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**Release: Immediate**

### **What a waste**

#### **Our enthusiasm for recycling wilts when it comes to food scraps.**

As we stock up for Christmas, a new national survey conducted for [AMDEA](#) by YouGov has found that an impressive 87% of us say we put out paper and card for council collection, 84% plastic, 77% glass and 75% metal, yet this drops to just 41% for food waste.

Depending where we live our zeal to store food left overs for separate council collection falls even further, to 32% amongst those living in inner city areas and 24% for those in purpose built flats.

Douglas Herbison, Chief Executive, AMDEA suggests that “for the urban population with little or no opportunity to compost and where kitchen space is at a premium, separating and storing food waste to take out for weekly collection is just too difficult.”

Food waste that is not recycled goes into our regular bins and ultimately to landfill or incineration; emitting greenhouse gases and wasting valuable biogas, precious soil nutrients and vital resources such as phosphorus.

Douglas Herbison points out that “For many local authorities separate food waste collections aren’t viable. The cash and carbon cost of running a second bin round, or a specially configured food waste truck, does not justify the low yield.”

For those turning their nose up at separate collection schemes, aside from those saying the service is not provided by their local authorities, top reasons cited included: “it smells” (19%) “It attracts unwanted pests” (19%) and “its unhygienic” (14%).

WRAP reports that only 10% of food waste is being recovered (Editors’ Note 4), yet nearly a third (32%) of those asked, who do not use separate collection when it is offered by their local council, said that an easier/ cleaner option (like an in-sink food waste disposer) would encourage them to do so.

Food waste disposers are small appliances that fit under the kitchen sink and grind practically any food waste to minute particles that flow easily through the sewer system to waste water treatment. Here biogas for heat and electricity is recovered, along with valuable natural fertilisers.

Douglas Herbison concludes, “Food waste disposers can use existing infrastructure to provide a clean and easy option for those currently defeated by food waste recycling. They keep unavoidable left overs out of landfill and help prevent food waste from contaminating our streets and other valuable dry recyclables.”

Other findings:

- 22% home compost some or all food waste

- 66% of those whose councils do provide food waste collection, but who don't participate, have never done so and 20% used to, but have given up.
- Further geographic and demographic breakdowns available.

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#### Editors' Notes

- 1- AMDEA is the UK trade association for manufacturers of large and small domestic appliances; representing over 85% of the domestic appliance industry. Members' products include most of the UK's top selling brands of major white goods, other large and small kitchen appliances, heating, water heating, floor care, waste disposal and ventilation equipment.
- 2- In 2010 those AMDEA members who manufacture food waste disposers formed [AMDEA's Food Waste Disposer Group](#) with the aim of promoting a greater awareness of the benefits of food waste disposers (FWDs) and informing the waste management debate.
- 3- All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2043 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 20th - 21st November 2014. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).
- 4- WRAP evidence to the House of Commons, Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee - Waste Management in England.  
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmenvfru/241/24106.htm>

Contacts: For further survey details, interviews or comment:

AMDEA Press Office

Dee Fernandes or Charlotte Aldridge

Tel: 020 7722 9034 Mob. 07887 648 434 e-mail: amdeapress@bfipr.co.uk