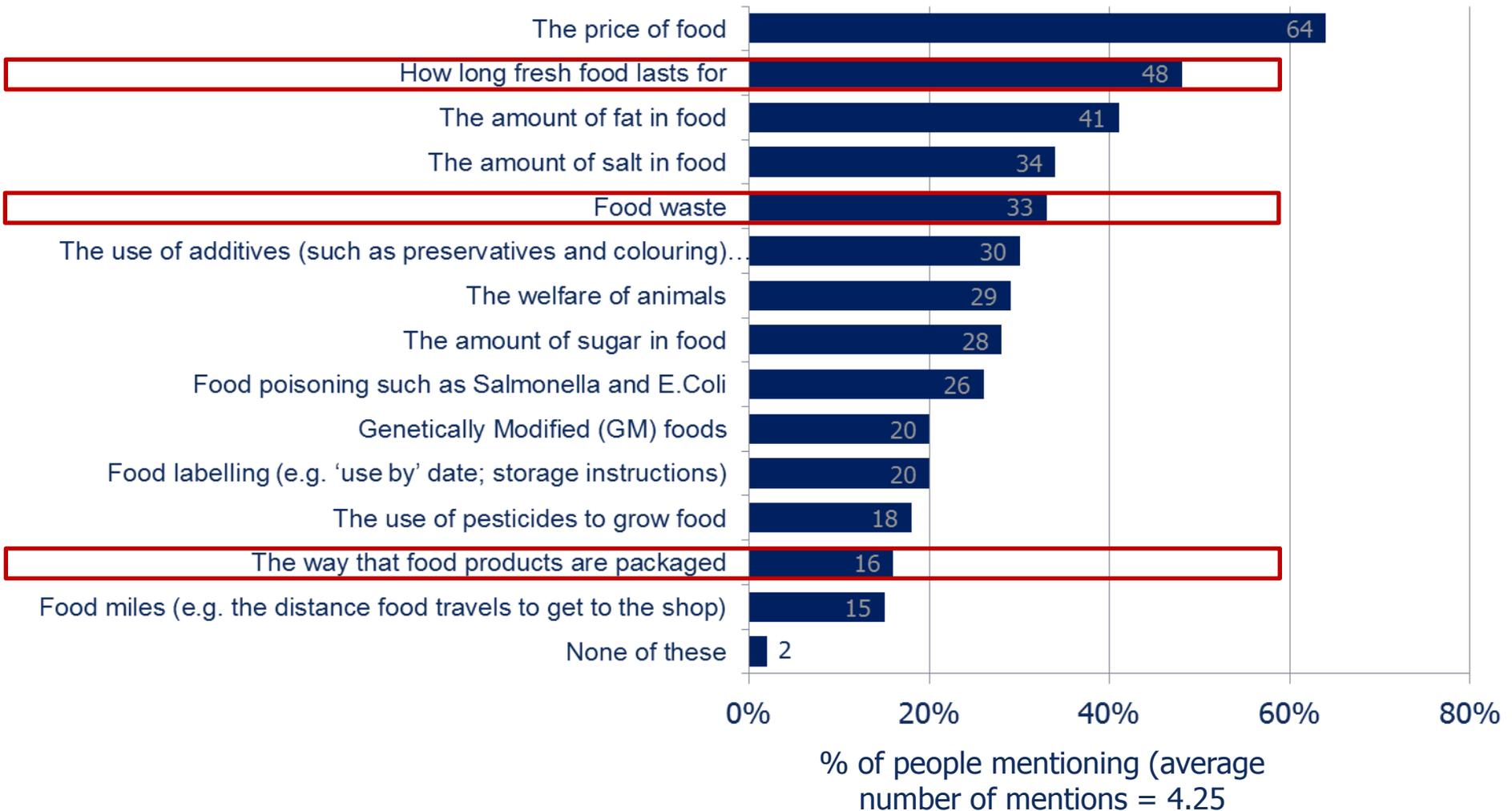
Health



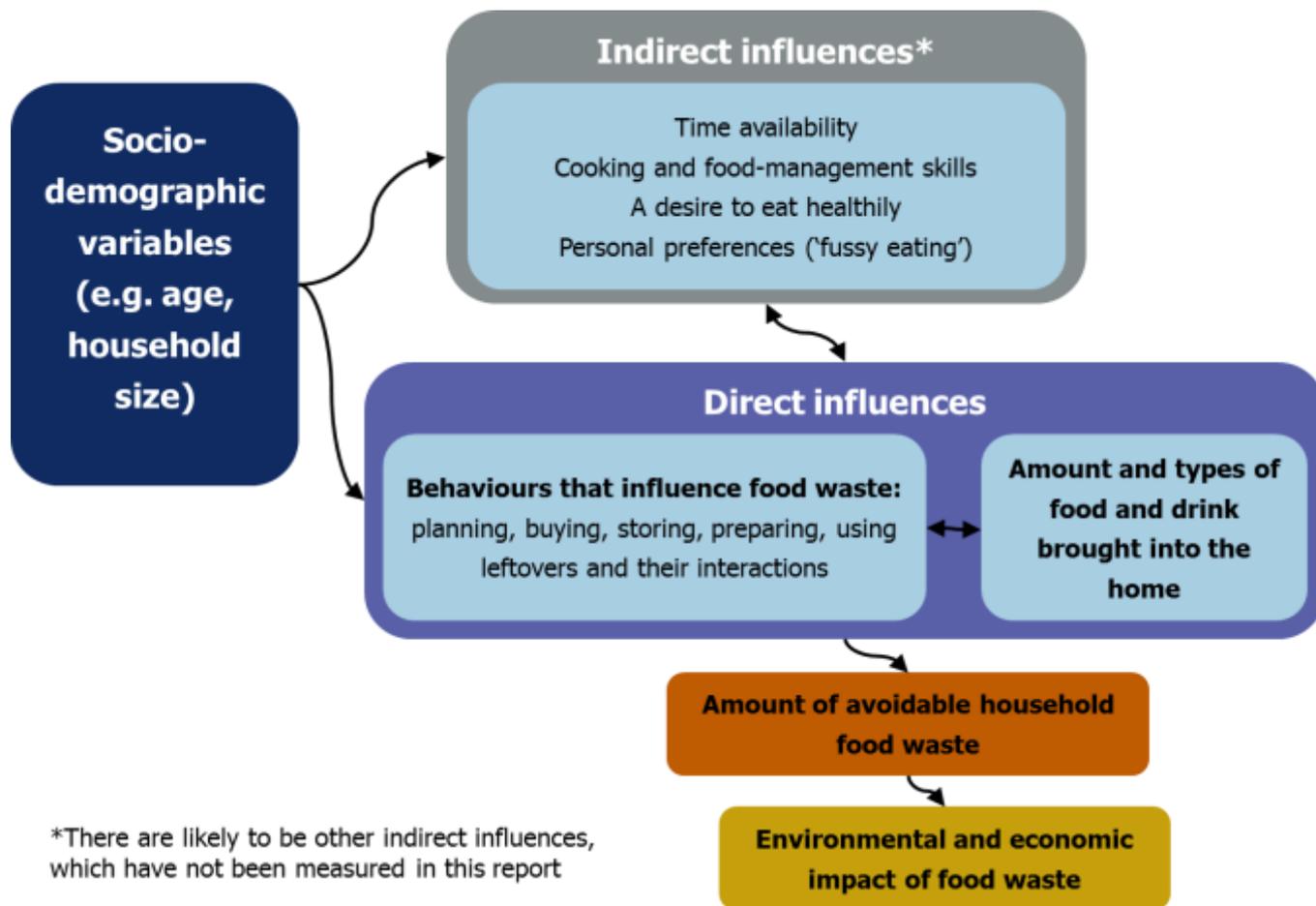
Factors influencing choice in store



What food issues concern consumers?

