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Tillery Valley win award for excellence in sustainability

Gwent-based food production company Tillery Valley's commitment to sustainability has recently been recognised at the prestigious Foodservice Footprint awards. The competitive annual awards are the only awards scheme in the food service industry to reward and encourage sustainability across the supply chain, and celebrate outstanding corporate achievement and responsible business practices in organisations across the UK.

Tillery Valley received a highly respectable third place in the "Waste Management and Reduction" award category, in recognition of the commitment to waste minimisation and recycling initiatives introduced across the site.

Waste disposal previously represented a significant proportion of Tillery Valley's costs. The site produced almost 6000 litres of liquid waste per week, in the form of surplus custards and sauces, costing £31,000 to dispose of, and 85% of waste was sent to landfill. Teams across departments were encouraged to work together towards a number of waste minimisation processes when cooking and packing meals, reducing waste waste generated on site between 2010 and 2011 by 23%. Recycling rates are now over 80%, diverting more than 2,000 tonnes from landfill. The changes made have led to savings of up to £50,000 per annum. Working partnerships with waste contractor Wormtech and food redistribution charity FareShare were also instigated to great effect.

Cath Lillow, Technical Manager at Tillery Valley, said: "We have made efficiency and sustainability key focus areas over the past three years, and this award recognises the great successes of our dedicated environmental team.

In many cases simple changes have returned dramatic improvements, demonstrating that sustainable business practices are neither costly nor complicated to introduce. For example we now use compostable cleaning cloths that are recycled alongside our food waste, and now offer customers 100% recyclable packaging by changing from foil-backed lids to card-only. We are delighted to have our efforts recognised by this Footprint award, and hope our example may inspire other businesses towards operating more sustainably."