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SOUTH AFRICAN FOOD LOSS & WASTE INITIATIVE

CASE STUDY

Unlocking value across the business: Tiger Brands reduces food waste by 50%, achieves financial savings, and builds environmental champions.

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About Tiger Brands

TIGER BRANDS

Tiger Brands is a signatory to the South African Food Loss and Waste Initiative (SA FLWI). Working with the SA FLWI has strengthened collaboration between manufacturing sector, giving us clearer insight into the scale of food waste and the key role we play in reducing it. Our core business is providing everyday branded food to large and growing markets, primarily in South Africa and neighbouring countries. We target best-in-class quality, underpinned by a cost-leadership culture and a strong commitment to sustainable agricultural sourcing. We have leading positions in most categories, and our iconic brands are well-entrenched with consumers in South Africa.

At Tiger Brands, we hold a fundamental belief. Everyone should have access to good food and quality essentials. That is why we are constantly working to make quality products affordable and available, from the biggest cities to the smallest villages.

Signatory Name:	Shailen Toolsi
Industry:	Fast Moving Consumer Goods – Tiger Brands
Location:	Bryanston, Johannesburg, South Africa
Company Size:	8,298 employees, Revenue of R34.4 billion for the year that ended 30 September 2025
Purpose Statement:	We cultivate and nourish lives, every day and every tomorrow

AT A GLANCE

Over a 5-year period, Tiger Brands:

- Reduced material losses and achieved significant financial savings
- Food waste declined from **4.88% to 1.96%**
- Reduced food waste by **50%**

Executive Summary

For over 100 years, through our portfolio of iconic heritage brands, Tiger Brands has been part of the moments that truly matter to millions of South Africans. From our humble beginnings as a family-owned business, we have grown to become one of Africa's largest listed manufacturers of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG). Our core business is the manufacture, marketing, and distribution of everyday branded food, beverages, grains and homecare.

In 2020, the Tiger Brands Group Process Engineering team was tasked to reduce food waste as a cost-based initiative, in line with the 2030 sustainable development commitments.

Tiger Brands products are manufactured according to a bill of material (BOM), where the material usage variance (MUV), particularly over usage above the BOM standard, results in losses and inefficiencies that impact production costs.

Focusing on the biggest impact items, an investigation into product loss and wastage (loss and waste approach) was undertaken across manufacturing sites. A standard protocol was codified during the deep dive studies and utilised throughout the process investigation. This protocol was shared to all manufacturing sites to speed up the execution of loss and wastage reduction.

Over a 5-year period, Tiger Brands has managed to reduce material losses and achieve cost benefits as a result of the reduced cost in material usage. In addition, the company achieved its 2030 target to reduce food loss by 50% ahead of schedule.

Teamwork and collaboration between people, production, and process were key to this success. The process was supported by operational leaders and directors and the commitment of everyone enabled a sustained, yearly improvement. Key procedures were written up and used to train the team and all new personnel. Embracing the culture change opened a new way of working for the production team and gave operators the freedom to take control and be more accountable for their plant. The implementation of the 3P approach (People, Process, Plant) not only delivered measurable savings but also transformed the way Tiger Brands' teams think about production, efficiency, and sustainability.

The Challenge

The ambitious task at hand was to:

- achieve material usage savings as a cost reduction activity and,
- in line with Environmental Stewardship commitments, drive a 50% reduction in the food waste generated.

The initial activities to develop and complete training over a 2-year period were as follows:

Development Phase: identify gaps in the material usage and manufacturing process and develop the training content required to address those gaps.

Foundation Phase: 3 months of training focused on understanding the end-to-end manufacturing process and how it aligns with the Tiger Brands Bill of Materials (BOM)

Implementation Phase: 6 month programme on world class standards and on-the-job application

1. Upskill process engineers and shopfloor team.
2. Develop a material management training programme that accommodates the different skill levels in the manufacturing units and assists with
    - **Mass balances:** understanding the usage of raw materials in the manufacturing process
    - **Process Flow Diagrams:** how to identify losses on the production line
    - **Quick fix routines (QFR):** teaching operators how to troubleshoot to identify root causes
3. Develop and train operational teams on a standard operating procedure for material usage variance (MUV) protocols
4. Map out the mass balances on the line and review the process capability (CpK) studies on the main products
5. Review plant capability studies against design parameters to identify limitations and restore the plant to its baseline or standard operating conditions

Investigation showed that Tiger Brands sites were experiencing high losses or gains in the materials used in the manufacturing processes. And, as a result poor stock accuracy, losses in food waste and write-offs across the business.

