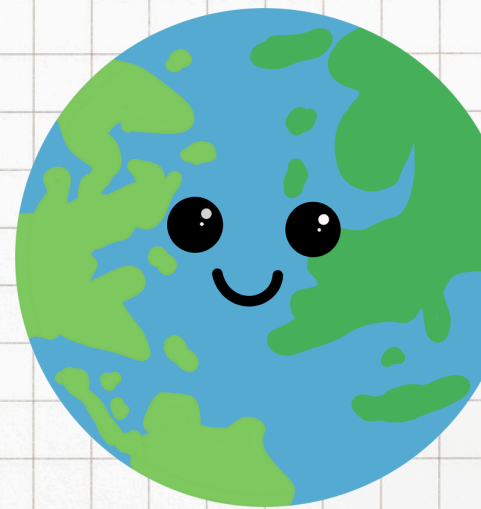
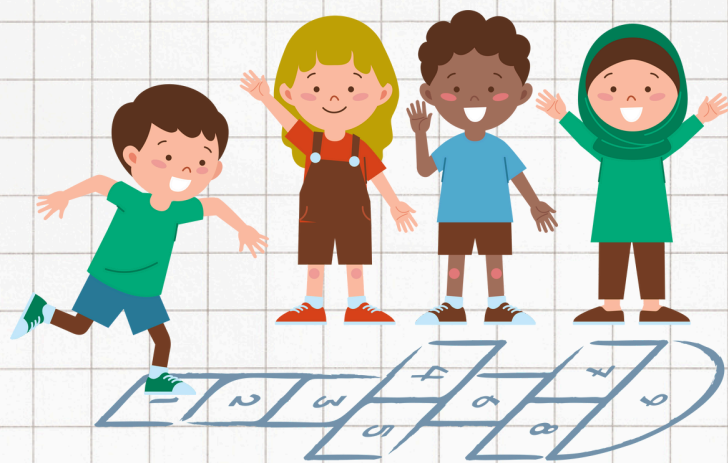


Public Health Projects 2025

At Caterlink we understand the importance of the role that we play in ensuring children have access to nutritious foods during the school day. We believe that it is not only our responsibility to provide menus that meet the School Food Standards, but also to focus on wider public health projects that link in with national and local initiatives.



An important part of eating a healthy, balanced diet is incorporating a wide variety of different foods. This includes plant-based foods which have the nutritional benefit of higher fibre and lower saturated fat content, but also aligns with our sustainability goals and our efforts to reduce our carbon footprint.

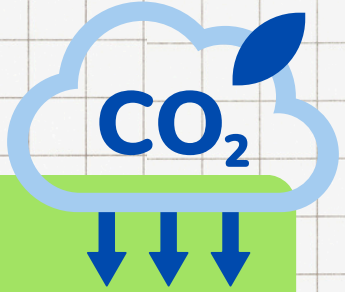


Our Caterlink nutrition team work hard alongside the development chefs to ensure that our recipes and menus provide children with a balanced meal, exposure to a variety of foods and a sustainable menu offer.

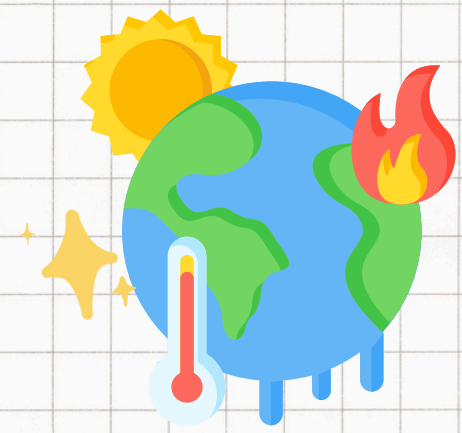
This document will detail a number of our current projects that focus on children's health and provide updates on the latest data and research.

Sustainable Food - Background Information

What is a carbon footprint and CO2e?



- A carbon footprint is the total amount of greenhouse gases that are released into the atmosphere because of human activities.
- These are calculated as 'Carbon Dioxide Equivalents' (CO2e).
- The higher the CO2e, the more greenhouse gases are released i.e., the greater the carbon footprint.

