



# Branston Ltd

Lincoln, England

Food waste inventory – 1<sup>st</sup> January – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019



# About Branston

**Fresh potatoes, seed potatoes, peeled and prepared potatoes... we handle around 340,000 tonnes of potatoes a year so we like to think we know a thing or two about them.**

From our sites in Lincoln, Scotland and the South West, Branston supplies retail, wholesale and food manufacturing customers with fresh and ready prepared potatoes.

As a privately owned company, over the years we've continued to grow and re-invest in the business all underpinned by a 700-strong team of people who keep everything moving.

We're one of the biggest buyers of potatoes in the UK and have established an efficient supply chain involving hundreds of growers. No matter who is growing the potatoes, one thing is key – the quality. To achieve this we need long term relationships with the best growers farming the best land.

Central to how we operate is long-term sustainability – from environmentally-friendly growing practices to efficient use of energy and water throughout our operations. All our sites are ISO14001 certified, the prepared site is FEMAS accredited and an over-arching Environmental Management System obligates us to make year-on-year improvements. We are also signed up to the Champions 12.3 programme, an initiative designed to meet UN Sustainable Development Goal 12.3.

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



Vision grading the crop to sort the waste from the 1st grade



The anaerobic digestion plant using exclusively out-grade crop handled on site

# What we're doing to tackle food waste

Our farmers put resources into every single potato they grow so it is important to use every potato in the best possible way. We work closely with them to help improve the quality of the crop – from variety and field selection, right through the growing season and during harvest.

We're working with a natural product, so not every potato can be perfect, but even those that don't look attractive, or aren't the correct size or shape for retail packs can be used for something. So we approach it in this order:

## If they're still good for us to eat...

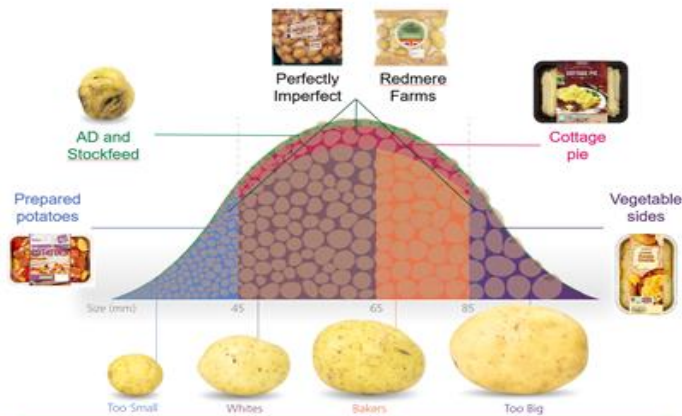
We use lots of odd shapes or sizes in our ready-prepared potato products. And if they are good mashing potatoes we peel and send 350 tonnes per week to Tesco's ready meal supplier – Samworth Brothers. We also donate some potatoes that we can't sell to the charity, FareShare for redistribution. In 2019 we redistributed 29 tonnes which equates to 96,900 meals.

## When they're not fit for human consumption...

Cows and pigs are a lot less fussy than us, so local farmers come and collect our potatoes that are damaged or have green patches for stock feed. In 2019, we have sent 29,913 tonnes of surplus to animal feed – keeping it in the food chain and saving carbon. If we have too many we use the excess in our anaerobic digester to generate electricity.

## Breaking it down....

There's a lot of nutritional value to potatoes, so we are also investing in ways to extract this from damaged potatoes to be used in other products.

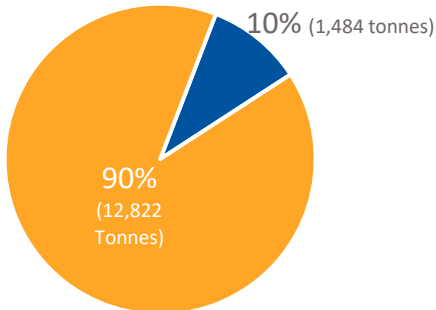


Total food handled\*  
**335,775**  
tonnes

Waste as a % of food handled\*

**4.3%**

Waste by category

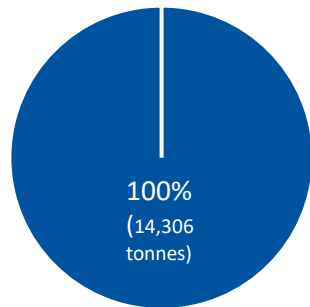


- Sub-standard potatoes going for in-house Anaerobic Digestion (AD)
- Proportion of peeling waste that currently goes to off-site AD plants

Overall food waste

**14,306** tonnes

Waste by destination %



- Anaerobic digestion

## Food waste data commentary

- We measured our food waste from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019. In this period, we handled 335,775 tonnes of food. Of this, 14,303 tonnes was classed as food waste, equal to 4.3% of our total food handled.
- In 2018, we measured 15,951 tonnes of food waste (5.1% of our total food handled). This represents a reduction year on year of 16% and a reduction since our 2017 baseline year of 27% relative to our total food handled. Overall we are on target to achieve our commitment to reduce food waste by 50% by 2030. The reduction in food waste this year is a result of an increase in the number of potatoes sent to animal feed, and a small increase in the tonnage donated to FareShare.
- Most of our food waste (90% or 12,822 tonnes) comes from peeling potatoes that are not of suitable quality. Most of the peelings are sent for off-site anaerobic digestion as waste. A smaller portion of our food waste (10% or 1,484 tonnes) is from potatoes that don't meet the required specification (e.g. halves, greens, rots) and are sent to our in-house anaerobic digestion plant.
- We also sent 29,913 tonnes of surplus potatoes that were unsuitable for human consumption to feed livestock directly. We prioritise sending these potatoes to feed livestock rather than being sent to anaerobic digestion where possible. Our aim is to send all peelings waste down the livestock feed route to help reduce waste and keep the potatoes in the food chain.
- We have also conducted a series of post-harvest field waste studies with suppliers during 2019 to assess how many potatoes are left behind during the harvesting process. Although this not covered as part of this report, we felt it was important to record potential losses in the field:
  - 11 fields were analysed, covering 120Ha of production. All potatoes lost during this process were either very small, damaged, classed as unsaleable or carried over harvester riddle during wet conditions. We calculated a loss of approximately 2.5% during harvest.
- With the vast majority of food waste being in the home of the consumer, we are continuing to look at ways we can work with Tesco to reduce this. Measures include changing date coding to 'Julian' codes instead of 'best before' dates. We are also looking at improving storage advice on packs.

\* Note: to be consistent with industry best practice and the UK's Food Waste Reduction Roadmap, we've updated our terminology this year from "total food produced" to "total food handled" (which, as last year, includes food sold as intended as well as food waste and surplus). This is also reflected in our calculation of waste as a % of food handled".