

ISSN 1032-5298 • PRINT POST APPROVED PP241613/00096 VOL. 71 ISSUE

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JANUARY - MARCH 2019

australia

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FIAL



NATIONAL FOOD WASTE STRATEGY: HALVE FOOD WASTE IN AUSTRALIA BY 2030

Words by Nerida Kelton

With an estimated cost to the Australian economy of around \$20 billion each year, Food Waste is a serious problem. Australian consumers throw away around 3.1 million tonnes of edible food a year with another 2.2 million tonnes disposed of by the commercial and industrial sector.

The problem of food waste requires an end-to-end supply chain approach but the first step to ensuring effective strategic change is having long-term policy commitment that addresses the seriousness of the Food Waste issue by the Federal and State Governments.

The development of the *National Food Waste Strategy* by the federal government represents the first step. This strategy provides a framework to support collective action towards halving Australia's food waste by 2030.

Over the next two years, Food Innovation Australia Limited (FIAL) will receive funding from the federal government to develop the *National Food Waste Strategy* Implementation Plan, including a Voluntary Commitment Program and an evaluation framework to monitor progress. The government recently appointed a *National Food Waste*

Steering Committee to support the implementation of the National Food Waste Strategy.

FIAL has been working with the National Food Waste Steering Committee to help identify the short, medium and long-term initiatives crucial to the delivery of the strategy against the four priority areas that have been identified: policy support, business improvements, market development and behaviour change. The implementation plan is due in March 2019 and will provide the road map for Australia to meet the goal of halving food waste by 2030.

The steering committee has also been working closely with FIAL to identify the pathway to success for an industry-led and -championed voluntary commitment program. This program is a call to action for businesses that want to deliver a meaningful and collaborative reduction in food waste, through partnerships, collaboration, shared expertise and innovation.

Fight Food Waste Cooperative Research Centre

The Fight Food Waste Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) directly

supports the federal government's National Food Waste Strategy working on identifying priority projects for the next three years. The Fight Food Waste CRC involves 60 participants from around Australia and overseas, who collectively raised \$103 million in addition to the \$30 million from the initial CRC Program grant. This initiative will be an Australia-first, bringing industry, government and research bodies collectively and collaboratively together to tackle the food waste problem in this country.

The CRC's mission is composed of three core aims:

1. **Reduce** food waste throughout the value chain.
2. **Transform** unavoidable waste into innovative high-value products.
3. **Engage** with industry and consumers to deliver behavioural change.

The Australian Institute of Packaging

The Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP) has taken an active role in helping educate the packaging industry on the true role of packaging in minimising food waste by contributing to the National

Food Waste Strategy, having a representative on the National Food Waste Steering Committee and as a core contributor to the Fight Food Waste CRC.


The Institute runs training courses, design awards and is developing criteria and guidelines for packaging technologists and designers to use as the standard for 'Save Food Packaging' design.

AIPs objectives are to:

1. Encourage all packaging technologists and designers to use Save Food Packaging key criteria and guidelines across the globe. The key criteria include, but are not limited to *"resealability, openability, improvement of barrier packaging and extension of shelf-life, portion control, better understanding of Best Before vs Use By dates, improved design to reduce warehouse and transport damages and losses, better use of active and intelligent packaging and Life Cycle Assessments"*.
2. Ensure that all packaging technologists and designers are utilising Lifecycle Analysis Tools within their Save Food Packaging framework. Today there is a strong focus on the environmental aspects of food packaging, to ensure that at the end of its life (after use of the product contained) that it can be reused, repurposed, recycled or composted.
3. Encourage Manufacturers to actively engage in designing innovative Save Food Packaging and communicating these initiatives to their customers and consumers.
4. Recognise a wider range of Save Food Packaging innovations through the Packaging Innovation & Design (PIDA) Awards and the international WorldStar Packaging Award program.
5. Showcase Best Practice Award-Winning Save Food Packaging innovations across Australia and New Zealand.
6. Contribute to consumer education and engagement projects to change the narrative around packaging's roles in minimising food waste. Consumer education is needed to help them better understand the true role of Food Packaging: *"protection, preservation and promotion of product, shelf-life extension, tamper resistance, barrier from external elements all the while ensuring safe delivery of food."*

The National Food Waste Strategy and the establishment of the Fight Food Waste CRC have enabled for the first time the bringing together of an extensive range of like-minded industry professionals, who are working collaboratively across the entire supply chain for a common goal: *"halving food waste by 2030"*.

Every business has a role to play...do you know yours?

Nerida Kelton is the executive director of the Australian Institute of Packaging. 



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REF:101

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