Practical Strategies to Reduce Foodservice Waste

Turning control into consistency

THE PAYOFF FROM MEASURING AND CONTROLLING WASTE

26%

average cut in food waste within one year at 114 restaurants that measured it

Champions 12.3 (2019)

$7 : $1

operating savings for every dollar those restaurants invested

Champions 12.3 (2019)

14.8%

average waste reduction per store with AI ordering tools

Pacific Coast pilot, 1,300+ grocery stores (2022)

2 vs. 6–8

slices cooked at a time with a small-batch pizza format instead of a full pie

McLane, via NACS (2026)

FIVE AREAS OF CONTROL

Forecast and produce

Cook to hourly demand in small batches

Sell down and rotate

Hold times, first in first out

Control portions

Recipes, tools, right-sized formats

Train and own

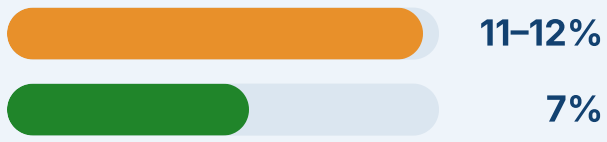
Clear ownership, no-blame logging

Adjust with data

Weekly reviews by item and hour

Waste as a share of food cost

Benchmarks cited for c-store pizza programs



Pre-topped products, measured portions and cook-to charts help close the gap.

Source: Hunt Brothers Pizza, via CSP

Do

- Build cook schedules from sales by hour
- Reduce facings, replenish more often
- Record every pulled item

Avoid

- Cooking full volume until close
- Portioning by eye
- Punishing honest waste logs

THE WASTE-CONTROL LOOP

Forecast
Expected demand by hour

Cook to minimum
Low display triggers a cook

Hold and pull
Remove at hold time

Record and adjust
Data feeds the next forecast

Sources: Champions 12.3 (February 2019); Pacific Coast Collaborative AI case study (Fall 2022); NACS, McLane Engage 2026 (September 2026); CSP coverage of Hunt Brothers Pizza, NexChapter and RaceTrac. Prepared by It’s All Goods.