



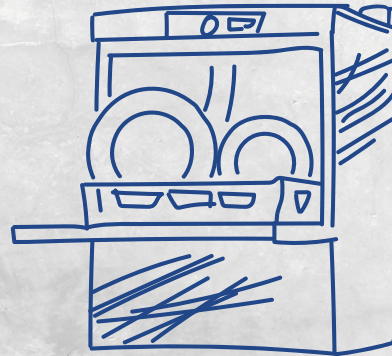
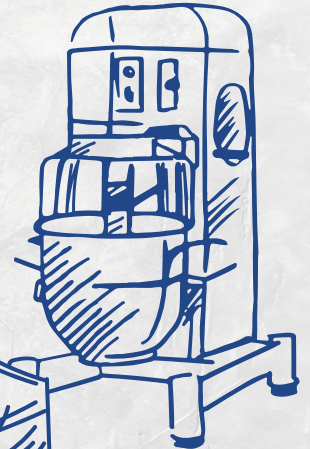
SUSTAINABILITY 2030

FROM FOOD WASTE TO ENERGY EFFICIENCY:
WHY FOODSERVICE MUST KEEP SUSTAINABILITY ON THE MENU
IN A POST-PANDEMIC ERA

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WELCOME

The bottom line is: sustainability matters

Not used much in contemporary parlance, but the word ‘respair’ is a 16th century term meaning “fresh hope, and a recovery from despair.” 2021 might well be the year that ‘respair’ is dusted down and makes something of a comeback in the lexicon of foodservice professionals. Goodness knows, on the flip-side we have otherwise ran out of words to describe the hopelessness and devastation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

But, personal and professional loss is perhaps not all that has hit the wayside this year. For many foodservice operators, the topic of sustainability was beginning to finally loom large and be positioned front and center strategically in business thinking before the pandemic struck. Why? Because being energy efficient makes good business sense. Parking the environmental imperative – the fact that we just *should* be good custodians of our planet because it is fundamentally our responsibility – the bottom line is that wasting resources is bad for the bottom line.

So, how far has sustainability slipped back down the industry’s menu of issues it must tackle? While operators fight fires and simply try and stay solvent until a vaccine is widely available and normality resumes, it’s too early to tell. But there’s no doubt that, while sustainability has been knocked off the front page somewhat this year, the issue isn’t going away. It remains a compelling subject for the industry for the very reason that, now more than ever, operators need to save money and watch their P&L more hawkishly than ever before. Pouring money figuratively down the drain or wastefully scraping saleable assets into the garbage bin is no longer an option for any business. For that reason alone, we as an industry must get a firmer grip on what resources we use, and when.

Customers vote with their feet and are happy to shun otherwise well-run businesses if they don’t believe they behave ethically. So if you’re not on board with sustainable practices now, the future of your business really might depend on it.

All of this is the very reason FCSI EAME will be theming its 2021 Conference on the subject of sustainability (see page 18). It’s the reason this supplement has been mailed to you in ‘Bio-wrap’ packaging. Made from potato starch and vegetable matter, the wrap is fully compostable and will bio-degrade in your personal compost within 12 months. Otherwise, hopefully there are plenty of other reasons in these pages, kindly supported by Meiko, to find respair from the past year and hope for a sustainable future.

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FCSI and carbon footprint measurement

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Words **Michael Jones, Cameron Sharpe, Andrea Tolu**

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Progressive Content
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PERSPECTIVE





FUTURE FIT

As foodservice fights the fires of the Covid-19 crisis, many other pressing issues have had to be put on hold this year. But sustainability must be an ever-present on the menu if the industry is to survive and thrive, reports Michael Jones

It would be a strong contender for understatement of the decade to declare that the hospitality sector is facing some challenging headwinds at present. But, for readers suffering from ‘Covid-crisis’ fatigue in terms of industry coverage, you will be pleased to learn that this supplement is not another treatise on the industry’s travails in the pandemic. Instead it focuses on a topic that was, finally, getting the attention it deserved before the virus rampaged through our lives – and our sector – at the beginning of 2020: sustainability.

