

73% believe adopting a more sustainable way of eating is now urgent

2 years ago



[Sodexo UK and Ireland](#) has today unveiled the UK results of its first annual Sustainable Food Barometer, with data taken from international research conducted with Harris Interactive.

The study, which surveyed more than a thousand UK consumers, identifies the change levers and barriers to accelerate change towards more sustainable diets. The three key takeaways of the barometer are:

First takeaway: The awareness of the urgent need to change eating habits is not only well-established, but positively perceived.

Second takeaway: There is a gap between aspirations and actual behaviours.

Third takeaway: The benefits of sustainable food are more motivating when perceived as individual, rather than collective.

When asked what reason might make them more inclined to adopt a sustainable diet, the most popular response related to it having a beneficial effect on their health (37%). This was closely followed by financial reasons (36%). While, it is clear that these individual benefits are the most motivating, 28% referenced a fear of worsening climate change and 23% of respondents cited their reason as being a role model for their children and future generations so that they naturally adopt the right behaviours.

The Sustainable Food Barometer also examined attitudes to eating when out of home. UK respondents indicated that they would like to eat more sustainably when they are at school or university (65%); at a restaurant (54%); at a work restaurant (50%); or at a sporting or cultural event (47%), than they do at home.

This data in particular demonstrates the critical role that foodservice providers such as [Sodexo](#) will play in helping to reduce the carbon footprint of UK consumers' diets.

In recognition of this, Sodexo – which serves around one million meals per day across diverse environments from offices and schools to military bases and hospitals – has pledged that by 2030, 70% of all main meals it produces in the UK will be low-carbon and that it will cut its food waste by 50% by 2025.

External studies indicate that an average meal today accounts for between 2 and 2.5kg CO₂e which is in contrast to Sodexo's targeted low-carbon meals that have a footprint of just 0.9kg CO₂e, a definition determined in collaboration with WWF.

Charles Abraham, Food Director at Sodexo UK & Ireland, says: *"Food systems have an enormous impact on climate change, accounting for a third of global GHG emissions. At Sodexo, we understand the crucial role we play in reshaping the nation's eating habits to help reduce this.*

"This is, however, more complex than simply cutting the carbon in some of our menu items. As the research shows, price and taste are still the primary drivers of choice when it comes to food. Producing a 'sustainable meal option' that is perceived as less appealing or more expensive for the consumer will have the unintended consequence of creating food waste when few people choose it.

"With this in mind, we are working towards 70% of our main meals being classified as low-carbon by 2030 – with a <0.9kg/CO₂e science-based definition of low-carbon – but crucially, ensuring these are among the most tasty and affordable options we serve. Our ambition is to set the entire ecosystem in motion to accelerate real change."

[Earlier this month](#), Sodexo UK & Ireland announced another year-on-year increase in the consumption of meat-free meals across its clients' sites. Sodexo's diverse range of tasty meat-free meal options have been instrumental in driving this growth, aligning with Sodexo's commitment to sustainability.

To learn more about Sodexo's commitment to sustainable food in the UK & Ireland, click [here](#).