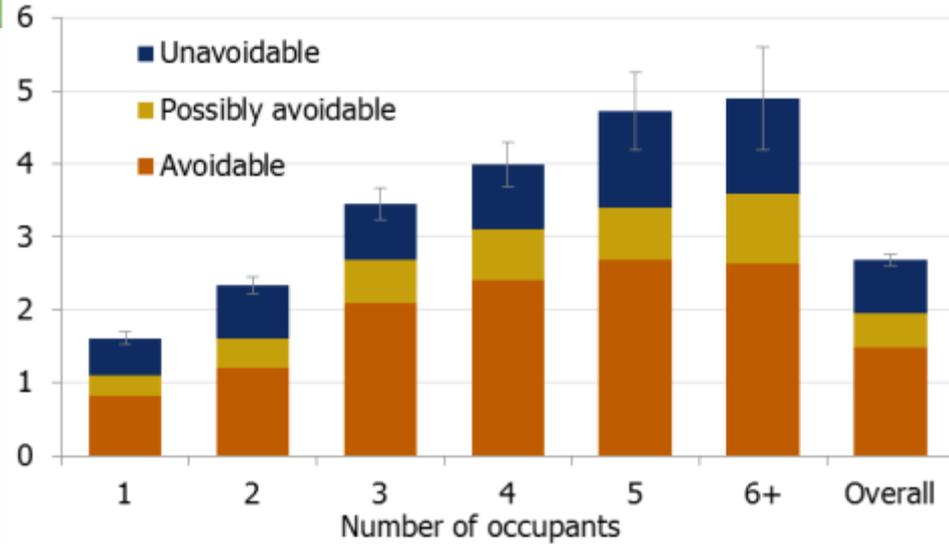


Influences on food waste levels

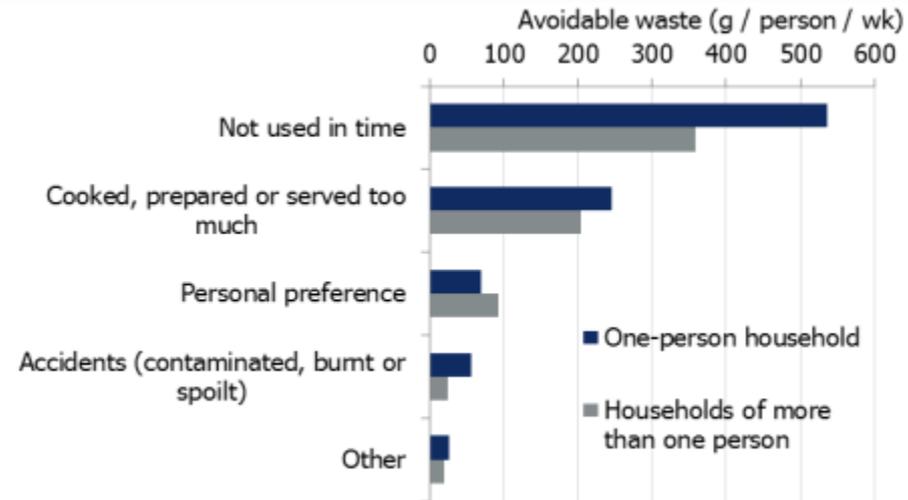
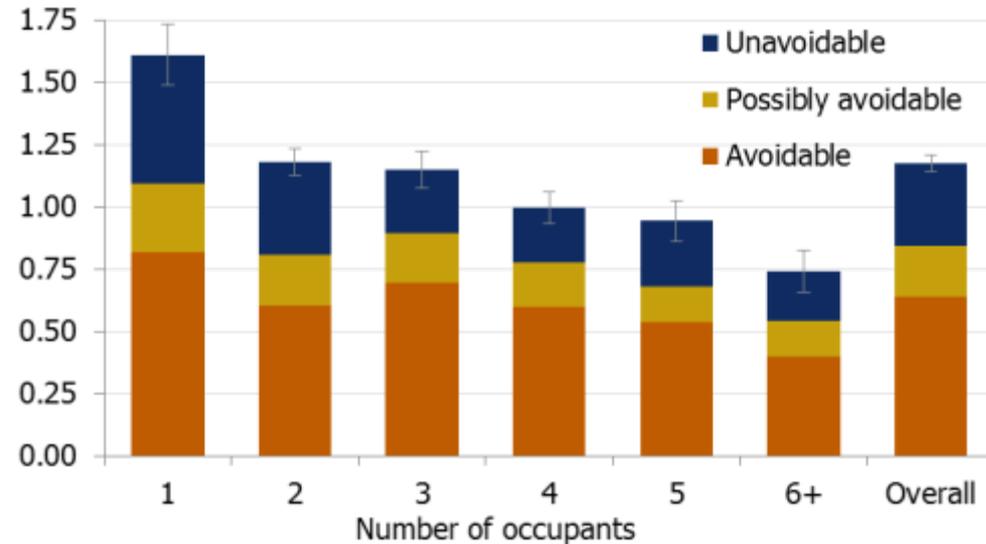