Pre-pandemic, the lip-service paid towards sustainability for years before had finally begun to turn into demonstrable action that saw energy-saving practices placed at the heart of many successful foodservice operations; the disingenuous greenwash spouted by companies for years had solidified into considered action plans for saving resources and food too good to be wasted. Empty slogans were become strategy.

Sustainability had finally earned its seat at the table because in this industry, as in all others, money talks. Operators, suppliers and manufacturers had finally become convinced that equipment,

processes and practices that saved energy and prevented waste could also save a considerable amount of money in return.

The worry is that all this hard work – which had been benefiting the planet, the consumer and the industry holistically – would go into reverse. That we would fall back into bad, old habits in terms of how we operate in the face of an uncertain future.

Thankfully, that concern is not the prevailing view – sustainability will not slip off the radar. “Sustainability matters

in our business, because it matters everywhere. Our industry today cannot avoid being involved in sustainability. It’s a very, very important issue,” consultant **Paul Montegut** FCSI told me recently on FCSI’s Sustainability Lowdown podcast.

Montegut, the chair of FCSI France, will play a lead role in the organization of the 2021 FCSI Europe, Africa, Middle East (EAME) Conference in Chantilly, Paris, next year. The theme of the Conference? You guessed it: ‘Sustainability’. As well as leading consultants and industry experts giving presentations on the topic and its importance to the future of the sector, the Conference will have its carbon footprint meticulously measured and

analysed (see page 18) and a report of the findings published subsequently that will hopefully become a blueprint for future FCSI events to reduce their carbon output. The initiative is led by FCSI EAME Allied member representative Mick Jary, of warewashing manufacturer Meiko.

A mindset change

For Montegut, the Covid pandemic, while self-evidently horrendous for operating profits within sector itself, is actually “good for sustainability,” he says. “Now people will have to change their own life and way of working. We have to live a life completely linked to sustainability. Working from home is very good for sustainability. Less travel is very good for sustainability. I think this year will accelerate the sustainability issue.”

Montegut, like many other concerned individuals, believes that society has little choice but to embrace a sustainable future and feels a personal burden that his – and preceding – generations have

“Now people will have to change their own life and way of working. We have to live a life completely linked to sustainability”

>

not been good custodians of the planet soon to be inherited by his children's generation. "This planet has been destroyed in 100 years, which is a very short time. If we continue [like this], there will be nothing left. I have kids and grandkids. We have to work for them. In terms of weather and climate change, it's just unbelievable."

Fellow consultant **Frank Wagner**, FCSI, chair of FCSI Germany/Austria and also an interviewee on the Sustainability Lowdown podcast, believes there has been a fundamental shift towards sustainability in recent years. "People want to be sustainable now. We cannot continue as we have done the last 20 years. We give this environment to our children, so it would be good if it's intact. Also, from an economic point of view there is nothing bad in saving electricity, garbage, waste and space. I think that's a mindset. People should not waste resources. We should make sure our children have the same standard of living we have – or better."

The food and foodservice sector is, needless to say, a major contributor to



carbon emissions. According to research by Joseph Poore and Thomas Nemecek (2018), published in *Science*, the global food system, encompassing agriculture, production, processing, and distribution, is responsible for approximately 26% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Those stark statistics are finally starting to hit home though and it is the consumer that helping to drive change.

People power

In the UK, new research from energy provider E.ON (E.ON's Renewable Returns report, has highlighted the shift in consumer purchasing behavior towards more sustainable products in the food and drink sector.

A survey of business leaders and consumers across the UK revealed that: 79% of small businesses in the food and drink sector are targeting growth through sustainability and have made 'becoming more green' a top business priority for 2021. 36% are now purchasing more sustainable goods and services than they did before.

The food and drink industry is also notably where consumers expect strong environmental credentials. Three quarters (78%) of food and drink small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have reported greater demand for sustainable products and practices from their customers in the last year. Interestingly, three quarters (75%) of food and drink SMEs have reported increased pressure to act is coming from their own staff.

