



SUMMARY REPORT

1st MEETING OF THE EU PLATFORM ON FOOD LOSSES AND FOOD WASTE (2022-2026)

DG HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY (SANTE)

Meeting on-line via Interactio

17 February 2022 – From 09:30 to 16:30

Chair: Nathalie Chaze, Director, Food sustainability, international relations, DG SANTE

Commission: DG AGRI, EMPL, GROW, MARE, RTD, SANTE, JRC.

Agencies: European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HADEA)

Member States represented (26): AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK.

Private sector organisations represented (43): BEUC - The European Consumer Organization, BOROUME, CLEAN TECHNOLOGY CENTRE, MTU, CONSORZIO BESTACK, COPA - European Farmers, DUH - Deutsche Umwelthilfe e.V., ECSLA - European Cold Storage and Logistics Association, EDA - European Dairy Association, EFFPA - European Former Foodstuff Processors Association, EUPPA - European Potato Processors' Association, EUROCOMMERCE, EURO COOP - European Community of Consumer Co-operatives, EUROPATAT - European Potato Trade Association, FEBA - European Food Banks Federation, FOODCLOUD, FOODDRINKEUROPE, FOODSERVICEEUROPE, FOODWIN - Food Waste Innovation Network, FRESHFEL EUROPE - European Fresh Produce Association, FRUTA FEIA CRL, FUNDACIÓN AZTI – AZTI Foundation, HAROKOPIO UNIVERSITY, HFBA - Hungarian Food Bank Association, HOTREC - Hospitality Europe, IFWC - International Food Waste Coalition, INDEPENDENT RETAIL EUROPE, LAST MINUTE MARKET, LES RESTAURANTS DU CŒUR, MATVETT-NORSUS-NOFIMA CONSORTIUM, RABOBANK, REGAL NORMANDIE, RISE RESEARCH INSTITUTES OF SWEDEN AB, SLOW FOOD, STOP WASTING FOOD MOVEMENT DENMARK, THÜNEN-INSTITUT - Federal Research Institute for Rural Areas, Forestry and Fisheries, TOO GOOD TO GO, VENTURIS HORECA, WRAP - Waste and Resources Action Programme, WUR - Wageningen University & Research, WUWM - World Union of Wholesale Markets, WWF EPO - World Wide Fund for Nature European Policy Office, ZERO WASTE SCOTLAND.

Public entities (3): EESC, FAO, OECD.

Observers: Norway

1. Introduction by the Chair

The Chair welcomed all Platform members and viewers of the web streaming and highlighted the focus of the meeting to discuss the Platform operations and its priority areas of work in the next 5 years. As announced in the Farm to Fork Strategy, the Platform will support the implementation of food loss and waste related actions in order to achieve sustainable food systems.

2. Opening statement by European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Stella Kyriakides – (video message)

In her video message, the Commissioner reflected on how the Platform has helped create momentum for change across the EU. She highlighted the importance of measuring food waste levels and how the Commission and the Platform will continue to support sharing evidence-based practices to identify what works best and scale-up action across the EU. Finally, she highlighted the role of the future legislative proposal, setting EU-level targets for food waste reduction, in helping to drive progress towards the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 12.3.

3. Reducing food loss and waste, establishing sustainable food systems by Claire Bury, Deputy-Director General DG SANTE

Ms. Bury underlined the Platform's role in achieving the food loss and waste related actions laid down in the Farm to Fork Strategy and updated members on their implementation. She referred to recent developments from the Commission in related policy areas (for example, food hygiene, date marking etc.) and updated members on several EU actions to support all actors in taking action against food loss and waste, such as research and innovation opportunities under Horizon Europe, action grants managed by HADEA etc. In closing, Ms. Bury recalled the EU's commitment to advance the *Food is never waste* coalition for action following the UN Food Systems Summit and encouraged all members to share their thoughts and expectations concerning the work of the Platform in the new mandate.

