



# GOOD to go

TAKE-HOME BOXES AS  
PART OF YOUR SERVICE



Food waste is a major issue, which costs the Scottish hospitality industry an estimated £64 million a year. Research by Zero Waste Scotland estimates that around 53,500 tonnes of food is wasted from Scottish restaurants each year, and that two-thirds of this could have been avoided. 34% of this good food is estimated to be 'plate waste' – food left over at the end of the meal.

Providing take-home boxes, or 'doggy bags' as part of your service is a simple way to reduce waste and associated costs, whilst also offering your customers an enhanced service by enabling them to take uneaten food home to enjoy later.

Research has shown that, while customers overwhelmingly want to be offered 'doggy bags', two fifths (42%) are currently too embarrassed to ask for one.

The Good to Go scheme, run by Zero Waste Scotland, with the backing of the Scottish Government, has been launched to tackle this – to change the culture around leftovers and make it normal to take food home after a meal.

## **BENEFITS TO YOUR BUSINESS**

The Good to Go pilot, which ran in 16 restaurants in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Irvine and East Kilbride during spring 2014, revealed clear benefits to the participating restaurants:

### **Less food waste**

- Plate waste was reduced by an average of 42% per participating restaurant. Around half of this reduction was due to diners taking food home, with further reductions achieved through other measures such as restaurants adjusting portion sizes, changing menu options and checking if customers actually wanted side dishes such as chips or vegetables – all as a result of taking part in the pilot.

### **Enhanced service to customers**

- All customers surveyed welcomed the option to take leftover food home, regardless of whether they used the service or not.

### **Up-selling**

- Some restaurants reported an increase in sales thanks to the Good to Go take-home service, as customers who were unsure if they could manage a three course meal felt more confident doing so because they had the option of taking any leftovers home with them.

### **Being part of a national scheme**

- Feedback from restaurant staff showed that being part of a national initiative increased their confidence in offering customers a doggy bag and it was seen as a positive way to enhance the sustainability credentials of the business.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS**

Wasted food is not only a waste of money, it is also a major contributor to climate change. Findings from the pilot revealed that if restaurants across Scotland routinely offered doggy bags to customers, it could save the equivalent of 800,000 full meals going in the bin every year.

## **SUPPORT AVAILABLE**

The first 100 restaurants to sign up to the scheme will receive a supply of Good to Go containers, bags, promotional materials such as table-top ads, posters and window stickers, and guidance on how to take part.

## **NEED TO KNOW**

### **Health and safety**

Stickers used to seal the Good to Go containers contain all the relevant Food Standards Scotland safety advice the customer will need to ensure that the food is safe for consumption.

### **Bags and bag charge**

Restaurants signing up will be provided with branded paper carrier bags for customers to use to carry the containers home. The Good to Go pilot clearly showed that customers would expect to be offered a carrier bag and were happy to pay the 5p charge if they chose to take one.

The full Good to Go pilot report and a short video about the scheme is available at <http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/content/good-go-pilot-report-0>

**To sign up, or to find out more, contact  
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