Purchasing power – and indeed people power generally if we factor in employees too – has become a massive factor in why foodservice brands choose to adopt more sustainable practices. It's the reason McDonald's, for example, announced two years ago that it would set two hugely ambitious environmental goals to achieve by 2025: to have 100% of customer packaging sourced from "renewable, recycled, or certified

McDonald's announced two years ago that by 2025

100%

of customer packaging will be sourced from "renewable, recycled, or certified sources"



sources" and have recycling available in all its restaurant locations. In 2018, 50% of customer packaging came from sustainable sources and only 10% of its restaurants are recycling.

In January 2020 Starbucks announced ambitious plans to become a "resource-positive" company, aiming to reduce emissions within a decade. Plant-based meal options have been expanded alongside a shift to reusable packaging and less single-use plastic. The company will also invest in innovative agricultural

"People want to be sustainable now. We cannot continue as we have done the last 20 years. We give this environment to our children, so it would be good if that's intact"

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practice, eco-friendly operations and stores, and better waste management.

The foodservice giants, and a plethora of other high-profile foodservice brands, are savvy enough to realize that adopting good, sustainable operating procedures (and telling the world about them), is an investment in their own future. It is sincerely not a good look for any company to be associated with guzzling gas and depleting rainforests. Pillaging the planet's resources or contributing to climate change when your current and future customers care deeply about the ethics of environmentalism is a short-term approach that will bury brands that cannot read the room and do what's right.

And the biggest group of current customers really do care about sustainability. Millennials' spending overall was forecast to grow at a higher rate than other age groups (2.6% in 2020, reflecting a growing spending

power as that demographic assumes more senior professional roles in the worldwide workplace. According to Goldman Sachs Global Investment Research (*Millennials: Coming of Age*), the Millennials generation is the biggest in US history, even bigger than the Baby Boomers.

The role of the manufacturer

That incentive for brands to change for the better – marrying the ecological imperative that customers desire along with the economic benefits bestowed by efficiency gains – is also being driven by foodservice equipment manufacturers. “The focus on sustainability starts with product development. Each product is developed by R&D with the aim of being precise, sustainable and efficient,” says cooking technology manufacturer Giorik's **Maria Savi**.



“Digitization is our ally when it comes to sustainability. Even technical assistance services are now carried out 90% remotely”

“Our compact ovens achieve very high performance and cooking levels, but their energy consumption is reduced to a minimum. But we are not just talking about energy saving. Our washing systems are developed with a specific water recirculation system that allows very low water and detergent consumption. Our boiler can complete the descaling cycle without chemical agents, but with simple vinegar.”

Giorik, says Savi, “tries to reduce waste as much as possible”. Packaging is often made of recyclable material and never plastic where possible. Even the printing of pricelists and brochures is minimized, with storage systems or downloads from the cloud preferred for customers, to reduce the damage caused by deforestation.

“Digitization is our ally when it comes to sustainability,” she says.

“Even technical assistance services are now carried out 90% remotely thanks to software and workstations specially developed to solve problems even hundreds of kilometers away. This helps us to reduce movement by car, train or aircraft – reducing CO2 emissions.”

The manufacturer also works with customers to calculate the exact amount of emissions that the production, use and shipment of its products can cause to the environment and contributes to their disposal.

There are many other laudable initiatives from equipment manufacturers, making important contributions to reducing waste and reducing resources during the production of equipment that, in turn, is >

