

*We are*  
**GOMEZ**<sup>®</sup>

# A Gomez Ltd.

Canterbury, UK

Food waste inventory – 1st August 2018 to 31st July 2019



## About A Gomez

**A Gomez Ltd is a fresh produce business located in Bridge, near Canterbury in Kent. The business was established nearly 70 years ago and is one of Tesco's longest serving fresh produce suppliers, with 2017 marking 50 years continuous supply to Tesco.**

Gomez sources and supplies a wide range of fresh produce across multiple categories, including tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, exotic fruits grapes, stone fruit and berries, accounting for over 100% of the total volume we supply to Tesco.

We have over 300ha of our own company production, so we understand the time and effort that goes into producing the food we supply. Preventing food waste, especially waste that is suitable for human consumption, is the right thing to do for our business, consumers and for our planet.

We use our expertise and knowledge to meet the ever changing challenges of the retail sector. Gomez places great importance on all aspects of quality from selecting the varieties, growers and growing locations to monitoring quality at every stage from grower to store with the aim of consistently delivering produce faster, fresher, better.

**In 2017 we made a commitment to reduce food waste in our own operations by 50% by 2030.**



# What we are doing to tackle food waste

Supplying fresh produce in the best possible condition can be impacted by a range of factors. Poor weather conditions, crop diseases or delays at port can all lead to food waste. At Gomez, we seek to avoid or reduce food waste wherever possible and at all stages of our supply chain, for example:

- **Broadening specifications:** Although perfectly edible, often some of our fresh produce is unsuitable for our standard lines due to minor defects such as blemishes or being misshapen. We are able to use this in other ranges such as in Tesco's Farm brand range. Next, we sell any food that does not meet customer specification, but still perfectly good to eat, to local wholesale markets.
- **Redistributing surplus food:** As a part of our quality control process we must take several shelf life samples from each product line every day. We keep these samples in order to check how well products will last while on display in store, as this means that we can address any quality issues which may lead to waste later down the line. These samples previously made up a lot of our own food waste, even though they were still perfectly good to eat. However, thanks to our new partnership with FareShare, which began in January 2019, we have achieved a huge reduction in this type of waste. In the first six months of our partnership, we donated 3.5 tonnes of fruit and veg samples, the equivalent of 8,238 meals.
- **Using surplus produce for animal feed:** Where produce isn't fit for human consumption, we utilise as much surplus produce as we can as animal feed. This year farmers have started accepting stone fruit as well as fruit and vegetables. Through this method we have saved 4,824 tonnes of food from becoming waste.
- **Investing in new technology:** We have expanded our Canterbury site, including new temperature controlled storage and new ripening rooms. These are much more efficient than our previous equipment and give us more control over storage and ripening, helping us to further reduce our food waste.
- **Packaging alternatives:** Finally, we are working on new forms of packaging to help reduce food waste and improve shelf life, while being mindful of the impact of packaging on the environment. A good example is our packaging ventilation project which not only helps to improve final product quality by preventing dehydration, but also helps products stay fresher for longer and reduces food waste.

Total food produced  
**106,799**  
tonnes

Waste as a % of production

**1.1%**



Overall food waste

**1,174** tonnes

From 2.3% in 2017 of total waste production



Down to 1.1% in 2018

## Food waste data commentary

- We measured our food waste from August 2018 to July 2019 from our pack houses (35,000 sq. ft.) in Canterbury, Kent.
- Our total food production for this period was 106,799 tonnes. We have calculated our overall food waste to be 1,174 tonnes (1.1% of total production).
- We are proud that since last year we achieved a significant reduction of our total food waste by 1,102 tonnes (from 2.3% in 2017 down to 1.1% in 2018). This is a 48% absolute reduction and a 52% intensity reduction and is due to an increase in the amount of produce sent for animal feed and FareShare.
- The highest tonnage for waste is ambient salads as it's the largest volume product which goes through our operation.
- Our waste figure is a combination of direct weighed figures and calculated figures. This material includes inedible shelf life samples which have been packaged and are operationally harder to separate.
- We are actively trying to reduce the amount of produce sent to landfill by increasing the amount of food sent to animal feed as well as our new partnership with FareShare. We are currently looking at other ways to reduce the levels of produce sent to landfill further.
- Most of our surplus which is unsuitable for human consumption is sent to animal feed (4,824 tonnes). Every year, we are able to send more product to animal feed as we build our contact with the local farmers. From this year, farmers accept stone fruit waste which was previously sent to landfill.