

Overview: Six-step process for identifying opportunities to reduce food waste

The process and tools that form the Food Waste PRO (Prevention and Reduction Opportunity) Toolkit are an evidence-based approach to reducing food waste. The toolkit is informed by food waste management best-practices and widely accepted theories on environmental sustainability management, decision-making, and financial cost-benefit analysis.

The table below outlines the core principles and each step of the process, and shows which tools apply along the way. The tools and guides are available for download on the Food Waste PRO Toolkit webpage.

Overview of the six-step framework

Framework steps		Description	Min. expected completion time (Individual businesses)	Min. expected completion time (Industry groups)	Tool or resource
1	Set expectations	A set of eight questions that helps businesses and industry groups to set goals and understand what type of food waste solutions they are ready to undertake within 12-24 months.	10 minutes	1 hour	Business readiness self-diagnostic tool (Excel)
2	Walk the chain	Supply chain, business processes, and waste flows are mapped by physically walking through the field/ facility so that no processes or observations are overlooked.	1-2 hours	2 hours	Guide to mapping (PDF)
3	Measure	Production, yield, and waste data are collated or collected to quantify food waste volumes and estimate the associated financial costs to the business or industry group. This helps to identify the areas where attention should be focused.	If business has existing data: 30 min to 1 hour If business need to collect data: 7-10 hours over 3-5 weeks	If businesses have existing data: 1-2 hours If business need to collect data: 7-10 hours over 3-5 weeks	Reducing Food Waste Tool (Excel): • Data collection sheet • Data entry • Waste audit results • Waste and cost calculator
4	Identify opportunities	A broad desktop review is performed to understand all possible opportunities for value-adding or improving current management.	10+ hours	10+ hours	Reducing Food Waste Tool (Excel): • Desktop review
5	Make stop/go decisions	Pre-feasibility analysis is performed to assess the commercial potential of the identified opportunities and shortlist 1-3 possible solutions.	30+ hours depending on depth of research	30+ hours depending on depth of research	Reducing Food Waste Tool (Excel): • Prefeasibility tool

6	Conduct: • Cost benefit analysis • Direct cost comparison	Pre-feasibility analysis is performed to assess the commercial potential of the identified opportunities and shortlist 1-3 possible solutions.	1-4 hours	If business has existing data: 30 min to 1 hour If business need to collect data: 7-10 hours over 3-5 weeks	Reducing Food Waste Tool (Excel): • Cost analysis survey • Direct cost comparison tool • Cost/benefit analysis tool
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Testing, piloting, and/or seeking investment

Implementation

AN ITERATIVE PROCESS

You might find that you have to 'go back to the drawing board', after either:

- Assessing the feasibility of the options you have chosen and finding that the potential for commercial feasibility is low, or
- Testing and reviewing any solutions at a small scale with unfavourable results.

In other words, you may have to repeat Steps 4, 5 and 6 and testing; but this is a normal part of the process.

It is also important to note that Steps 5 and 6 can happen simultaneously. These have been placed in a linear order for structure and simplicity; but in reality this can be a more parallel process.

Case Studies

These steps and tools have been tested and validated from start to finish by seven SME case studies in WA's agrifood sector; and several other shorter case studies participated in Step 2 (Walk the Chain). Examples from these case studies are provided in the guides, webinar materials, and video testimonies on the Food Waste PRO Toolkit webpage.

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