

Sodexo UK & Ireland Chef Scoops Joint Win at Global Sustainable Chef Challenge

2 years ago



Sodexo UK and Ireland is proud to announce that Sharon McConnell, from Northern Ireland, was joint winner of Sodexo's global Sustainable Chef Challenge.

The Sustainable Chef Challenge highlights Sodexo's commitment to sustainable food and its goal to ensure that 70% of its main dishes can be labelled 'low carbon' by 2030. It is run in partnership with Rational AG, Eaternity and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

Sharon faced seven other Sodexo chefs from Brazil, Chile, France, Germany, India, United Arab Emirates and the USA in a live cook-off in Germany on 15 November. The finalists were required to produce two delicious, low-carbon, sustainable yet practical dishes that minimised food waste.

On a stage, against the clock and under the watchful eye of a panel of experts that included the German three-Michelin star chef Thomas Bühner, Sharon impressed the judges with a gluten free, vegan friendly pistachio-crusted celeriac steak, followed by a vegan chocolate mousse with a honeycomb and coconut ice cream. As well as using low carbon ingredients, Sharon also ensured her dishes minimised food waste.

Sharon was declared joint winner alongside Brazilian competitor Ricardo Machado, and they were both presented with the Culinary Experience Grand Prize.

Commenting on her win, Sharon said *"I am over the moon to have won, the standard was very high, and I was a little nervous, but I'm used to preparing food under pressure and I put in a lot of practice beforehand so once the competition began, the nerves fell away."*

"Even back at school I felt most at home in the kitchen, so a career in catering was always on the cards. I joined Sodexo as a food service assistant 15 years ago and worked my way up. I hate wasting anything, particularly food, so I've always tried to keep it down. Volunteering with FareShare, which redistributes food to communities that need it, keeps me vigilant. But then you learn about the connection between food waste and climate change, and it fires you up even more.

"I was delighted to have had the opportunity to work with such talented people, united by a common purpose, paving the way for tasty and sustainable food."

Charles Abraham, director, food platform at Sodexo UK & Ireland said, *"It is fantastic that Sharon has been recognised as joint winner in our global sustainable chef competition – it showcases her ability and skills but also her commitment to sustainable eating. At Sodexo, we have a key role in positively impacting change to what people eat every day and how this impacts the environment and with chefs like Sharon championing this, it demonstrates the progress we are making and also that you have can great tasting, low-carbon dishes."*

[Read Sharon's blog here](#)