Norway and **Ireland** emphasised the need to consider a food systems approach and integrate food loss and waste prevention within all relevant policy areas through enhanced cooperation between relevant government departments and services both at national and EU levels. **Ms. Bury** confirmed that DG SANTE is working closely together with other directorates (for example, with DG Environment on setting EU food waste reduction targets as part of EU waste legislation) and is aiming to integrate food loss and waste prevention in the legislative framework for sustainable food systems. DG SANTE announced that it is establishing an Advisory Group on Sustainability of Food Systems to consult with stakeholders on the implementation of the Farm to Fork Strategy, which will have a broader and deepened range of expertise and will replace the existing Advisory Group on the food chain and animal and plant health at the end of its mandate. DG SANTE has also established an expert group on sustainable food systems comprising experts from different ministries/bodies in Member States.

WRAP emphasised that the Platform has done considerable work in the preparation of the Farm to Fork Strategy and asked about the Platform's role in driving further momentum and to scale what works, in particular to help citizens reduce waste. The latter was also supported by **EUPPA**. Ms. Bury highlighted the role of EU food waste reduction targets in driving further action and the critical need to ensure that

Member States report data in a timely manner to support the establishment of these targets. Citizens also need to be aware of these targets and to be provided with practical tools to reduce their food waste¹.

Ms Bury agreed that helping people understand how reducing food waste can also bring savings would be a great motivator for change, as suggested by **WRAP** and **STOP WASTING FOOD MOVEMENT DENMARK**. **WRAP** recommended coupling such awareness actions with behavioural change interventions.

EUPPA and **EFFPA** pointed out that when reduction of CO₂ is linked to financial incentives (e.g. for biogas production), this may discourage food business operators from preventing food waste from arising through redistribution of surplus food and use of by-products for feed. **The Chair** agreed that such challenges should be discussed within the relevant sub-group of the Platform.

Rabobank highlighted their positive experience with a food waste challenge for food services, which led to a 21% reduction in food wasted, and proposed to have a similar challenge for food losses in primary production. **Ms. Bury** agreed on the benefits of such challenges on focus areas and suggested that these could be part of national food loss and waste strategies.

STOP WASTING FOOD MOVEMENT DENMARK asked whether there is a plan to reduce food loss and waste beyond the 2030 goal. **Ms. Bury** acknowledged that the global goal is a step along the way and it is important to already start thinking beyond that moment and have a broader strategy.

FEBA expressed its support and expertise for the Platform on issues related to food recovery and redistribution. Building on the comments of **WRAP**, **FEBA** pointed out that the Platform also helped building momentum for the food donation sector, which saw increases in both quantity and quality with a positive impact on the sustainability of the food system. In terms of the Platform's work in the new mandate, **FEBA** would like to contribute to the establishment of EU-level binding targets, data sharing and exchange of good practices at EU level, while highlighting the importance of leveraging the outcomes at national level. **The Chair** thanked **FEBA** for their involvement in the work of the Platform.

FAO explained that the Platform's goals and objectives align with **FAO's** work to reduce food losses and waste and to facilitate the transition process towards a sustainable food system, more generally.

In closing this point on the agenda, the Commission thanked Platform members for their commitment and enthusiasm and encouraged them to be actively involved in the work of the Platform's sub-groups and help define their main areas of work.

4. EU actions to reduce food loss and waste ([slides](#))

The Commission updated members on the timing and next steps for the legislative proposal to set food waste reduction targets as well as the surveys that will be launched to collect data for the modelling exercise. The latter is part of the impact assessment that will inform the legislative proposal. Members received an update on the revision of EU date marking rules, recent developments in legislation allowing new protein sources to be used in feed, the European Consumer Food Waste Forum project, on-going EU-funded

¹ The [European Consumer Food Waste Forum](#) project run by the Commission aims to gather data and identify a variety of evidence-based, practical solutions to reduce food waste at the consumer level, including household and food services. The forum will issue research- and evidence-based recommendations and develop tools to help reduce consumer food waste, aiming to produce a compendium of best practices to facilitate uptake of effective interventions (2023). These will contribute to the work of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste and that of other players to help reduce consumer food waste.

projects and grants for stakeholders and Member States through the Single Market Programme (to be launched in 2022).

Consorzio Bestack, EUPPA, HOTREC, Harokopio University and Les Restaurants du Cœur expressed their availability to test the survey templates for the data collection that will support the establishment of food waste targets. In reply to a question by the **Thünen-Institut**, the Commission confirmed that Platform members could share the links to the survey with their networks.