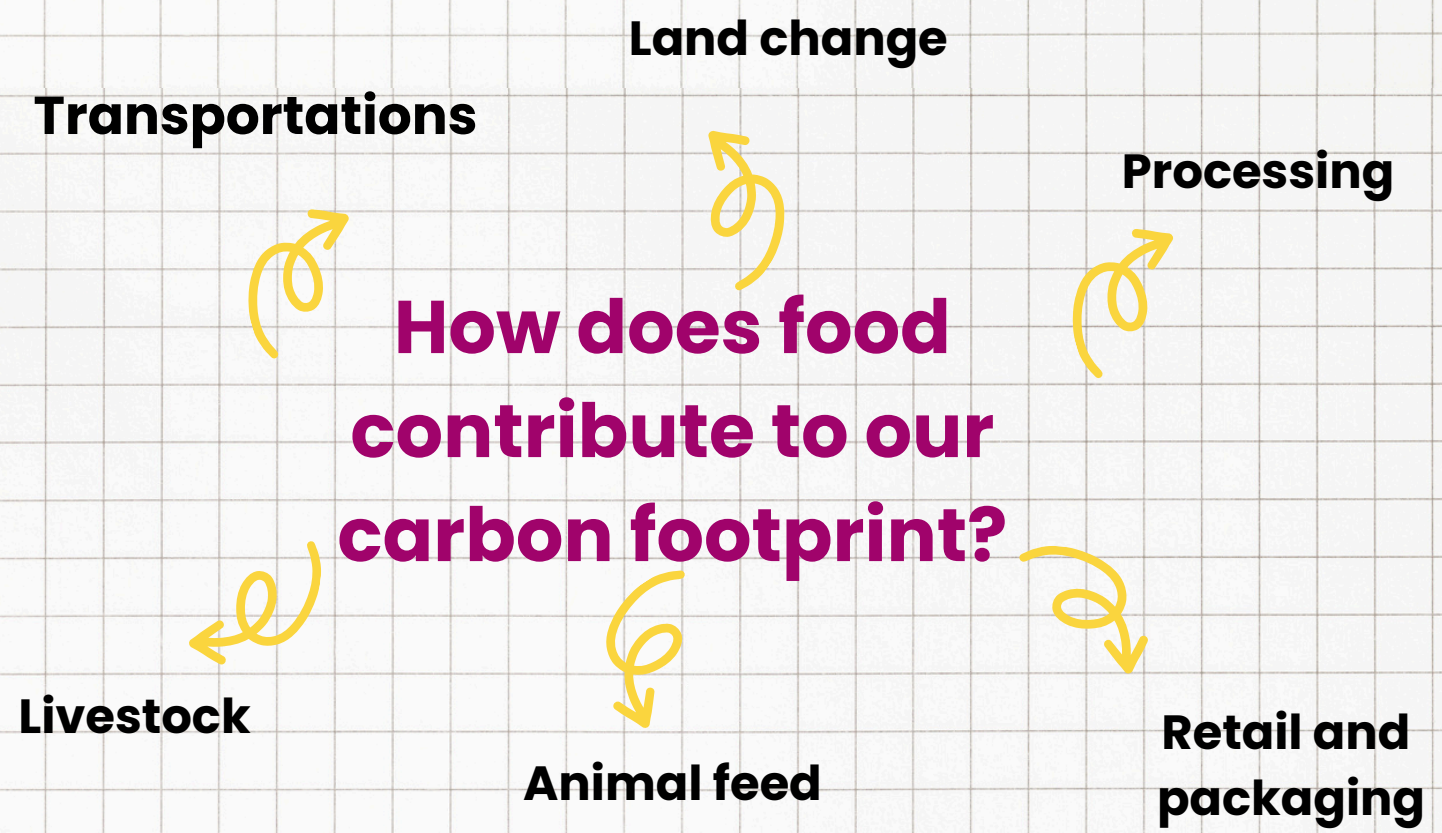


Why is our carbon footprint important?

- When greenhouse gases accumulate in our atmosphere, they warm the planet resulting in climate change.
- Rising sea levels, melting glaciers and more frequent extreme weather like storms, flooding and heatwaves ruin nature and our own livelihoods.

1/3 of all man-made greenhouse gas emissions are from the food chain

How does food contribute to our carbon footprint?



How can we help in school meals?

We can slow the rate of climate change by making small changes to our diet:

- Introducing more plant-based proteins
- Reducing meat and dairy products
- Sourcing products from local suppliers
- Minimising food waste



Carbon Footprint - Menu Initiatives

Since 2016, we have undertaken numerous initiatives to lower the carbon footprint we generate from our menus, such as:

- Consistently implementing Meat Free Mondays
- Introducing more vegan dishes
- Continuing our 'Added Plant Protein' project

