



FESTIVE FACTS & FIGURES



DID YOU KNOW?

- * In the seven days running up to Christmas, Asda estimates it will have sold **750,000 tonnes of Christmas pudding**¹ - that's equivalent to the weight of 1,875 jumbo jets²
- * Marks & Spencer estimates it will sell more than **500 tonnes of sprouts** over the Christmas period³, that's as heavy as 125 double decker buses
- * In preparation for the festive rush Tesco stores have stocked up with **2.25 million fresh and frozen turkeys, 72 million mince pies and 16 million Christmas crackers**⁴. If all these Christmas crackers were laid end to end, they would stretch for 3,082 miles – that's the length of the entire UK coastline
- * Between **20% and 30% more** glass jars and bottles are collected over the Christmas period⁵
- * During the Christmas period, we'll cook **6,711 tonnes of fresh whole turkeys** and **12,472 tonnes** of frozen whole turkeys⁶
- * This Christmas the UK will consume almost **5.5 million jars of mincemeat, 12 million jars of pickles** and **6.5 million jars of cranberry sauce** all packaged in glass, but only a small percentage will get recycled.⁷ The weight of all these jars is equivalent to the weight of 59,500 Santa's, weighing an average 18 stone each. And if all these glass jars were recycled, it would save enough energy to boil water for 60 million cups of tea⁸
- * Royal Mail delivers around **150 million cards** and packets during the pre-Christmas period. It is estimated that up to 1 billion Christmas cards (17 for every man, woman and child) could end up afterwards in bins across the UK⁹. If all the Christmas cards were laid end to end they would span from London to Sydney and back more than five times!



- * Over **six million trees** were bought last Christmas in the UK, most of which were thrown out after December¹⁰ creating over 9,000 tonnes of additional rubbish, almost five times the weight of the London Eye¹¹



- * It is estimated that over Christmas as much as **83 sq km of wrapping paper** will end up in UK rubbish bins, enough to cover an area larger than Guernsey¹² or enough to cover Hyde Park 33 times!¹³
- * The waste created in Britain over Christmas is equivalent to **400,000 double-decker buses**, stretching all the way from London to New York City! And even though half of this waste could easily be recycled, almost 90% will actually end up in the dustbin. Parties and presents account for a 30% increase in the number of bottles and cans binned, not to mention the Christmas trees, extra packaging, paper and card thrown out across the capital¹⁴
- * Around **125,000 tonnes of plastic packaging** are thrown away over Christmas - that's the equivalent weight of more than 50,000 festive polar bears!!! When buying gifts, try to avoid items that are excessively packaged¹⁵
- * Around **4,200 tonnes of aluminium foil** gets thrown away in the UK each Christmas¹⁶

ENDS

Sources for our Statistics:

¹Guardian Unlimited, 24/12/02

²Research Machines plc and based on an average jumbo jet take-off weight of approx 400 tonnes, i.e. 1875 jumbo jets

³Guardian Unlimited 24/12/02

⁴Guardian Unlimited 24/12/02

⁵Waste Watch

⁶British Turkey

⁷British Glass

⁸Waste Watch

⁹Waste Watch

¹⁰Durham County Council

¹¹BuyImage.co.uk

¹²Waste Watch

¹³Friends of the Earth

¹⁴Recycle For Cheshire - <http://www.crewe-nantwich.gov.uk/main.asp?page=1704>

¹⁵Durham County Council

¹⁶Durham County Council

Notes:

Top Ten Toys For Christmas (Toy Retailers Association):

- Bratz 'Flashback Party' (Each Bratz doll 29x23x6cm)
 - Cabbage Patch Kids
 - Classic Games (Buckaroo, Twister and Cluedo)
 - Dora The Explorer 'We Did It Dancing Dora'
 - Leapster Multimedia Learning System
 - Power Rangers (12.5cm)
 - Robosapiens
 - Tamagotchi
 - Trampolines
 - V-Smile TV Learning System
- The Christmas Market: "£850m spent in Britain on around 180m toys" (i.e. approx £4.72 per product) (BBC)
 - The toy sector accounts for 3% of annual use of plastic packaging in UK (3% of 4.7m tonnes i.e. 141,000 tonnes)
 - Around 125,000 tonnes of plastic packaging are thrown away over Christmas (NewtonAbbey.gov)