Household size & food waste

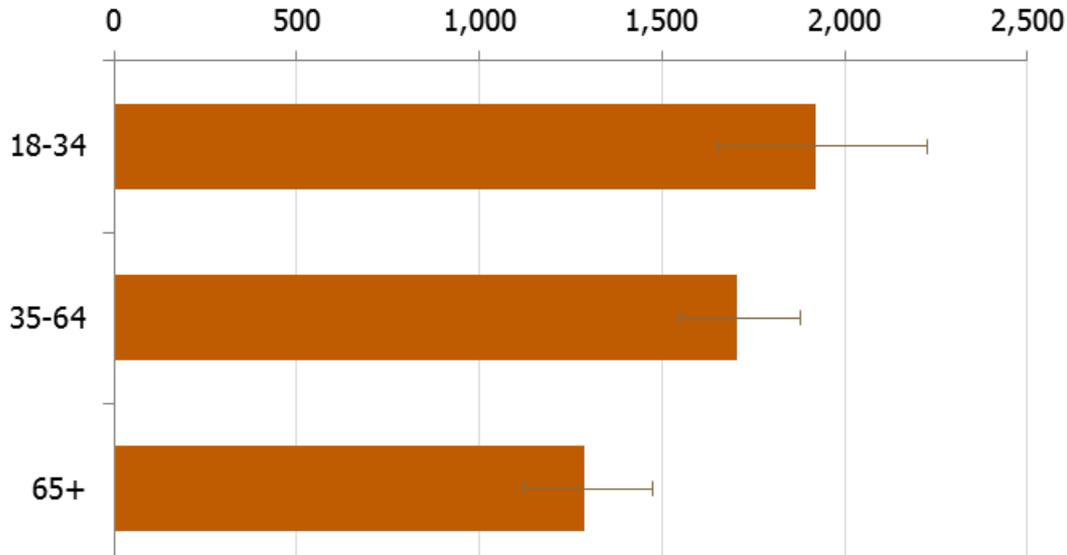
Average food waste (kg per household per week)



Average food waste (kg per person per week)

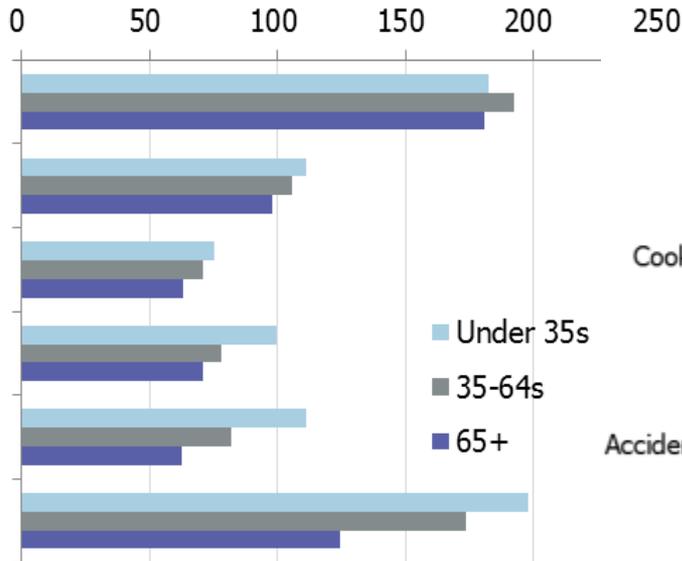


Avoidable food and drink waste (g / household / week)