The design of each product includes a list of raw materials that are used in its production. The objective was to understand the process (which was different for each site) and streamline the losses to ensure that this correlated to the final costing in the BOM. The protocols developed looked at the accuracy of measuring systems, correct ratios of mixing, reducing losses in pipes, optimised run strategy, restoration of equipment, and associated maintenance.

The Solution

Tiger Brands' approach to food waste reduction revolved around 3 key pillars, also referred to as the **3P approach.**

- People
- Process
- Plant

Sustainability of these processes was the key initiative to ensure that the actions completed will be driven on a continuous basis at all the sites.

1 People development

Tiger Brands has always believed that the foundation of the company lies within the strength and experience of their people. The first commitment by managers was to develop a training plan and take the key people through the training, as well as develop the core capabilities that are needed in their plant.

A key competency gap identified and closed was the development of the site process engineers to deep dive and solve process issues that result in the generation of food waste. The central process engineering team, in conjunction with a training service provider, formalised a one-year program to upskill the engineers. This was supported by coaching and practical development by the central process engineering team.

2 Process and Systems

Involving people, developing and coaching expertise provided quick-fix solutions. To further entrench the focus on food waste reduction, scheduled interventions were developed and institutionalised – these spoke to the hourly process checks (with deviation management), by shift, daily, weekly, and monthly reporting with sessions to understand losses, and develop recovery plans. Driving the drumbeat created focus and front-of-mind attention to material losses.

3 Plant Improvement

Once the low-hanging fruits had been picked, further opportunities to reduce process waste relied on new technology, or optimising current technology – invoking the need for capital expenditure. Expenditure projects were developed and executed by the site process engineers, with guidance from the central process engineering team.

Q What food loss and waste challenges was your organisation facing before the implementation of this action/activity/intervention?

A In the 2024 financial year, Tiger Brands, with its 36+ manufacturing sites, generated over 42000 tonnes of waste. This was stratified into landfill waste and food waste with food waste making up 85% of the total waste. (Food waste: Loss on the production lines affecting MUV and sent for animal feed).

The food waste generated at each site resulted in financial losses and revealed inefficiencies in the system that needed to be reviewed.

Q How did you decide on this action/activity, and what was the thinking behind it?

A Tiger Brands employs a loss and waste approach, applying the 80/20 rule to focus attention on the biggest impact areas. Financial and operational data analysis pointed the process engineers to problem solve and reduce root causes in order to generate benefit. This approach is aligned to world class manufacturing principles of identifying opportunities to reduce food waste generation.

Q What were the expectations behind implementation, and were there specific goals your organisation was hoping to achieve?

A A key goal was to improve the reproducibility and reliability of the process for food waste reduction in manufacturing. Although the leading driver was cost reduction it also benefitted the Tiger Brands' goal of 50% reduction of food waste by 2030.

Q What steps did you take to implement it, and who was involved?

A Involving the operators in the plant process monitoring and control using SPC (Statistical Process Control) charts was the main step implemented. A graphical representation was installed at each workstation, and operators would track the average weights of material used over the shift. The process engineering team had control limits that would indicate if the weights were in or out of control. If the limits were out of control, the operator would then review the quick fix routine charts to help bring the process back into control.

The success of this process relied on the involvement of the operators, supervisors, technical support team, plant, and financial managers. The control boundary was specific to the Tiger Brands manufacturing unit.

