

PLANNER TOOLKIT

Guidelines & Resources



Reducing Food Waste in Events

This guide provides practical steps for planners to reduce food waste at events using a natural flow (Discover → Design → Deliver → Debrief). This document highlights the most common opportunities we've seen in pilot sites and provides ready-to-use templates to help you begin.

By starting with a few actions, you can steadily build a framework for preventing food waste in your planning process and provide meaningful impact for your clients, partners, and the planet.

Discover

- Add food waste prevention and recovery to internal planning agendas and pre-con meetings.
- Confirm the venue's donation, compost, and diversion partners and document expectations in contracts, BEOs, and client materials.
- Share best-available attendance insights (no-shows, early departures, consumption patterns), so guarantees and overage stay within an agreed range.
- Build from this customizable template: [Essential Food Waste Reduction Questions for Venues](#).

Design

- Co-design menus with the venue to reduce highly wasted foods, limit preset items, and avoid unnecessary menu variety.
- Align with the venue on portioning and service formats for top menu items, including strategies to avoid overproduction of special meals.
- Customize [Planner Expectations Checklist for Venues](#) from template.

Deliver

- Agree in advance on how real-time adjustments will be handled—such as slowing or stopping refills, consolidating stations, or shifting service as guest flow changes.
- Embed food waste expectations into BEOs and on-site communications so all teams execute the plan consistently.
- Utilize this [Pre-Event/Pre-Con Checklist](#) template.

Debrief

- Request a post-event summary on production, consumption, surplus, donation, and composting and capture insights to improve future forecasting and menu planning.
- Share this [Post-Event Recap](#) template with the venue.