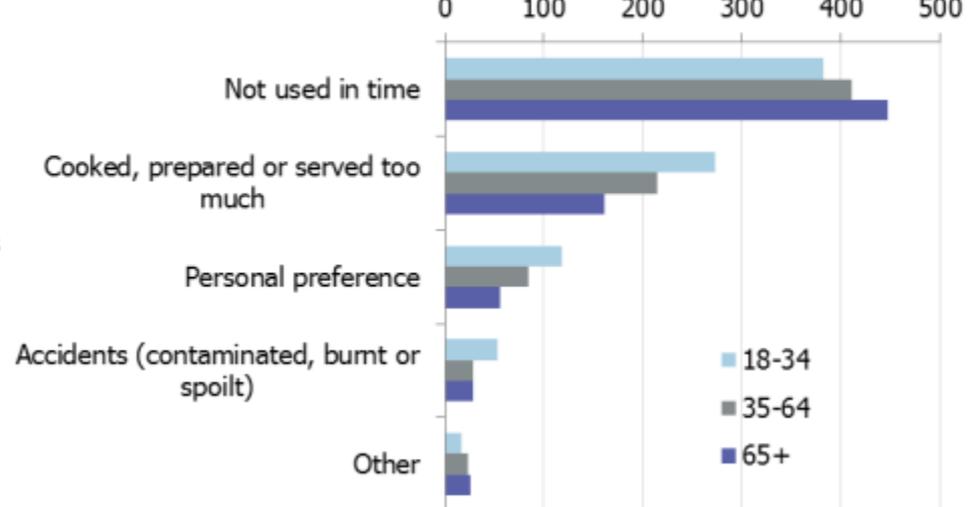


Age & food waste

Avoidable waste (g / person / week)



Avoidable food and drink waste (g / person / wk)





Healthy eating & freshness

- Those who cited 'a need to buy a range of foods to ensure they can provide healthy food for their family' as a barrier to reducing waste generated significantly more avoidable food waste
- Similarly those that stated 'I don't want to compromise on the choice of fresh foods I have in my fridge' as a barrier also generated more avoidable food waste than those who did not
- There was however some evidence to suggest that a healthy diet (self-reported) was associated with lower levels of avoidable food waste. This may not necessarily be a result of their diet, but other factors that may correlate with healthy eating, such as cooking skills, simply eating less food or thinking more about food

Presence of children



- Overall households with children don't waste more than others
 - BUT this means children are wasting as much as adults
- More likely to plan meals, and use the freezer
- **Less likely to use leftovers, and more likely to throw food away due to it going past the date**
- Evidence of cooking more than is required, and having more 'meal' waste than households without children
- Waste LESS fresh fruit & veg, but also buy less.....

Understanding what motivates people

Motivations to reduce food waste*:

- Saving money (78%)
- Managing an efficient home (70%)
- Feeling of guilt (57%)
- Reducing impact on the environment (48%)
- Food shortages elsewhere (39%)

*WRAP consumer food waste tracker Spring 2013



Tackling food waste - an integrated strategy

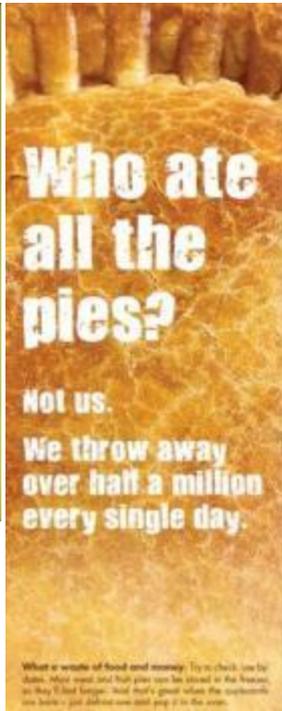
- National \ large scale communication
- Community engagement & support
 - Awareness raising & enabling behaviour change
- Changes to products, packaging & labelling
 - Making it easier for consumers to buy the right amount, and use what is bought



Ready, Steady, Cook chef comes to Middleswich

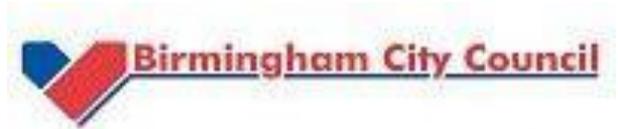


Consumer engagement - evolving strategy



2007

2015



Very Lazy



Examples of action - products

Freeze-by dates relaxed to cut waste of unused food

By James Hall
Consumer Affairs Editor

prevention manager at Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) said: "Changing the guidance to focus on the use-by date is a welcome move. Now we can all look in our fridges and know that we can reduce our food waste."

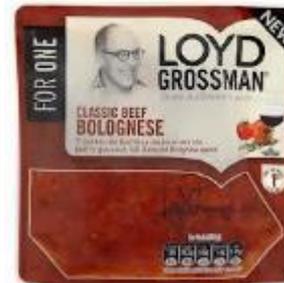
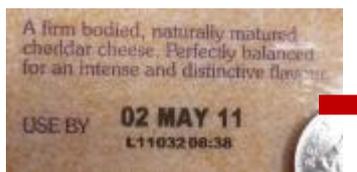
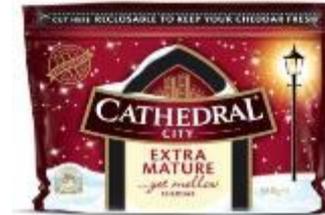
THE distress of having to throw away food close to its sell-by date because it won't be used in time has been reduced by new guidance from the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

The new guidance allows shoppers to buy food with a use-by date, provided it is not a chilled or frozen product, and then to freeze it. This means that food can be stored in the freezer for a longer period than the use-by date.

