

Together we're keeping food out of our garbage



metrovancouver

SERVICES AND SOLUTIONS FOR A LIVABLE REGION

June 16, 2015

Attn: Restaurant & Foodservice Managers

Re: Food Waste Reduction Pilot - Tool available for tracking and reducing food waste

Metro Vancouver invites foodservice businesses to participate in a food waste reduction pilot program.

Food waste, particularly the pre-consumer kind, costs the North American foodservice industry an estimated \$15 billion every year and sends millions of tonnes of valuable ingredients to landfill.

There are many good reasons to minimize food waste, including the rising costs of ingredients, the global impacts of transportation and increasing consumer concern over waste impacts. In 2015 Metro Vancouver introduced a region-wide organics disposal ban, which means food now needs to be separated from regular garbage. While directing scraps to green bins for compost is part of the solution, it is equally important to prevent and reduce food waste.

To help businesses find ways to *identify, measure and reduce* their food waste, Metro Vancouver is offering local restaurants and foodservice businesses a 6-8 week trial use of an electronic food waste tracking system.

The system works with your own menu on electronic tablets and digital scales. With a few quick steps, kitchen staff can track daily or weekly food waste trends by food type, cost, weight, time-of-day, and loss reasons, such as overproduction or spoilage. Your business will also benefit from data analysis and waste reduction recommendations. Lessons learned through the pilot program may be used to help other businesses to reduce food waste.

Attached is an FAQ sheet with more details. To participate in the program or for more information visit our [website](#) or email [Stephanie Woo](#) at Metro Vancouver.



Metro Vancouver Food Waste Reduction Pilot

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Metro Vancouver doing this?

Metro Vancouver introduced an organics disposal ban in 2015. Instead of being thrown away, food waste is collected separately and recycled into compost or biofuel. In addition to recycling food waste, businesses can first reduce the food waste they generate, or consider donating excess food.

Metro Vancouver is developing tools and resources to help residents and businesses make changes to keep food out of the landfill. One such tool is the LeanPath system, which helps track kitchen waste sources and reduce purchasing and operating costs at large institutional kitchens.

The equipment has been adapted for use in smaller-scale and independent restaurants, and was tested by Metro Vancouver in a few local restaurants in 2014. Now Metro Vancouver is offering a trial use of the system to more local restaurants to help them understand their food waste. Understanding the 'what' and 'why' of food waste will best guide how that waste can be avoided.

Can any type of restaurant apply?

The program is open to all Metro Vancouver restaurant and foodservice outlets that serve meals and dishes prepared from raw ingredients in an onsite kitchen — from small neighbourhood cafés to large-scale institutional facilities. Every effort will be made to provide fair access to businesses located in all regional communities.

How does the program work?

Participants will receive the food waste tracking equipment for 6-8 weeks, along with onsite and online advice on how to reduce food waste in your operations.

The program involves four main steps:

1. **Prep/Set-up** (*approx. one hour*) - you will receive a link to an online questionnaire to help configure the tracking software to your menu. Choose from 80 food/ingredient types and enter your custom pricing to ensure all the waste results reported are accurate. All system data is secure and confidential (see more below).
2. **Launch** (*approx. one hour*) - Equipment is delivered and installed onsite for staff orientation and training.
3. **Mid-program check-in** (*less than an hour*) - onsite review of results and changes implemented as needed.
4. **Wrap-up** (*approx. one hour*) - final data reports, onsite review and recommended next steps, equipment removal.

Metro Vancouver Food Waste Reduction Pilot

What does the equipment look like?

Metro Vancouver has two types of LeanPath systems: the ZAP portable touch-screen tablet and companion digital scale suited to most restaurant operations, and the LP360 tabletop system for large-scale, high-volume operations.

Each system requires standard 110vAC power to operate or recharge and Internet access (minimum once daily) to upload data. The ideal location for the scales and systems is near the waste or green bins accessible by all kitchen staff.

We will show your team how to use the equipment and explain the big-picture value of reducing food waste. We will also train a designated staff 'champion', and provide a secure log-in to your LeanPath web account to review data and produce regular reports for all team members.

How long is the program?

Your operation will have use of the system for 6 to 8 weeks (most large-scale businesses need a full 8 weeks for best results). Here's the typical breakdown:

- Week 1-3: Learn the system and gather benchmark data on your kitchen waste stream. We will then review the results with your team and recommend some easy-to-implement changes
- Week 4-6: Continue tracking food waste to measure the effectiveness of the changes
- End of week 6: You will receive a final data report, which will report your successes and opportunities for food waste reduction
- The program will run throughout 2015.

What if I need help during the program?

Metro Vancouver has engaged sustainability facilitator André LaRivière to serve as the local pilot project manager responsible for delivering the equipment, providing participant orientation and onsite support. He is a foodservice professional with years of kitchen experience and founder of the Green Table Network. André will help set up, train, and coach your team to get the most from the program. Also, LeanPath (based in Portland, Oregon) provides technical support by telephone and email.



Zap tablet

LP 360

What happens to the food waste data collected by the LeanPath system?

All program information is fully confidential. All waste results collected will be returned to you in the form of reports and digital data. Broad, anonymous summary results will be reported to Metro Vancouver and shared (online, print, and video) to promote food waste reduction among other businesses.

How can my business benefit?

Tracking your food waste for as little as 6-8 weeks will provide you with some insights (and perhaps a surprise or two) about the ingredients and prepared items that regularly go to waste in your kitchen, and how you can reduce or eliminate those costs. Metro Vancouver trialed the program with a few local restaurants, with generally positive results.

More importantly perhaps, this approach has proven to be very effective in getting staff on-board with waste reduction and building support for all sustainable efforts. Your customers, too, may be interested to know about your new efforts to track and reduce food waste.

Ultimately, this program can help keep food out of the landfill, reduce your costs related to purchase, handling, and disposal of food, and benefit your community.