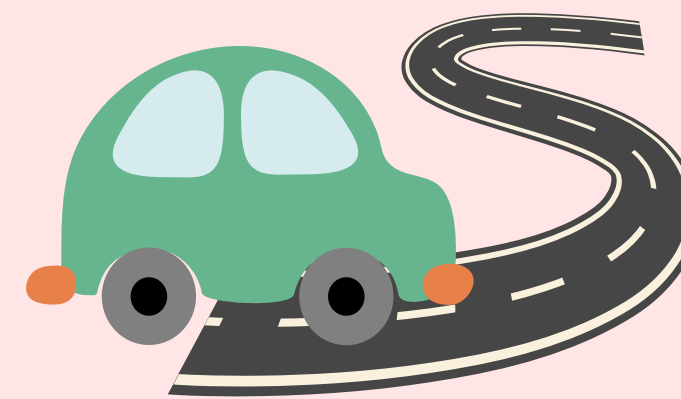
Last year alone, we have reduced carbon emissions by almost

7 million

kilograms

*Compared to pre-project (2016) using like for like meal numbers

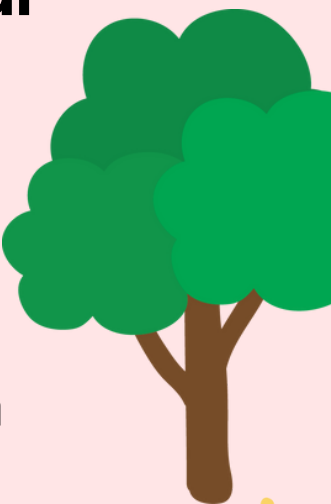
The amount of carbon saved over the past year, just from the menu initiatives is equivalent to...



Driving 1,568 for a year

OR


111,177 trees planted and grown for 10 years



*Based on 2024/2025 meal numbers of 35m meals; 70% choosing meat option, 10% choosing vegetarian option, 20% choosing jacket potato

Added Plant Protein

Look out for our Added Plant Protein logo on our menu!



By putting on one Added Plant Protein (APP) dish each week for the past six years, it has made a huge difference to our carbon footprint – over 10million kilograms of Co2e saved!



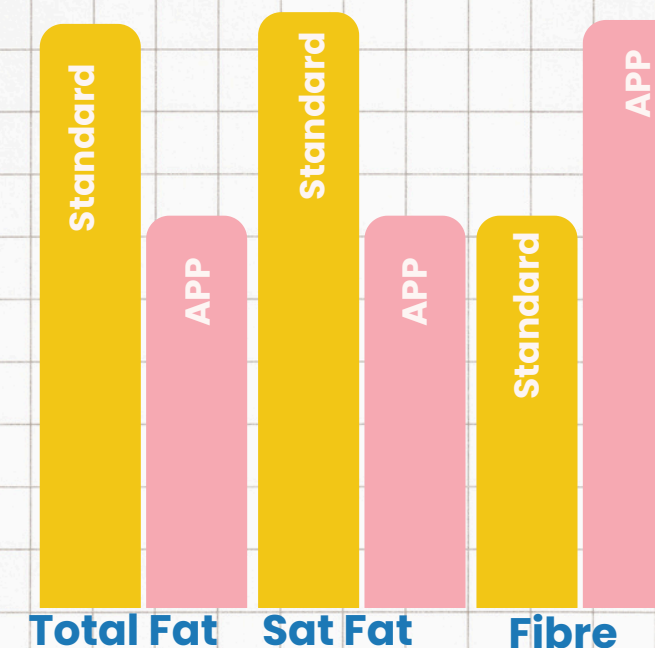
This is the same carbon footprint reduction as:

- 9,200 laps around the earth!
- or 250 return flights from London – New York!
- or planting almost half a million trees!

In 2019 we introduced our range of Added Plant Power dishes – these are meat dishes where 50% of the protein content comes from plant-based proteins such as lentils, chickpeas or beans. Each recipe still has the required amount of protein as per the School Food Standards.

Plant based proteins are also good for us – compared to the original recipes our Added Plant Power Recipes are:

