

A Tesco case study

Supplier Learnings.

Thanks to the following suppliers for their contribution:



Introduction.

One of the key themes for Tesco to explore in this year's supplier food waste reporting is supplier learnings. When suppliers report for the first time on their adoption of the 'Target, Measure, Act' approach to food waste, some may experience difficulties relating to quality and availability of data, resource to carry out the reporting, as well as how to change the understanding of operational food waste within the business.

For example, a supplier might believe that they have minimal food waste, but after conducting measurements and formal reporting, learn that cumulatively quantities of food waste are significant. However, as suppliers continue in their food waste reporting journey, they have become more efficient in collating and reporting on food waste data, helping them to take more focused action to reduce food waste and track progress towards their target.

Improved Efficiency of Reporting

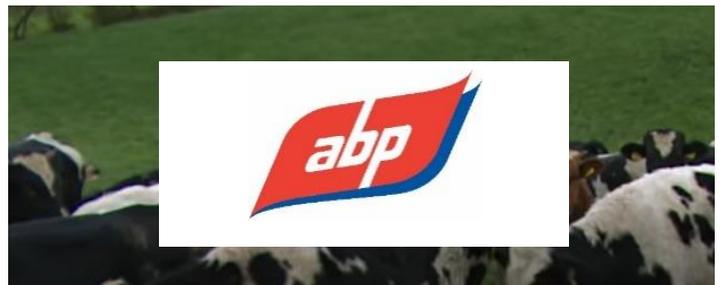


As food businesses are very dynamic, suppliers may need to re-baseline food waste reporting as the scope of their business changes, or their data collection methodology becomes more accurate.

dps Home Farm, an own-label supplier, set their original baseline year as 2016. Over the following years, the scope of their reporting changed as the range and volume of products handled significantly increased. By acknowledging the limitations of the initial measurements, dps Home Farm were able to work towards better management of their waste material, and decided to re-baseline in 2021, using 2019 as their baseline year.



Another example of this increased efficiency comes from Country Crest, a Tesco Ireland produce supplier, who has begun producing a detailed quarterly report to enable more efficient annual reporting.



In 2021, ABP, a Central European MFPE (Meat Fish Poultry Eggs) supplier, moved towards direct weighing to quantify the total amount of edible food that is lost within their production system. This provides a clearer picture of their progress towards achieving reductions in food waste by 2030. Moreover, ABP explained that "site measurements and progress is now tracked through monthly sustainability calls with management, helping to engage site teams in the importance of reducing their food waste".



Samworth Brothers, an own-label prepared foods supplier, carried out a data validation exercise for food waste between 2017-2021, following improved availability of data. This allowed them to “reduce reliance on assumptions and enable additional visibility of the split between food waste and food surplus”.

Greencore

Greencore, another own-label supplier of prepared food, has also begun to measure food loss and waste in effluent and other food waste streams, although they recognise that challenges remain in accurately calculating where the food losses are occurring.

Using Learnings to Take Action on Food Loss and Waste



Some suppliers are investing in staff training to reduce waste. Irish Country Meats, a Tesco Ireland MFPE supplier, has focused on staff education and raising awareness through having ‘Lean Coordinators’ and ‘Environmental Officers’ on their sites, working closely with production teams to understand increases in floor waste volumes that lead to food waste.



AM Fresh, an own-label produce supplier, are similarly engaging their work force to develop food waste ‘Champions’ to reduce their processing waste.



Other suppliers are investing in infrastructure to reduce waste. In 2021, Master Good, a Central European MFPE (poultry) supplier, upgraded their production line by applying robotic technology at several stages to increase the precision of their production, as well as installing an automatic filleting system to reduce waste and increase product yield.



Noble Foods, an own-label MFPE (egg) supplier, recently invested in a major refit of grading machinery and product handling equipment, allowing them to grade more efficiently and decrease potential product damage and waste. Due to the positive impact, in the coming years they will be providing additional robotic packing machines, which should “significantly reduce handling by staff” and “become more efficient in reducing damage to eggs”.





G's Fresh, an own-label produce supplier, has recently invested in a new beetroot harvester, enabling the harvest of both over and under-sized beets, utilising additional crop that would traditionally be wasted. Additionally, they use 'AgriEye', a system of "imaging with drones/aircraft to understand crop establishment and size variability", used alongside the innovative 'IceCAM' model to "predict the growth rate of a crop based on variations in heat and light, allowing growing teams to identify where over/under production might occur, giving them time to find alternative solutions to food waste". Where suppliers haven't been able to invest in new technology, they have identified other ways to reduce food waste.



Bakkavor, an own-label prepared foods supplier, are reviewing total product shelf life and minimum life of short shelf-life products to maximise in-store life, thereby improving selling opportunity, and reducing retail and consumer food waste.



Yeo Valley, an own-label dairy supplier, are transitioning from short production batches to longer production runs to reduce the wasted product left in pipes and vessels.



Hilton, a Central European and own-label MFPE supplier, is focusing on yield improvements in production through marginal gains, including maintenance improvements, better stock control, greater flexibility and increased use of frozen ingredients. In their Central European operations, they are "focused on shifting contracts with waste handlers to ensure disposal is at the highest feasible level of the waste hierarchy, as well as working with retail partners to extend perceived shelf life of products by removing date labels on specific products and adding freezing guidance to labels".