

Plans to halve Wales' food waste announced by Lesley Griffiths

Wales has made significant progress in recent years in reducing the amount of food we unnecessarily throw away. Recent figures, published by WRAP, show a reduction of household food waste in Wales of 12% between 2009 and 2015. Wales' household waste is now lower than the rest of the UK by around 9%.

The Cabinet Secretary today confirmed in order to build on this progress, she intends to launch a consultation on a non-statutory target for Wales to halve food waste by 2025, against a 2006-07 baseline.

Lesley Griffiths made the announcement as she welcomed the Scottish Government's Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, Roseanna Cunningham, to Wales. Scotland was the first country in the UK to set a food waste reduction target.

Both Cabinet Secretaries will share views and information around waste and resource management. Lesley Griffiths is keen to hear the Scottish Government's experience of setting a food waste target and will discuss with Roseanna Cunningham how Wales has achieved its success in municipal waste recycling. The visit comes a week before the release of provisional annual waste statistics for 2016/17, where Wales expects to improve on last year's rate of 60% – the third highest in the world.

The Cabinet Secretaries will also discuss their commitment to developing a more circular economy, an approach where high-quality materials derived from waste products can be supplied back to manufacturers and productively used again and again.

Lesley Griffiths and Roseanna Cunningham will visit Newport WasteSavers, a social enterprise that promotes the importance of reuse and recycling, and Public Health Wales' new office in Cardiff, which has been refurbished with the use of repaired and recycling furniture and tiles, an excellent example of the circular economy in action. PHW's refit recently won the organisation an international award for Environmental Best Practice.

Ahead of the visits, Lesley Griffiths said:

“I am very much looking forward to welcoming my counterpart in the Scottish Government, Roseanna Cunningham to Wales to compare our approaches to waste management.

“In Wales we are well on our way to achieving our ambitious target to become a zero waste nation by 2050. Recycling is at an all time record high and our 60% recycling rate is bettered by just two other countries in the world.

“We are keen to build on this success and one area where we believe

improvements can be made is food waste. If just half of all the food and dry recyclables found in Wales' bins were recycled, Wales would reach its 2025 recycling target of 70 per cent nine years early. The consultation I intend to launch will examine the potential to halve food waste by 2025. It is an ambitious target but I know, from our recycling performance in recent years, when we work closely with local authorities and householders we can achieve results that make the world stand up and take notice."

Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Roseanna Cunningham said:

"We welcome the Welsh Government's steps to tackle food waste which will help save households money, reduce emissions and contribute to the circular economy.

"In Scotland we are committed to reducing food waste by 33% by 2025 which could lead to significant savings for everyone – avoidable food waste costs Scotland £1 billion per year or £460 per household.

"Through our Love Food Hate Waste campaign to encourage people to reduce waste in their homes, the roll out of a doggy bag scheme in restaurants and the introduction of legislation which requires local authorities to provide food waste recycling points, we are working with households, retailers and the industry to help reach our target."