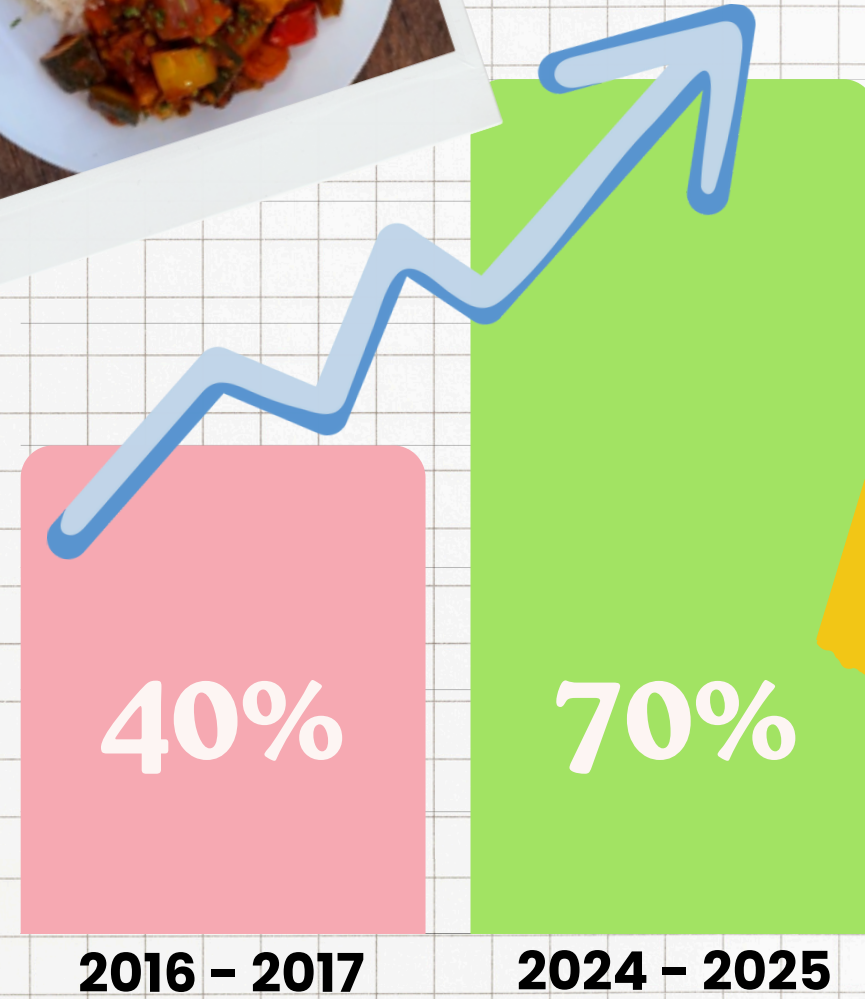
52% lower in total fat
49% lower in saturated fat,
50% higher in fibre



Vegan Options

Many people are making a conscious effort to include more plant-based options in their diets. Over the past few years, we have increased the number of plant-based options on our standard menus.

We provide a full vegan menu to any child that requests one, however, we think it is important to offer vegan dishes on all of our menus to expose children to a range of proteins and offer variety.



Over the past eight years the percentage of our vegetarian meals that are also vegan have increased from 40% to 70%

Whilst eating meat and dairy provides important nutrients, **adding vegan meals into your diet can offer huge environmental and health benefits.** We compared our most popular vegetarian dishes against our most popular vegan dishes and found...

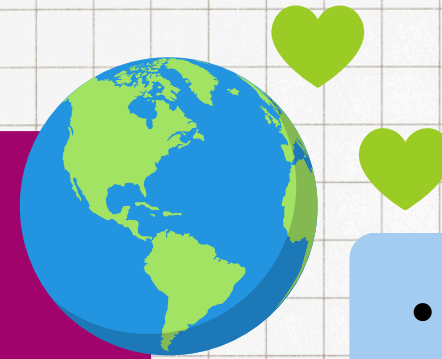
- 9% higher in protein
- 56% higher in fibre
- 44% lower in salt
- 87% lower in saturated fat
- 78% lower in total fat



ProVeg School Plates Project

What is the School Plates Project?

We have partnered with ProVeg UK on their School Plates Programme. This programme aims to make school food healthier and more sustainable by increasing and promoting plant-based content on school menus.



How we enhanced our menus to meet the standards...

- Repositioning the menus to list the vegetarian options at the top
- Using descriptive and positive language for plant-based dishes
- Blending plant proteins into dishes to help boost fibre (e.g. beans & lentils)
- Increasing the diversity of plants on our menus

The ProVeg School Plates Award

80 of our Caterlink schools achieved a **silver award** by enhancing their menus with more plant-based dishes and content.

We have even more schools who have achieved a **bronze award**

This upcoming year we are going to align our central menu with the standards and expand the impact of the programme further.



Caterlink came **3RD**

in the ProVeg UK Top 25 Contract Caterer Ranking

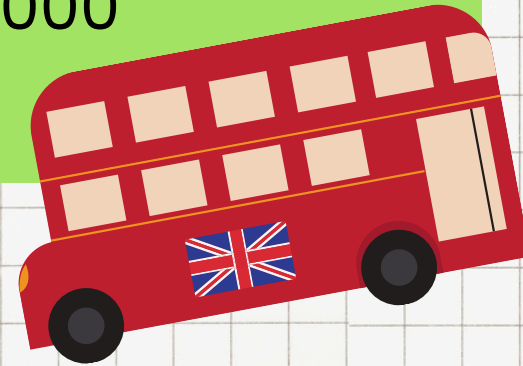


Our kitchen teams all received training in plant-based cooking techniques.

