

We are
GOMEZ[®]

A Gomez Ltd.

Canterbury, UK

Food waste inventory – 1st August 2019 to 31st July 2020



About A Gomez

A Gomez Ltd is a fresh produce business based in Bridge, near Canterbury in Kent. The business was established nearly 70 years ago and is one of Tesco's longest serving fresh produce partners, having supplied for over 50 years.

Gomez sources and supplies an extensive range of fresh produce across multiple categories, including tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, grapes, stonefruit and berries.

We are committed to meeting national and global targets on food waste reduction by implementing a strategy of target, measure, act. Within our Group, we strive to prevent surplus and waste being generated in the first instance, and redistributing then diverting any surplus from becoming waste.

As a Group, we have over 3,200 ha. of owned production in Spain, the UK and the Netherlands, in addition to working with a number of trusted suppliers. This gives us a deep understanding of the time and care that goes into growing the food we supply and a real passion to ensure that as little as possible goes to waste. It is the 'right' thing to do, both for our business and for the planet.

Our whole chain approach to tackling food waste begins in the field. From carefully selecting varieties, growers and growing locations, to ensuring optimal storage, transit and packing conditions, we work to prevent and address food waste in the most efficient, sustainable and integrated way.

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



What we are doing to tackle food waste

A range of factors can lead to food loss, surplus and waste within the fresh produce supply chain. These can include weather volatility, crop variety, pests and disease, changes to forecasting, specifications, delays in transit time or prolonged residency. In order to tackle food waste within our own operations, we have been working on the following:

Optimising specifications: Although perfectly edible, often some of our fresh produce is unsuitable for our standard lines due to defects such as blemishes or being misshapen. We are able to use this in alternative ranges, such as Tesco's Farm brand. Next, we sell any food that is not of suitable quality - but is still perfectly good to eat - to local wholesale markets.

Increasing volumes to FareShare: Over the past 12 months, we have worked to move food surplus up the food hierarchy. When we reported last year, we were in the early stages of our partnership with FareShare and had donated 3.5 tonnes of food in the first 6 months. Our partnership has grown significantly over this reporting period and we have been able to donate 29 tonnes over the past 12 months. This equates to over 70,000 meals provided across 1,500 UK frontline charities and community groups. The product we give to FareShare largely comes from the shelf life samples we take from each product line every day and which were previously going to either animal feed or landfill.

Maximising efficiency with FareShare: Not only have we significantly increased the volumes donated to FareShare, we have also continued to evolve the ways in which we work with them, in order to maximise our partnership. We have created a team of Gomez 'FareShare Champions' throughout the business; have our own drivers take donations to the local FareShare depot three times a week to maximise efficiency for FareShare's third party hauliers; work to flex delivery days to the FareShare depot on some shorter life products such as ripe and ready stonefruit; and are able to suggest usage and recipe ideas to make the most of particular product volumes.

Diverting surplus to animal feed: Over the past 12 months, we have worked to move food surplus up the food hierarchy through our partnership with FareShare. However, not all of the food surplus generated is suitable for feeding people. Where produce isn't fit for human consumption and therefore cannot be used by FareShare, we divert as much surplus produce as we can to animal feed. We were able to send just over 640 tonnes of what would otherwise have gone to waste to animal feed.

Investing in new technology: We continue to invest in equipment, such as temperature controlled storage and ripening rooms, that allow us more control over storage and the ripening process and to further reduce waste.

Developing packaging alternatives: We continue to work 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 innovation which helps products stay fresher for longer and reduces food waste.

Total food handled*

90,506
tonnes

Waste as a % of food handled*

0.7%



Overall food waste

618 tonnes



Down from 2.3% in 2017; 1.1% in 2018

Food waste data commentary

- We have calculated the overall food waste and surplus from our sole packhouse (total site: 42,000m²) in the UK over a twelve month period (1st August 2019 to 31st July 2020). July 2020 figures are provisional. Our food waste total includes inedible parts (pits in stonefruit, vines with some tomato products and grapes) to landfill, which we estimate to represent around 0.01% of our overall food handled.
- The total food handled in our UK operations over the reporting period was 90,506 tonnes. Of this total, 1,288 tonnes (1.4%) was not sold to customers or the wholesale market.
- Of this, 670 tonnes are accounted for as surplus, with 29 tonnes donated to FareShare for redistribution and 641 tonnes to animal feed.
- The remainder – 618 tonnes or 0.7% of our total food handled - was accounted for as waste, which went to landfill. The most significant proportion of this was ambient salad.
- In 2017, our baseline year, this figure was 2.3%. We have worked hard over the last two years to reduce this proportion substantially – by 70% relative to our total food handled - to 0.7%. The specific steps we have taken to reduce food waste, such as our partnership with FareShare, along with factors such as no longer handling sweet potatoes (associated with high wastage) and no longer operating a high care facility have driven the change.
- Over the next reporting year, we are committed to growing our partnership with FareShare further, to increase the proportion of surplus redistributed for human consumption, in accordance with the food hierarchy. We will also continue to work hard to reduce waste to landfill, by continuously looking for new ways of working.
- We have also committed to working with our producer partners within our Group, principally in Spain, to report on food surplus and waste at source on an ongoing basis. This reporting year, we have included preliminary results from a six month data collection pilot in tomato and stonefruit production:
 - (a) From Paloma, our Group partner and the largest independent tomato grower in Spain, we have calculated zero food waste from our packhouse at source, with 150 tonnes of surplus product redistributed for human consumption and 300 tonnes sent to animal feed. At field level, it is estimated that c.2% (of 50,000 tonnes) of crop grown is unharvested at the end of the season, and is aerobically composted with the remainder of the plant.
 - (b) Frutas Esther, our Group partner in Spain, calculates that of 40,000 tonnes of stonefruit production, there is zero food waste and surplus (any fruit that is not sold as intended – c.15% - goes to secondary market for juicing).

* 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.