



Country Crest

Dublin, Ireland

Food Waste Inventory - 1st November 2018 to 31st October 2019



About Country Crest

Country Crest was established in 1993 by brothers Michael and Gabriel, who are the fourth generation of the Hoey farming family. With a deep knowledge of growing potatoes for the wholesale market behind them, the brothers set up Country Crest to grow and pre-pack fresh potatoes and onions for the Irish retail sector. In more recent years we also began to import and supply sweet potatoes.

From our base in Lusk, north County Dublin, Country Crest operate an integrated Food business consisting of a primary farming operation growing potatoes, onions, cereals and a beef enterprise, while our retail packing business consists of refrigerated storage, washing and packing production facilities for potatoes, sweet potatoes and a similar temperature controlled drying and curing facility for onions with its own production packing facility.

Country Crest have a long history focused on sustainability and reducing waste. Following on from winning the 2011 Bord Bia Food & Drink Industry Sustainability Award, we were asked to become a pilot company for the Origin Green program and have completed 8 years in managing and reducing energy, water and waste in our business.

We know the time, effort and cost which goes into producing fresh potatoes, sweet potatoes and onions. This is why we look to every avenue to avoid food waste. Through retail, processing, animal feed, anaerobic digestion (AD) and composting we use 100% of our harvested crops handled onsite.

In 2019, we made a commitment to reduce food waste in our own operations by 50% by 2030, adopting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 12.3.



What we are doing to tackle food waste

With roots deep in a farming tradition and working with the soil and our environment on a daily basis, we here at Country Crest have been looking at how we can reduce food waste before it ever becomes an issue.

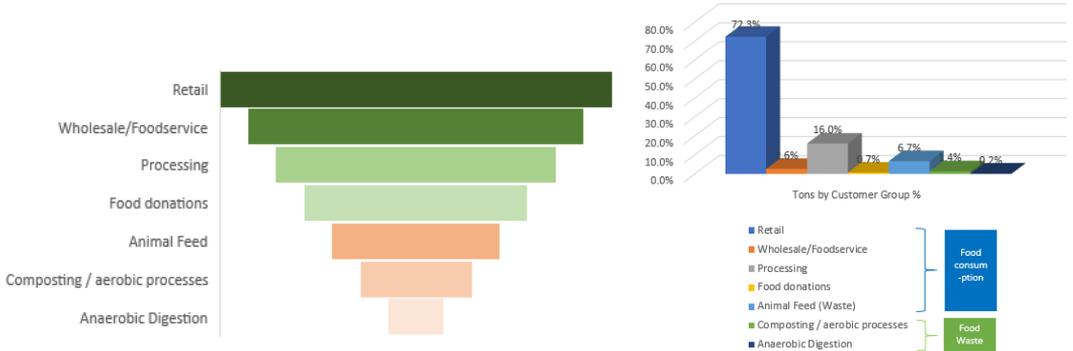
We believe that reducing food waste starts before the seed is even planted. Therefore we take into consideration sight selection, plant variety, soil conditions and using the best available technology and advice. We grow the crop to harvest to ensure and maximise its intended purpose, which is to feed people. We also work closely with our grower network, encouraging them to follow these best practices.

Just because it doesn't look the part....

As we are working with a naturally grown fresh product, we know that we will have a percentage of product that won't make the retail shelves as a potato, onion or sweet potato and this is where we need to be innovative. Working closely with third party processing partners, we can divert produce which may have slight visual surface defects into the processing trade for peeling, chipping etc. Some of this produce makes its way back onto the consumers plate in cooked prepared meals through our sister company Ballymaguire Foods or it goes into the Foodservices supply chain.

We also redirect some of this produce to food charities - in 2019 we donated 216 tonnes to food charities to help feed those less fortunate. One such charity is FoodCloud who we first donated to in July 2019. We continue to donate weekly to their Dublin hub and have more recently, following an appeal during the pandemic, added a second weekly donation for their Galway hub.

Preferred Sales Funnel



What about the produce not fit for human consumption....

There will always be a small percentage of any crop which won't be suitable for human consumption. Produce which may have mechanical damage or major defects will be directed to animal feeding, composting or anaerobic digestion (AD) depending on the produce. All of these uses however will recover the energy and nutrition of this produce.

Total food handled
37,643
tonnes

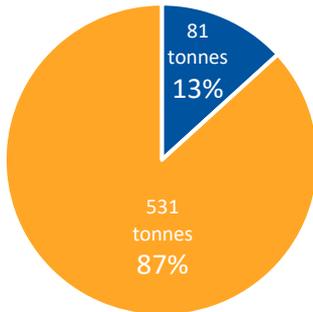
Waste as a % of food handled

1.6%

Overall food waste

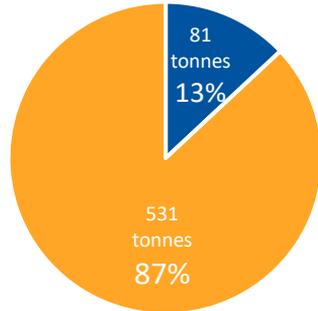
612 tonnes

Waste by category



■ Sweet Potato Waste ■ Onions Waste

Waste by destination



■ Anaerobic Digestion ■ Composting

Food waste data commentary

- Food waste was measured in our 2 production facilities for Country Crest calendar year 2019 (1st Nov 2018 to 31st October 2019).
- Our waste is calculated based on tonnes into production versus packout weights (excluding packaging and giveaway) – this is a manual calculation as we do not have a fully automated weigh in system in our packhouses.
- Total food handled for this period was 37,643 tonnes with food waste of 612 tonnes going to anaerobic digestion (AD) or composting.
- The majority of our food waste was made up of produce that was not of suitable quality to be sold, for example from damages caused by machinery during harvest or throughout the packing process which made the products unsuitable for human consumption.
- Within our business, animal feed is also classed as food waste however is not included in the overall waste figures within this document – there were an additional 2,525 tonnes of potatoes sent to animal feed in this financial period.
- We sent 531 tonnes of onions for composting in 2019.
- As sweet potatoes are unsuitable for feeding to cattle, we sent 81 tonnes of waste sweet potatoes to anaerobic digestion (AD) in 2019.