Reducing Food Waste



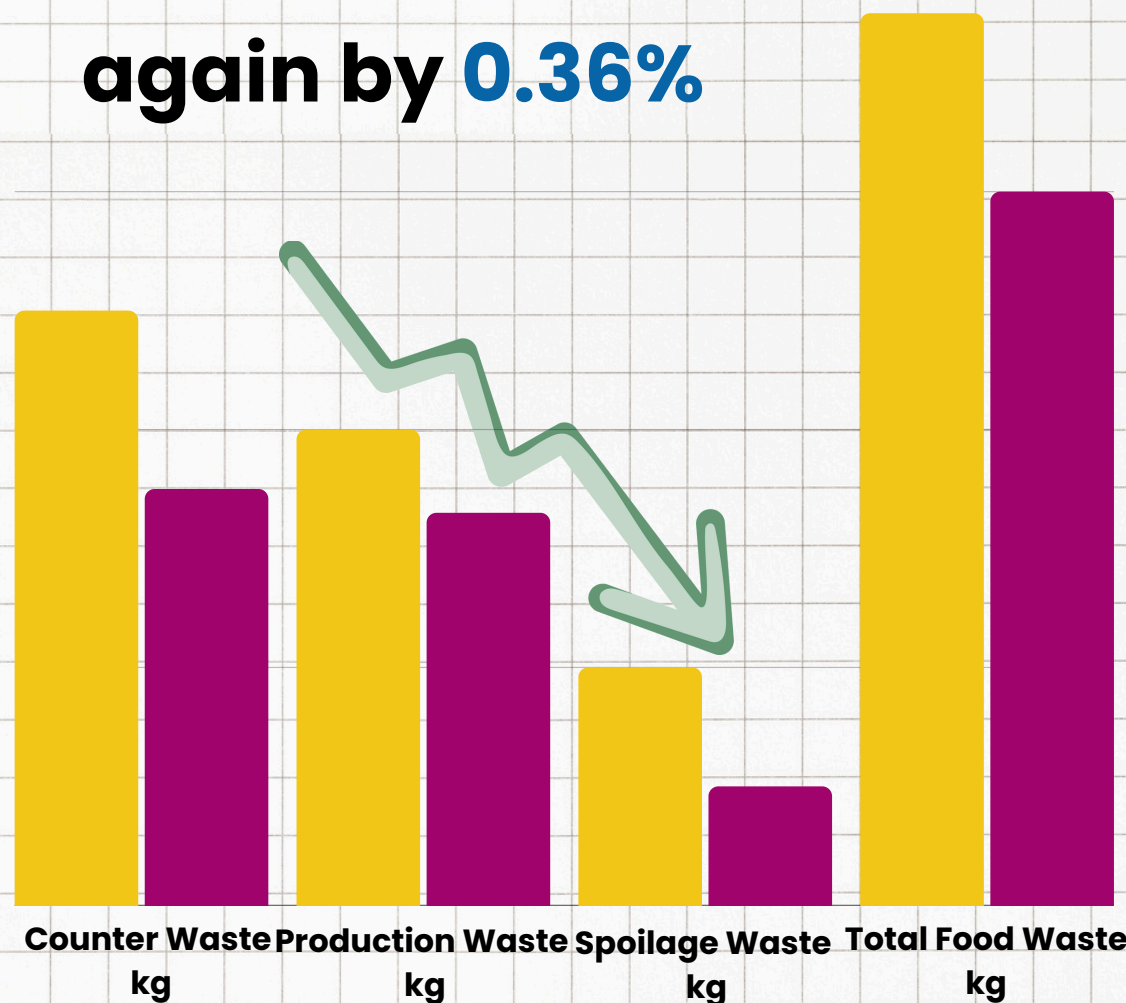
- Food waste is food we could have eaten that is instead thrown away, whether it has been kept beyond its expiry date or left to spoil.
- In the UK we produce 6.7 million tonnes of food waste every year, which is the same weight as 480,000 double decker buses!



In September 2023 we introduced food waste monitoring into our schools – the catering teams measure production waste, spoilage waste and counter waste every day.

Each week our catering teams report on the total food waste in all three categories. In 2024 – 2025 the breakdown of the three categories by percentage was:

In 2024 we cut our total food waste again by 0.36%



70% of the food we throw away is edible