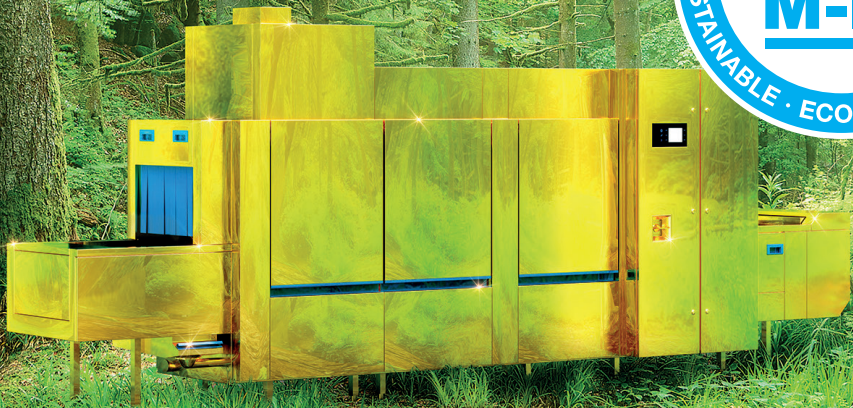


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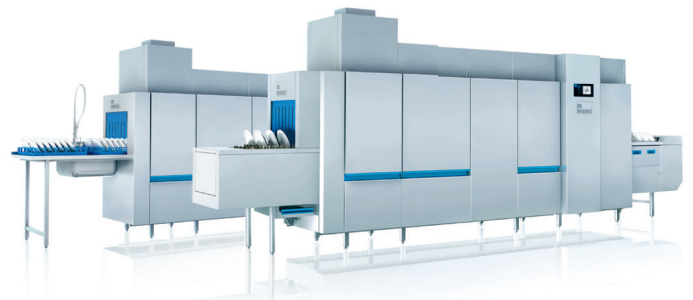
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10 years of the M-iQ – a story gleaming with efficiency



M-iQ rack type

M-iQ flight type

far more energy efficient than previous iterations. Electrolux Professional recently enhanced its own sustainability commitments based on the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals and the Paris agreement. The ambition for the company, a signatory of the UN Global Compact – a voluntary call to companies “to align their strategies and operations with basic responsibilities to people and the planet” – is to become climate neutral from operations by 2030. “I am very proud to be able to announce our strategic sustainability commitments, that will guide our operations and business in the years to come. We have a strong foundation in our sustainability legacy. Our sustainability focus areas and targets are designed to set the pace for the future within the professional food, laundry and beverage industry,” says **Alberto Zanata**, president and CEO.

As well as becoming climate neutral within the next decade, the company will also reduce scope 1 and 2 CO2 emissions by at least 50% until 2025. “The main environmental impact occurs during the product-use phase as customers operate products consuming resources such as energy, water and detergents. We are determined to continue developing, and offer low-resource consuming products, which benefit both our customers’ running costs as well as our planet,” adds Zanata.

Chef-driven

Many chefs, both of the high-profile variety and those lower down the food

“I see a lot of European, experienced chefs are so aggressive towards the ingredients, they don’t pay much attention to wastage. It is painful for me to watch”



chain, are also notably becoming more vocal on the subject of another compelling sustainability topic: food waste.

Interviewed in the Q4 2020 edition of FCSI’s *Foodservice Consultant* magazine, Japanese chef **Masaki Sugisaki** describes his experience working with European chefs and how there exists, he feels, some cultural divergence in how ingredients and waste are viewed in different regions “I want to train them and let them know how to be friendlier to the environment,” he says. “I see a lot of European, experienced chefs are so aggressive towards the ingredients, they don’t pay much attention to wastage. It is painful for me to watch.”

Food waste has also become something of a hot-button issue in China



recently. In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, in August 2020, president Xi Jinping announced that the “shocking and distressing” amount of food wasted in China had to be addressed. Xi has called for increased legislation and supervision to stop food waste. WWF China revealed approximately 17 to 18 million tons of food were wasted in China in 2015, enough to feed 30 to 50 million people annually.

As *Foodservice Consultant* reported in its Q3 edition this year, ‘Operation Clean Plate’ is now in effect in all eateries in China. “This raises consumer awareness not to waste food when they eat out,” said Xi, who has instigated local authorities and individual restaurants in China to step up and stop wastage.

France is a country that has already





made successful attempts to mitigate against food waste. “In France, we have had a law for many years now that says restaurants – whether a staff canteen, a hotel or a commercial restaurant – must valorize [attach a value] to their organic food waste,” says Montegut. “So, operators are very keen on that and try to adapt their production to the reality of the number of people [they serve]. Now, you cannot offer 10 different meals between 12-2pm. They are reducing their offer. That’s good for them too, because food waste is a cost. It’s good for the planet and it’s good for money. We have good laws in France for food waste, I think we are quite advanced on that.”

