The challenge of the 21st century - food waste

2025-05-15

According to data from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, some 1.3 billion tons of food are wasted worldwide each year, accounting for more than ⅓ of total food production. Poland also has its share, with as much as 5 million tons of food ending up in the trash every year. This is not only a social problem, but more importantly an environmental one. And while the numbers may be overwhelming, the solution doesn't require a revolution - a series of thoughtful steps toward a circular economy will suffice.

Circular economy - what does it mean in foodservice?

For the HoReCa (hospitality) industry, circular economy is all about minimizing waste, extending the life cycle of products and maximizing the use of resources - both material and food. In practice, this means, among other things:

- optimizing purchasing and menu planning,
- donating surpluses to food banks or selling at a reduced price,
- reusing products in the kitchen (e.g., preparations from leftover vegetables),
- educating guests and employees.

Example from the market: B&B Hotels and Too Good To Go

Concrete solutions have been implemented by the B&B Hotels Poland chain, which has partnered with the Too Good To Go app. Thanks to this initiative, over the past year alone, the 14 hotels of this chain in Poland “saved” more than 7160 meals and prevented the emission of more than 19 tons of CO_2e. And all of this while the local community was able to buy so-called Surprise Packets - wholesome meals offered at a discounted price.

- Not only are we reducing food waste, but we are also opening up to a new group of customers by acting responsibly and locally,” says Mariusz Jochan, Regional Operation Manager at B&B Hotels Poland. - This is an example of ESG in practice,” he adds.

Krakow - ready for a circular revolution?

As a city that attracts millions of tourists a year, Krakow is particularly vulnerable to food overproduction - especially in hotels and restaurants. Breakfast buffets, special events, fluctuating occupancy rates - all generate surpluses that often end up in the trash.

Meanwhile, responsible food management can not only reduce operating costs, but also enhance brand image. Consumers increasingly expect companies to take ethical climate action - including reducing waste.

What can a Krakow hotelier and restaurateur do?

- Join Too Good To Go or foodsi - the apps are active in Krakow and are very popular with users.

- Estimate in advance - analyzing sales data and seasonality helps avoid overproduction.
- Staff training - employees should know how to identify reusable products.
- Communicate with guests - information about anti-waste activities can be an added value for customers.
- Cooperation with local organizations - such as Food Banks.

Circular economy pays off

By implementing simple solutions, it is possible not only to reduce operating costs, but also to increase guest engagement and build positive PR. The example of B&B Hotels shows that small steps can bring big results - both for business and the environment.