STORAGE

For Use By, Keep refrigerated 0°C to +5°C.

Freeze by date mark shown.



Long life: The new iceberg salad

Joined up approach

- Importance of integrating relevant (to consumers!) messages and solutions
 - Food waste and food safety
 - Food waste prevention and collections
 - Food and packaging
 - Food waste and healthy eating



WOP Working together for a world without waste

Guides for partners

Consumer attitudes to food waste and food packaging

WRAP, DUPEN, The Packaging Federation, the Food and Drink Federation, West Wiltshire Partnership and the British Retail Consortium carried out independent research into consumer attitudes, behaviours and motivations around food waste and food packaging. To better understand how to help reduce the amount of food thrown away, the results of this research have now been published and this is a short guide to what we found.

Summary
Approximately 40% of household food waste is from food not used in time, mainly vegetables or having a short shelf-life, with a total of around 10.7 tonnes. The research confirms that a priority for consumers is how long food stays fresh for. It also shows that consumers are not making best use of the information on each, or the packaging that is available. This, not to say they aren't of the benefits that packaging can offer to maximize how long food lasts at home.

Key findings
Many consumers do not recognize that packaging protects food in the home. While there is recognition that packaging is important to keep the product safe on its way to, and in, the store, there is less recognition that it also acts at home. In fact, the prevailing view is the opposite, i.e. that keeping products in the packaging leads them to spoil more quickly. This in turn leads many consumers to take products out of their packaging, which potentially decreases how long they'll last. This finding is also important because, among the majority of consumers who do recognize that packaging can keep products fresher for longer, attitudes to packaging are significantly less positive.

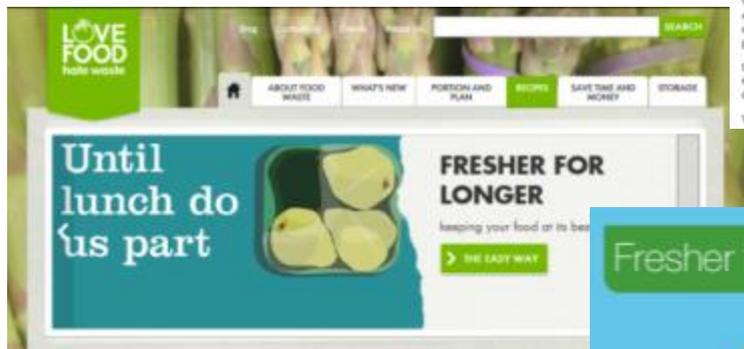
Fooding consumers with clear and consistent labelling on each (e.g. the date label on storage and freezing guidelines), communicating the benefits of utilizing this information and providing improved packaging functionality (e.g. re-usable or materials to enhance the) will help consumers make best food and drink in their homes, and save money.

Consumer confidence around whether food is high, but can be misplaced. The information on labels, and how they are used, could build the more effective. The majority of consumers are confident in their use of storing food items with labels developed through that and some of passed down from parents. However, a large proportion are actually storing items in less than ideal conditions, causing the potential for (see also next slide). Despite this confidence, there is demand for better advice & guidance about storage and the majority of consumers are that they would use this.



LOVE FOOD hate waste

Fresher for Longer



Until lunch do us part

FRESHER FOR LONGER
keeping your food on its best

THE EASY WAY



Fresher for longer

POTATOES

VEGETABLES

FRIDGE

The Grocer

THE Sun

Keep food in original packaging, shoppers urged

BRITS could save hundreds of pounds a year by storing food in the packaging it is bought in, experts claim. Fruit and veg will last for another two weeks if kept in packets, say Government-funded waste watchdogs Wrap. It claims an average

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You make my shelf life complete




At Tesco we're committed to helping you reduce food waste.

Keep your carrots fresh by keeping them in the fridge in their packaging.

LOVE FOOD hate waste

At Tesco we're committed to helping you reduce food waste.

Keep your carrots fresh by keeping them in the fridge in their packaging.

