



Food Waste Audit Decision Tree Tool - explanation

The research team recommends that the decision tree tool should be integrated into hospital foodservice systems as a quality improvement/audit project. The decision tree tool guides the user from left to right, top to bottom, with choices to prepare and execute a food and food-related waste audit in the hospital foodservice setting.

Starting from 'before the audit begins' **(A)** the tool ensures foodservices have completed these steps, such as determining a goal for the audit and recruiting data collectors, before moving to the next section.

The following choices determine the logistics of the audit set-up and can be selected by marking the small circle at the bottom right corner of each option, with green circles being the preferred option as chosen by the research team and representing a typical aggregate food waste audit method for an onsite hospital foodservice such as a cook chill/cook fresh kitchen **(B)**.

The options following include: which foodservice system is in operation, the duration and scope defined for waste collection, equipment requirements, location(s) of the audited waste and methods for waste measurement **(C)**.

The next section describes how to complete the measuring component of the audit at each stage of food preparation, plating, service and clean-up regardless of which method is chosen these steps at each stage of foodservice will likely always be the same **(D)**.

The final section of the consensus tool provides foodservice departments data analysis options depending on their interest and priorities **(E)**.

Once foodservice teams have obtained this information, they should discuss possible food waste reduction solutions with their team. To identify if the proposed solutions reduce food waste, solutions should be implemented for an appropriate amount of time (for example, one month) before completing an additional audit, using the same methods as previously chosen to compare the findings, completing the full cycle of the tool **(F)**.

For more information on the decision tree pathway please read our published journal article:

Cook N, Collins J, Goodwin D, Porter J. A systematic review of food waste audit methods in hospital foodservices: development of a consensus pathway food waste audit tool. J Hum Nutr Diet. 2021;00:1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jhn.12928>

