

IFS INSIGHTS

REFLECTIONS ON CATERING & CORPORATE FOOD SERVICE

INDUSTRY INSIGHT OF THE MONTH:

THE TRUE COST OF FOOD WASTE IN CATERING & CORPORATE FOOD SERVICE



Food waste isn't just a sustainability issue — it's a **financial, operational, and cultural** one. In many catering programs, waste is hidden inside overproduction, unclear forecasting, and menu fatigue.

Organizations that actively track waste often discover savings opportunities without reducing quality or experience.

PRACTICAL TAKEAWAYS

DESIGN MENUS FOR REALITY, NOT OPTIMISM: Fewer, well-executed options often outperform large menus.

TRACK WHAT COMES BACK: Leftovers and untouched items tell a clear story if you're willing to look.

USE WASTE AS A DATA POINT: Waste should inform future menus, portioning, and ordering decisions — not be written off as "the cost of doing business."

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Reducing waste isn't about serving less — it's about serving smarter. When food service is aligned with real demand, everyone wins: the client, the team, and the bottom line.

A letter from Musette

February is often when reality sets in. The year is no longer new, budgets are active, and teams are living with the decisions made a few months earlier. In food service, this is also when waste becomes visible — not just on the plate, but in purchasing habits, menu planning, and operational blind spots. Over the years, I've learned that food waste is rarely about carelessness. It's usually about systems. This month, I want to talk about the true cost of food waste — and why addressing it is one of the fastest ways to improve both performance and trust.



Musette Fowke
CORPORATE AFFAIRS DIRECTOR



BEHIND THE SCENES AT IFS

INSIGHT: Sites that implement structured inventory tracking and menu rotation consistently reduce food waste while maintaining guest satisfaction.

Curious what your food waste might be telling you?

Let's take a close look together.

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