

Calorie Wise

What Calorie Wise scheme is, how it can benefit your food business and how you can join.

[Calorie Wise](#) is a free and voluntary scheme delivered by the Food Standards Agency and district councils in Northern Ireland. The scheme encourages food businesses to display calories on menus and to provide healthier options to help consumers make healthier choices when eating out.

With six in 10 adults in Northern Ireland either overweight or obese, [Calorie Wise](#) can make a big difference to the choices consumers make when eating out. The key to maintaining a healthy weight is balancing the energy we take in with the energy we use.

- men need around 2,500 calories a day
- women need around 2,000 calories a day

There are three main benefits to joining the [Calorie Wise scheme](#):

- it can increase profit due to standardisation of recipes and reduction of food waste
- current food trends all point towards a rise in demand by consumers for healthier foods and products
- research shows 96% of people want calorie labelling in all or some food outlets (Food Safety Authority of Ireland 2012)

Any catering business can join the scheme, whether it's a restaurant, takeaway, cafe, coffee shop, pub, sandwich shop or staff canteen. Businesses can get the award by displaying calorie information clearly and prominently at the point of choice, meaning on menus and/or menu boards, for all standard food and non-alcoholic drinks.

If you join the scheme you will receive:

- help and advice on how to calculate and display calories
- guidance on how to offer healthier options for your customers by making small and simple changes to your menus
- window stickers displaying the Calorie Wise logo so that people can look out for the scheme when eating out across Northern Ireland

Get involved with Calorie Wise

Businesses can apply for either the Gold or Silver Calorie Wise Award. The only difference between the gold and silver award is the requirement to label all or 30% of menu items. Businesses taking part in the scheme will need to display energy information according to the following four principles described in the technical guidance:

Calorie Wise Gold

- Energy information is displayed clearly and prominently at the point of choice
- Energy information is provided for all standardised food and drink items sold (including breakfast, lunch and dinner menus and starter, main course and dessert menus where relevant) and all side portions

- Energy information is provided per portion/item/meal
- Information on the daily energy requirement is displayed clearly and prominently in a way that is appropriate for the customer

Calorie Wise Silver

- Energy information is displayed clearly and prominently at the point of choice
- Energy information is provided for 30% of standardised food and drink items sold (spread evenly across breakfast, lunch and dinner menus and starter, main course and dessert menus where relevant) and 30% of side portions
- Energy information is provided per portion/item/meal
- Information on the daily energy requirement is displayed clearly and prominently in a way that is appropriate for the customer

Businesses will need to complete an accurate nutritional analysis of menu items to identify kilojoule (kJ) and calorie (kCal) content. This can be carried out for free using the online tool [MenuCal](#).

Step by step guide

- [download the full technical guidance](#) which includes suggestions on how to comply with the above principles
- contact your local council's environmental health department and ask to speak to the Calorie Wise Champion
- submit an application to your local Environmental Health Officer (EHO) for an assessment. An audit will then be carried out using the [Calorie Wise audit tool](#)
- if you pass the audit, you can then display the relevant window sticker to show your membership of the scheme. This will be awarded by the Calorie Wise Champion
- commit to reviewing the accuracy of your energy information at least every six months