Wagner remains positive for how the industry in general will get to grips with its reduction of food waste in the future. “We will manage food waste better. And smarter than we do now too, through a

combination of food waste tracking and communicating how much food chefs are throwing away. That’s [already] reducing dramatically. It’s also a matter of how you plan your recipes, how you order, how you store, how you purchase food and then how you sell it. In the next five years, everything will be related to artificial intelligence helping us be better.”

Around the world, from high-end to QSR and chain restaurants, smart ideas are coming to the fore that will help reduce food waste and showcase green credentials to discerning customers. In November 2020, *Restaurant Hospitality* reported that Shuggie’s – a San Francisco-based startup due to open its doors in spring 2021 will serve up a menu of woodfired pizzas made out of food waste. The ‘trash pies’ will be

made from “oft-discarded ingredients such as offal, ugly produce, and leftover spent grain from breweries and oat milk facilities.” The owners are also the brains behind San Francisco’s Ugly Pickle Co., which boasts a similar concept of selling gourmet food “made from discarded produce and plant parts.”

Disposables, net zero targets and mega trends

Concerted efforts to change the bad habits of an industry previously drowning in single-use plastic before the pandemic, have been hampered because of this year’s mass pivot from table service towards take-out and food delivery. “Recent years had seen incredible momentum in reducing the use of disposables for foodservice, but Covid has seen an overnight reversal of this at many operations as they move away from self-service to pre-packaged product,” **Ed Bircham** FCSI, director at Humble Arnold Associates in the UK tells *Foodservice Consultant* this quarter.

In the magazine, Bircham predicts one of the ‘mega-trends’ set to dominate the industry in future years is so-called ‘net zero targets’, which will impact how operators and foodservice designers optimize kitchen operations. “We are at the embryonic stage of companies and organizations divesting themselves from fossil fuels as part of ‘net zero’ targets. This laudable environmental initiative will present operators and designers with a real challenge to fulfil the consumer demand for authenticity.”

Sustainability is, indeed now an authentic and very real mega trend in itself and those foodservice companies – whether operators, manufacturers or suppliers – who continue to ignore it, could well end up being a footnote in the sector’s history. Survival of the fittest remains the watchword, pandemic or not, and being future-fit requires becoming sustainable enough to face new challenges. ■



IN PROFILE:





A SUSTAINABLE BARGAIN

The team behind the Too Good To Go app have pioneered a new approach to help the foodservice sector combat food waste. CEO **Mette Lykke** tells Andrea Tolu why it works and how the Covid-19 pandemic has affected the way it operates

During the lockdowns imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, food waste stopped being a problem for the foodservice sector, for the worst possible reason: closed kitchens have no food and therefore no surplus either.

Now that restrictions have lifted across Europe, and many commercial kitchens are reopening, the issue is likely to return, albeit with an important difference: the pressure to avoid useless costs (and no cost is more useless than wasted food) will be even stronger.



Food packs are sold at discounted prices via the Too Good To Go app

Too Good To Go is an app that helps foodservice businesses eliminate the problem of wasting unsold food by selling it on to others. On its platform, restaurants, hotels, bakeries, grocery stores and supermarkets can make food packs available at a discounted price, which is usually half or one third of the original value. Customers buy them through the app and go to the store to collect them.

For food businesses, it's a way to generate revenue from food that would otherwise be thrown away. It can also work as an additional channel to find potential new customers, by showing them an active effort towards sustainability as well as developing relationships.

Too Good To Go was founded in Denmark in 2015 and has grown exponentially in the last five years. Not only are people downloading the app at a more rapid pace, they also buy more meals. In February 2018, about 261,000



The contents of each pack is unknown, so a desire to save edible food from being wasted is key

“Our initiatives help change mindsets and inspire people to think differently. Everything we do is part of the same movement against food waste”



new users downloaded the app and saved 1.2 meals on average. In February 2020, just before the pandemic hit, 1.3 million new users joined and each one bought almost two meals on average. Partnering stores are following a very similar progression.