Date labelling

wrap Waste Resources Action Programme

Executive Summary

Consumer insight: date labels and storage guidance



Determining consumer understanding and use of date labels and storage guidance in order to reduce household food waste.

Project code: W0202-012
Research dates: February - December 2011
Date: Feb 2012

wrap Working together for a better environment

Summary report

Helping Consumers Reduce Food Waste – A Retail Survey 2011



In 2009, WRAP undertook a survey across UK retailers, and products, of a range of factors believed to influence household food waste. This report provides an updated picture, and gauge progress against the 2009 report, the work was repeated in 2011 and this report

Project code: W0102-002
Research dates: February 2011-March 2012

wrap Working together for a better environment

Every year in the UK we throw away £12 billion worth of good food, costing the average family £50 a month. The good news is that there are some quick and easy things we can do to reduce the amount of food we throw away. It starts here.

Date Labels

Use-By
USE BY
06 DEC '09

Best Before
BEST BEFORE
03 MAY '09

Use-By:
Food can be eaten or frozen right up to the end of this date. Follow storage instructions on packs. Use by dates are usually found on chilled products such as meat, soft cheese and dairy-based desserts.

Best Before:
These dates refer to quality rather than food safety. Foods with a 'best before' date should be safe to eat after the 'best before' date, but they may no longer be at their best. One exception is eggs - never eat eggs after the 'best before' date. 'Best before' dates are usually found on items with long shelf lives such as frozen, tinned or dried foods, and preserved fruit and vegetables.

Display Until and Sell By:
You can ignore these dates as they are for shop staff not for shoppers.

For handy tips and recipes to help reduce food waste, visit www.foodwastewatch.com



LOVE FOOD
hate waste

YOUR FRIDGE IS YOUR FRIEND

KEEP FOOD SAFE & MAKE YOUR BUDGET GO FURTHER



Learn about labels: food.gov.uk/foodsafetyweek
Make the most of your food: lovefoodhatwaste.com
Facebook: [facebook.com/foodsafetyweek](https://www.facebook.com/foodsafetyweek)
@foodsafetyweek

www.defra.gov.uk

Guidance on the application of date labels to food

September 2011

extra trimmed leeks
great steamed or sautéed
by Sainsbury's



Best before 500g e
26 Oct
Grown by Patrick Allpress
Cambridgeshire, UK
Greenshoots
D 270A7
268 11-04

© Sainsbury's, rebr/operates for freshness. Best before use.

A firm bodied, naturally matured cheddar cheese. Perfectly balanced for an intense and distinctive flavour.

USE BY **02 MAY 11**
L1103208:38

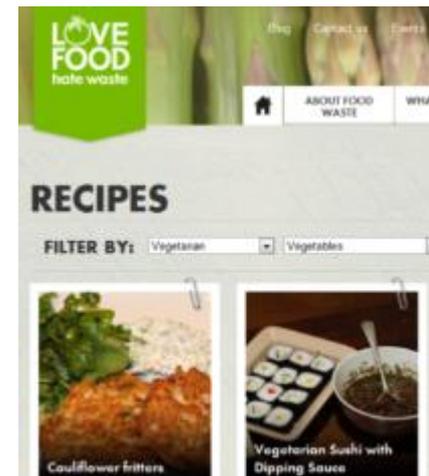
BEST BEFORE:

05 05 2011
WX 020
000044648 08:13:13



Links between food waste and broader objectives

- Tackling food waste is not really about tackling waste, but influencing attitudes to food, and related behaviours, skills etc
- Obvious synergies with other approaches to influence diet and health



Living a healthy lifestyle – looking at diet and physical and mental health - FREE

A two hour taster course for anyone wanting to know more about nutrition and health issues.

The course will look at:

- Nutrients in food and their role in the body
- A model of how to get the right balance for good health
- The relationship between diet and physical and mental health
- The importance of nutritional information available on food products
- Preparation of healthy recipes.



What other courses are on offer?

These courses are organised by Derbyshire County Council's Adult Community Education Service to support the Heart of Derbyshire campaign.

There are hundreds of daytime and evening courses throughout the county on a wide range of subjects including arts and crafts, computing, health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy and opportunities for families to learn together.

Course costs are very reasonable and you can buy gift vouchers to give friends and family the gift of learning. To find out more please visit www.derbyshire.gov.uk/adulteducation



Heart of Derbyshire cookery courses

Learn basic cookery skills, save money on your weekly food shop and discover how to make healthier food choices.



