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What is Portion Control?

Portion Control Example:

Poor control over portion sizes affects an establishment's food cost. For example, the portion size for rump steak at the Friendly Onion is 200g.

What will happen if Ben, the Second Chef, portions it at 250g?

- 20kg of cleaned rump will yield 100 portions at 200g ($20\text{kg} \div 200\text{g} = 100$ portions)
- 20kg of cleaned rump will yield 80 portions at 250g ($20\text{kg} \div 250\text{g} = 80$ portions)

Therefore 20 portions have been lost.

If the selling price per 200g portion is \$35, then the loss in sales revenue will be \$700 ($20 \times \$35 = \700).

If steaks are cut each week this amount could be:

- Monthly ~ \$2,800
- 3 Months ~ \$8,400
- 6 Months ~ \$16,800
- 1 Year ~ \$36,400

From this example it is clear that you can lose a lot of money with just one incorrect portioning.

Over the last few years I have discovered that many hospitality businesses have struggled to make any money. One of the major reasons for this is incorrect portioning of meals.

What is Portion Control?

Portion control means the control of serving sizes and the quantity of food served for each customer.

This means if someone orders spaghetti bolognaise today, will they get the same spaghetti bolognaise as they had last week or last month? Same taste, same amount of sauce, same amount of pasta...?

Why is Portion Control so important?

By calculating the quantity of food needed for each dish, you can ensure that each customer receives a meal that is uniform in quantity, standard and margin. Happy customers.

Portion sizes can be controlled by?

- **Buying foods by specifying requirements needed for the recipe.** Buy steaks pre-cut.
- **Training staff on how to control portions and why it is important.** Have documents on the weight of all portions.
- **Using appropriate utensils, measures and equipment to serve food.** A set of digital scales is a must.
- **Supervising staff during service.** Watch staff to see how they are put meals together – do they use their hands?
- **Pre-portioning foods.** I believe this is the most important. Use takeaway containers or plastic bags to pre-portion foods, for example portioning refresh cooked pasta that has been weighed to the correct weight.

Over the next few weeks I will look at some of these points in-depth

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