As of today, the app has 22.4 million users in 15 countries (14 in Europe, plus the United States), partners with more than 47,000 establishments, and has saved almost 40 million meals.

A different kind of ROI

Such impressive growth, however, is only part of the reason why Too Good To Go exists. Its goal is to “inspire people and create a whole movement against food waste.” Consistent with its ambition, the company is part of several initiatives to raise awareness about this global issue.

One of these initiatives aims to end the confusion between ‘best before’, ‘use by’ and ‘sell by’ dates, which is estimated

to cause about nine million tonnes of food waste every year in the EU.

“We have been working with some of the biggest food producers to improve date labelling and make it clearer that ‘best before’ often really means ‘good after’,” says CEO Mette Lykke.

Another example is a campaign launched in Spain, called Chefs contra el desperdicio (Chefs against waste), where 10 famous chefs share their anti-food-waste recipes and explain why it is important to use as much food as possible in professional kitchens.

For Lykke, business growth and higher social goals are really two sides of the same coin. “There are great synergies between the two. Every meal we save is a win from both a commercial and a mission perspective,” she says.

“We’ve also found that what we do outside of the marketplace helps drive the marketplace as well. Some of our initiatives don’t have the traditional return on investment, so we cannot measure exactly what we get out of them. But they do help change mindsets and inspire people to think differently. Everything we do is part of the same movement against food waste.”

When it comes to expanding into a new country, however, finding a minimum level of awareness about environmental issues in its population is an important factor.

“We have a framework with 35 different criteria. Some of the bigger themes are around the eating culture and mindset towards sustainability and climate change,” says Lykke. “Surprisingly, there are very few differences. No two countries are the same, but we don’t have to tweak our model a lot between them. Everywhere we operate we have seen a rise of the food waste agenda, which we have probably also helped speed up.”

An anti-food-waste mindset is important because Too Good To Go is

much more than a place to find meals at cheap prices. When users buy a food pack through the app, it is not possible to know in advance what it will contain. This is, of course, inevitable, as the stores themselves will not know what food is left until the last minute. But this is an element of surprise we are not necessarily used to when it comes to buying food – rather, freedom of choice is the norm. So, the discount alone would probably not be enough of a reason to give up that choice. There also has to be the desire to save perfectly edible food from being wasted.

A shock to the system

Lockdown restrictions had little direct impact on Too Good To Go’s operations, thanks to its logistics based on proximity. Delivery is not part of its business model: food bags have to be collected directly at the store.

The indirect impact, however, was significant. With numerous establishments closed and people confined to their homes, user growth and platform activity slowed down considerably.

“We saw a big decline, especially in the restaurant and hotel segments. Bakeries have been holding up a lot better, because they have been allowed



Awareness of environmental issues has increased consumer appetite for sustainable practices

to stay open,” explains Lykke. “To some extent, the supply and demand sides go hand in hand, so when there’s less activity on the platform we also have fewer new users per day. But as the countries have opened up again, they’re both growing very rapidly.”

While it put the battle against food waste temporarily on hold, Too Good To Go made the platform available for takeaway orders. The initiative, called Takeaway to Give Back, was non-profit (the app only charged enough fees to cover the costs) and helped restaurants in 10 European countries sell 25,000 meals.

In fact, for Too Good To Go, the pandemic was an opportunity to expand its marketplace to food producers. “We had a cheese factory, a meat factory and other companies reaching out to us because all the regular customers in the food service business were no longer buying what they had already produced. We helped save tonnes of cheese and meat and chocolate and other foods for some of these companies. With a big enough user base, we can move pretty big quantities in a short period of time,” says Lykke.

