

# How Novotel Alster Hamburg Reduced Food Waste by 32% in Just 7 Weeks

Located between the Elbe and Alster rivers, **Novotel Hamburg City Alster** is a modern hotel welcoming both business and leisure guests. Sustainability is becoming part of everyday operations and in November 2025, the team installed Winnow to better understand and reduce food waste, aligning with Accor's commitment to cut food waste by 60% by 2030. Within just seven weeks, the team achieved a 32% reduction in food waste weight.

### Making Waste Measurable

With a career that began through a classical apprenticeship and evolved across the restaurant and hotel industry, Head **Chef Khaled Matoussi** brings both structure and experience to the operation. For him, the turning point was moving from assumption to measurement.

**"With Winnow, we can clearly see what actually ends up in the bin, we don't just estimate it, we measure it."**

This visibility changed the conversation in the kitchen. Instead of relying on instinct alone, the team began using data to guide production planning, purchasing decisions, and service preparation. Winnow reports are reviewed regularly to identify which products are most frequently discarded and at what times waste occurs. These insights quickly revealed a clear pattern.

### Rethinking Breakfast Production

The most significant opportunity was found during breakfast service. With around 300 covers daily, the buffet must remain attractive and abundant throughout service. However, data showed consistent overproduction, particularly with hot dishes and baked goods.

By preparing smaller batches and replenishing more frequently, the team was able to reduce waste without compromising the guest experience. Purchasing plans were adjusted, and internal production processes refined.

Menu selection was also reviewed. Dishes that were consistently left over were replaced with more popular, freshly prepared components, aligning supply more closely with actual demand.

### A Dedicated Focus on Trimmings

Beyond overproduction, preparation waste became a second focus area.

Winnow data highlighted the volume of vegetable trimmings and unused fruit. Rather than discarding these ingredients, the team began integrating them back into the menu more deliberately.

Vegetable trimmings are now repurposed for stocks and other dishes, while leftover breakfast fruit is further processed whenever possible.

### Waste reduction results



**32% reduction in food waste weight**



**10 tons food waste saved annually**



**42.5 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e avoided annually**



**\$20,000 annualized reduction in waste value**



**25,000 meals saved annually**

This shift reflects a broader mindset change, treating every ingredient as valuable from delivery to plate.

Food waste awareness has also been integrated into onboarding. New team members learn from the outset why waste is measured and how each individual contributes to improvement. The result is strong internal support and a shared sense of accountability.

### Spotlight Dish: Salmon Teriyaki Bowl

One dish that reflects this evolution particularly well is the Salmon Teriyaki Bowl.

Combining high-quality salmon with a variety of vegetable trimmings, the dish transforms what might once have been discarded into a vibrant, balanced offering. It demonstrates how sustainability can strengthen creativity rather than limit it.

### A Clear Takeaway

For Khaled Matoussi, the lesson is simple and practical:

**"If you measure, you understand what is really happening. You recognize where the problems lie and can make targeted changes. You don't have to start perfectly, what matters is taking the first step."**

Novotel Alster Hamburg has demonstrated that meaningful change can happen quickly when data is embedded into daily kitchen management. By combining measurement, operational discipline, and team engagement, the hotel has reduced waste while maintaining high culinary standards, fully aligned with Accor's sustainability ambitions.