FIELD SHEET 04 / Trace Waste Back to the Decision

We took the notes. You put them to work.

THE PROBLEM, NAMED

Food is thrown away at closing, but the preventable cause may be ordering, storage, prep or service.

THREE THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. A waste dollar total is not a diagnosis; code the actual loss type.
2. Trace the item backward to the decision that made the loss likely.
3. Test one adjustment; protect food safety, product quality and guest service.

WHAT TO NOTICE

- Overproduction, spoilage, trim/yield, mistakes, remakes or damage.
- Outdated pars, poor rotation, inaccurate forecasts or rushed prep.

TRY THIS NEXT SHIFT

1. Select one recurring high-dollar waste item, not the entire menu.
2. Record losses as they occur for seven days with quantity and reason.
3. Trace receiving, storage, prep and sale to identify a supported cause.
4. Adjust one par or control with an approved backup, then repeat the check.

RECORD ONLY YOUR ACTUAL OBSERVATIONS

Item / waste type / estimated value: _____

Likely upstream decision / evidence: _____

Test change / owner / review date: _____

HOW TO KNOW IF IT HELPED

Compare next week's waste, stockouts, quality and service together. If waste falls while outages rise, revise the control.

Keep in mind: Never extend safe-use limits or serve unsafe food to reduce waste. Avoid double-counting transfers, comps and remakes.