

# Using CSR strategy to support business sustainability values: Focus on food waste



*ADAS is an environmental consultancy committed to promoting sustainability values and practices within its employee base. Recognising that most people aspire for their working life to have a higher purpose than simply earning an income, ADAS strives to find ways to get all employees engaged in day to day sustainability efforts. Companies that can help reduce the tension between employees personal values and the best interests of the business will benefit from having a more engaged and productive workforce. Businesses can promote positive sustainability practices internally by embedding key issues into their CSR strategy.*

Food waste occurs at all levels of the supply chain, with consumers contributing more than 70% of this waste. Since employees are consumers, food businesses can tap into their employee base to raise awareness of the importance of reducing food waste. There is evidence to indicate that employee and customer retention improve when both groups feel that the company they work for/shop with shares their values so there is good reason to address food waste reduction in company CSR strategy.

Consumer food waste at £12.5bn makes up 70% of total UK food waste



## Key drivers for including food waste reduction as part of CSR strategy:

- Reputational benefits** | moral issues of wasting food while many face malnutrition, environmental concerns
- Employee and customer retention** | consumer and employee retention improves when company values reflect those of employees/customers
- Voluntary measures** | Courtauld 2025, UN Sustainable Development Goals setting targets for food waste reduction

## ADAS supports businesses in developing CSR policies and understanding employee and consumer attitudes towards food waste:

- **Baseline measurements** | Survey the current attitudes and behaviours of the workforce towards food waste covering household, office catering and eating out
- **Analysis** | Collate and analyse survey results
- **Communication** | Develop materials to communicate results internally, identify areas where employees can make changes to reduce food waste
- **Develop** | Assist in developing new CSR policies around food waste
- **Educate & engage** | Develop a forum for sharing ideas and fostering discussion around food waste between colleagues, select food waste ambassadors to champion the campaign
- **Evaluate** | Survey employees over time to identify any changes in attitudes and behaviours towards food waste

## Experience & capability– internal food waste survey

- ADAS carried out a company wide survey to understand attitudes and behaviour toward household food waste and captured perceptions of how the food retail and service sectors manage food waste.
- More than 350 completed surveys were analysed with results communicated to employees in an engaging format
- A discussion forum called ‘Wacky about Waste’ was developed for employees to share and discuss ways to reduce their food waste footprint
- A programme of follow ups helps monitor engagement and tracks progress



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