Food waste challenge

Family A

- Meal planning / shopping planning to reduce food thrown away as it's not used in time
- Switching to soft rolls to avoid crusts being thrown away (previously refused by children)
- Portioning of food on the plate to avoid leftovers

Family B

- Reduce amount of toast made for breakfast (previously cooked far too much)
- Portioning
- Not eating biscuits before meals, so they have room for their meal

Family C

- Freezing crusts and then using as breadcrumbs later
- 'Take control of the fridge' to avoid throwing away chilled foods
- Bought a juicer to use up bruised fruit
- Letting children self-serve their meals / listening to children before packing their lunch box

Changes in consumer food waste

Food waste

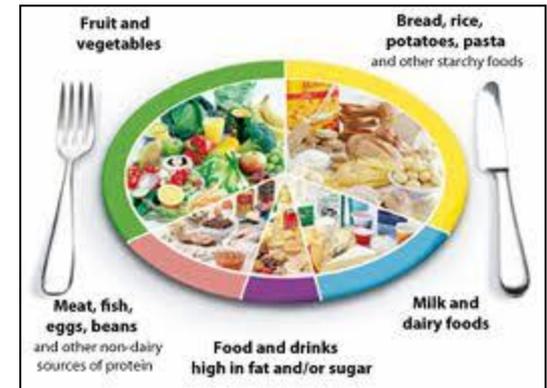
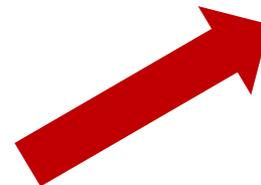
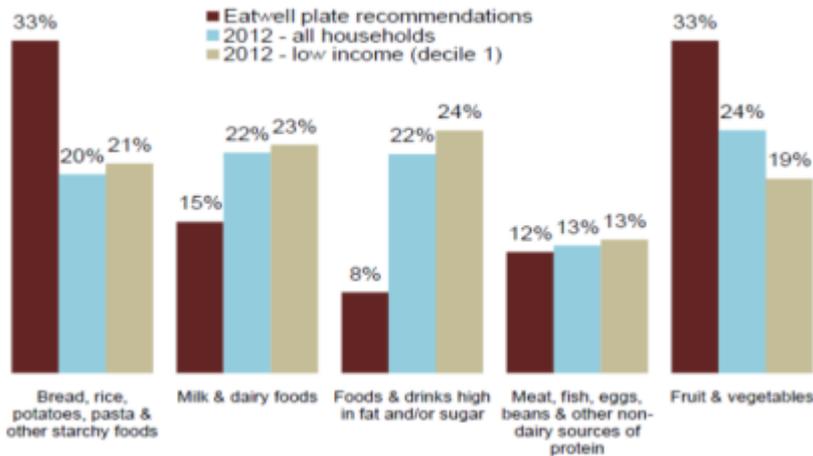
Are you binning good food?

Food waste from our homes has reduced, but there's still a long way to go



Impacts of changing diets?

Chart 5.4: Eatwell plate comparison for low income and all households



- Increase in more perishable foods
- Potential for unintended consequences (>1 Mt more food waste?)



WRAP
Final Report

Household food and drink waste: A people focus



This report explores the relationship between the level of available food and drink waste from households in the UK and factors including socio-demographics, behaviours and others relating to food, such as healthy eating and time available for food-related activities. These insights will support WRAP and its partners to develop more effective ways to help people waste less food.

Project code: C0701
Research date: Oct 2014-Apr 2015

Date: September 2014
ISBN: 978-1-8480-470-1

Courtauld 2025

- Discussions with industry, Governments and other stakeholders about a new framework for collaborative action in the UK
 - tackling food waste across the whole life-cycle
 - taking a whole system view to address other areas of resource efficiency, including getting more value from unavoidable waste
 - Opportunity to take a more 'holistic' approach to food consumption
- The new framework, Courtauld 2025, would start in 2016, and run until 2025



Summary

- Tackling food waste is not really about waste, but influencing attitudes to food, and related behaviours, skills, and making changes to what we buy
- An integrated and evidence-based approach has delivered a significant reduction over 5 years
- Obvious synergies exist with other approaches to influence diet and health
- Reducing food waste further is a global, regional and national priority
- Collaborative action will be key to delivering against challenging new targets



Thank You