This type of request from manufacturers is very much in line with



Top right: Too Good To Go's CEO Mette Lykke
Bottom left: Too Good To Go is much more than a place to find meals at cheap prices



“Consumers are demanding sustainability from the whole sector, so the issue of food waste will be even higher on their agenda”

the serious impact of the pandemic on the food system. “If you want to keep food waste down you need high predictability. But what we saw was that all of the predictability across the supply chain was basically destroyed. When all these shocks started hitting the system, a lot of additional food was wasted,” Lykke explains.

“A lot of the companies working with food suddenly weren’t able to sell it. Farmers could no longer get workers in across the border for harvesting and had to let produce rot on the fields; supermarkets went from extreme to very low demand after the hoarding phase passed; and the hospitality industry was left with all the food it already had in stock.”

“That was an eye opener. We could see how our supply chains are maybe not as resilient as we thought they were. I think that the pictures of completely empty shelves in supermarkets are going to stick with us for a long time.”

The next normal

For Lykke, the effects of the crisis on the foodservice sector will still be felt for some time to come. “We expect to see a lot of deals in this space, with one chain buying another and new investors coming in,” she explains. “Restaurants and food stores that were already struggling before Covid-19 – at least some of them – are probably not going to make it. The fine dining segment will probably take the biggest hit, less so the coffee shops and the bakeries that we primarily work with.”

On the consumer side, once health and safety concerns take a step back, sustainability will be a priority again. “Even more than before, consumers are demanding sustainability from the whole sector, so the issue of food waste will be even higher on their agenda. Also, with a lot of stores under pressure financially, it also makes good sense not to throw away your resources, but to make the most of them,” says Lykke. ■

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FCSI AND SUSTAINABILITY: OPINION

Counting carbon – FCSI EAME’s 2021 Conference

FCSI will demonstrate its sustainable credentials when it will comprehensively measure the carbon footprint of the 2021 EAME Conference, says Progressive Content’s **Cameron Sharpe**



The events of 2020 have made us all reflect on what we stand for, where we are and the sort of influence we have on the planet – socially, economically and environmentally. We all appreciate the seriousness of the impact of greenhouse gas emission and the contribution of our own individual carbon footprints to this parlous global landscape.

In foodservice, this is something the membership has been grappling with for many years. Indeed, FCSI was at the forefront of innovation in this area more than a decade ago, and we want to take a further step forward next year by producing a comprehensive report into the carbon footprint of the FCSI EAME Conference in Paris in June 2021.

Building on the legacy of Clara Ming Pi FCSI and her pioneering work ahead of the 2008 FCSI Conference in Beijing, China, and beyond, we plan to deliver both a carbon neutral event, but also one that acts as a line in the sand for future gatherings across the FCSI community.

We want to take the data we capture very seriously and for our findings to have genuine use to organizers, delegates and the wider membership.

Tracking and accounting

As part of the project, led by FCSI EAME’s Allied representative Mick Jary of Meiko, we’ll need your help. We will be asking each delegate and sponsor about their travel and accommodation plans for the conference. The more information that can be captured, the greater accuracy we can provide in the final report.

We’ll also be working closely with the Hyatt Regency Chantilly to ensure that we are tracking and accounting for all of the outputs associated with running an event of the scope and size of the EAME conference and making optimizations where possible. Hyatt have an established commitment to monitoring their output.

At the conclusion of our work, and in conjunction with the conference, I will deliver the report’s key findings during the event and would be delighted if you would join me to offer your thoughts on how we can make an impact and to help choose our offsetting method.

We’d also appreciate a commitment from sponsors to support our endeavor. There will be a discussion at the end of my presentation about key ideas and to draw a blueprint for the future.

Of course, some uncertainty around Covid-19 remains and while predictions around a vaccination are positive, we want to ensure that those wanting to attend remotely can do so.

The legacy of this project, we hope, will go beyond a single report. We’d love to develop fresh attitudes towards sustainability and find ways of building new partnerships and collaborations.

There’s much work to be done between now and June 2021, but I look forward to speaking to as many members as possible in the next few months and then in person at the FCSI EAME Conference next summer. ■



Cameron Sharpe, head of insight, Progressive Content



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