The Results

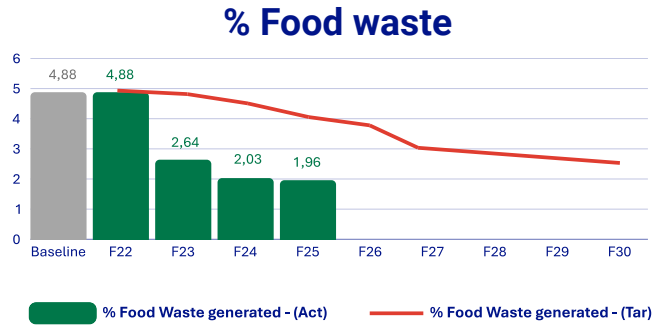
Over the 5 year period, the 3P approach resulted in the following economic, environmental and social benefits.

Economic Impact

F ood waste reduction through continuous improvement over the last five years has seen an appreciable savings on overall material usage costs.

The current material usage variation is much closer to zero through specific projects executed across manufacturing facilities.

Environmental Impact



Tiger Brands' food waste reduction from 4,88% in 2022 to 1,96% in 2025, including projected performance to 2030.

Social Impact

The creation of environmental champions gave employees a daily voice with **operational leaders around opportunities to improve overall sustainability outputs**. Employees who, through the training gained a deeper understanding of sustainability wanted to be more involved and provided key solutions to production food waste problems.

The overall action showed positive showed financial results as well as a reduction of food waste to landfill. The involvement of the team on the production floor showed increased morale and increased productivity. The success of this initiative, shows the benefit of the 3P approach and is a springboard to address other operational challenges.

"The training was both challenging and rewarding at the same time"

—R. Botha, Process Optimisation Engineer

Lessons learnt & future outlook

Lessons learnt through the process, highlighted the importance of:

- Working as a team.
- Utilising the experience of the production team during the problem analysis stage.
- Involving key stakeholders at each part of the process.
- Focusing on people development and systems to create a regular forum to discuss technology solutions and develop a holistic approach to resolving food waste issues.
- Listening to the team's advice and developing their skills to identify losses and highlight faults to the engineers on site.
- Small incentives and healthy competition amongst the shifts, to create a culture of knowledge-sharing between teams. Each shift wanted to be recognised and learn from each other.

"Natural resources are finite and, in some situations, very scarce. We must do more with less"

—S Toolsi, Director: Process Engineering & Sustainability

About The Consumer Goods Council of South Africa

The Consumer Goods Council of South Africa (CGCSA) represents the large Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector, which is one of the largest employers and contributes over 20% of the country's GDP. The CGCSA provides regulatory guidance via its Food Safety & Sustainability Initiative (FSSI). It also manages the South African Food Loss and Waste Initiative, which targets a 50% reduction in food waste by 2030.

To find out more visit https://www.cgcsa.co.za/

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About the South African Food Loss & Waste Initiative

The South African Food Loss and Waste Initiative is an initiative of the Consumer Goods Council of South Africa which aims to prevent and reduce food loss and waste by half by 2030; through the adoption of food utilisation hierarchy which prioritises improved food utilisation and food loss and waste reduction in the first instance; and secondly redistribution of edible, nutritious food for human consumption, and to enable secondary markets for surplus food; and identifying food surplus and waste management solutions that respond to a circular economy and sustainable food systems agenda. The purpose of the initiative is to respond to the current food loss and waste, and food security dilemma in South Africa.

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Strategic Partnership and Funding

The SA FLWI is supported by WRAP, an international climate action NGO that works to reduce food waste across supply chains and in the home. Globally, food waste is responsible for around 10% of all Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. Reducing food waste reduces GHG emissions.

Rainier Climate provided catalytic funding to support WRAP and its partners in tackling food loss and waste through existing voluntary agreements in Australia, Indonesia, Mexico, South Africa and through the creation of a new voluntary food waste agreement in Brazil.

The funding covers ongoing work with money allocated to each nation to increase the systemic Target-Measure-Act approach to prevent and reduce food waste.

WRAP

rainier climate

Disclaimer

The South African Food Loss and Waste Initiative (SA FLWI) is an industry-led initiative supported by the Government and other key stakeholders. It is led by the Consumer Goods Council of South Africa (CGCSA), which also serves as the initiative's secretariat.

The information and guidance provided by SA FLWI, including content related to food safety, food waste reduction, and food donation are intended solely for educational and informational purposes. The initiative seeks to raise awareness and promote best practices in line with national priorities and international commitments to reducing food loss and waste.