

FOOD WASTE

Reducing food waste at source and better management of the residual can make a major positive contribution towards delivery of Scotland's sustainability objectives and should be a key feature of Scotland's climate change delivery plan agenda. In particular, opportunities available from separate food waste collection and treatment offer the following:

- Engaging the public and businesses in the separate collection of food waste encourages everyone to recognise the current high levels of waste and reduce this at source through changes in purchasing patterns and preparation methods. This behaviour change will help save resources and reduce strain on agriculture, indirectly benefiting climate change.
- Separate collection of segregated food waste, enables it to be treated through Anaerobic Digestion processes, producing biogas that can then be used to produce heat or electricity, displacing fossil fuels and contributing towards Scotland's renewable energy targets.
- The Anaerobic Digestion process produces an organic fertiliser and nutrient source which, in turn can displace carbon intensive chemical fertilisers, contributing towards sustainable soil strategies and sustainable food production.
- In addition, separate food waste collection allied with appropriate treatment prevents it ending up in landfill where it would otherwise produce methane emissions which, if uncontrolled, are highly detrimental to climate change.

All of these benefits make a contribution towards making more productive use of these resources within Scotland, reducing the consumption of fossil fuels for energy generation and manufacture of inorganic fertilisers, and capturing valuable organic materials for return to the soil in a closed loop for food production and manufacture.

There are opportunities for many stakeholders within the food supply chain, resource recovery industry and financial sector from the implementation of food waste reduction and resource recovery policies.

These include reducing current disposal costs, meeting carbon reduction commitments, generating renewable energy, developing new businesses, creation of new jobs, investment in new infrastructure and managing food production in a more sustainable manner.

Given this significant contribution, the 2020 Climate Group wishes to make a statement on the importance of all parties engaging in making this happen through:

- Government pushing forward with a clear legislative framework that requires the separate collection of segregated food waste from business and householder alike.
- The Banking and Energy sector, recognising the valuable role that anaerobic digestion has to play and engaging in investment in this area.
- The retail and farming sector recognising the importance of managing food waste sustainably, as part of the food supply chain and in their public engagement role, and by working with Government, business and the public recognise that digestates produced through Anaerobic Digestion provide considerable potential as sustainable fertilisers for food crops and encourage their use.