EFFPA welcomed the recent authorisations to use gelatine and collagen of ruminant origin in the feed of non-ruminant farmed animals as well as processed animal protein from pigs, poultry and insects, while explaining the difficulties faced at technical level with the methodologies to test such products for conformity assurance. **Copa-Cogeca** and **EUPPA** agreed with **EFFPA**'s comment. **EUPPA** highlighted the benefits of using former foodstuffs and insects as animal feed to minimise the use of soy and its impacts on land use, CO₂ emissions and deforestation. **WRAP** supported the idea of using insect-related technologies, which have the potential to bring significant carbon reduction & biodiversity benefits. **EUPPA** has been collaborating with the Dutch authorities on using former foodstuffs and by-products for feed production and suggested that the feed regulation is often interpreted too strictly for plant-based products. **The Commission** suggested investigating these issues further with the relevant DG SANTE services in charge of animal feed, but also in the context of a sub-group meeting.

Europatat inquired about the next steps of investigating food losses at production level, a point also supported by **Rabobank**. The **Commission** confirmed that an EU-funded research project with calls for proposals to collect data on food losses was published earlier this year² and that the results of such research should provide a good basis to take policy action. The Commission underlined the complexity of quantifying food losses and that, as was done for food waste (where research informed development of measurement methodology), research on food losses could help inform the development of a relatively simple measurement methodology that could be used in practice for different types of crops.

WRAP is conducting research on the impact that removing best before dates (as well as the related issue of plastic packaging) on certain products has on food waste generation and asked whether the Commission is considering the removal of the best before date on selected products in the future (e.g. for produce). For the Impact Assessment that supports the revision of date marking rules, the **Commission** is looking into several policy options, including one option to abolish the best before date completely and/or replacing it by the production date. The Commission invited **WRAP** and other members to share any relevant studies and information on this to inform the Impact Assessment.

FoodDrinkEurope asked whether the Commission is planning a follow-up meeting on the date marking consultation held on 30 November 2021. The **Commission** referred to the next steps of the consumer research and explained that additional consultations may be held as work progresses on an "as needed" basis, inviting **FoodDrinkEurope** to provide any further comments in writing.

² [HORIZON-CL6-2022-FARM2FORK-01-08 Research and innovation for food losses and waste prevention and reduction through harmonised measurement and monitoring](#)

In reply to **REGAL NORMANDIE**, the Commission explained that Member States are to decide how to best integrate any regional data in their reporting on national food waste levels. This topic could be discussed in the Food loss and waste monitoring sub-group.

As an AOB point, the **Commission** informed members of its intention to amend EU food hygiene rules to remove the 21-day “sell by” date for eggs at retail and replace it with the obligation for food business operators to set the minimum durability (‘Best Before’) date for eggs at not more than 28 days after laying, a requirement currently laid down in the marketing standards for eggs. This proposal is currently under discussion with Member State experts.

5. Platform operations: Rules of procedure (slides)

The Commission circulated the draft sub-group mandates ahead of the meeting and has uploaded these in the Platform’s Teams group for written feedback, by 24 February 2022. Members were also asked to reply to the on-line survey and indicate their preferences for becoming members/co-chairing sub-groups as well as topics for discussion, projects and deliverables of the Platform and its sub-groups. The Commission gave an overview of the Platform’s Rules of procedure and the way in which these would be applied in practice.

Belgium asked whether Platform members would have access to all information from the sub-groups even if they were not members. The **Commission** explained that the agendas of meetings will be sent to the whole Platform and members can request to participate in meetings of sub-groups if they have an interest in the topics discussed. In reply to a query from **WWF**, the **Commission** reiterated that members could register for up to three sub-groups.

Ireland inquired if organisations that are not currently members of the Platform can express interest to join a sub-group. The **Commission** explained that the membership of the Platform is fixed for the duration of its mandate (ending 2026). Should there be a need to invite new members to join the Platform, an open call for applications would need to be published. However, it is possible for the Commission to invite organisations, which are not members on an *ad-hoc* basis in order to provide expertise on a specific issue or topic.

FAO requested further clarifications concerning the role and responsibility of sub-group co-chairs. The **Commission** referred to the list of indicative tasks (*c.f.* slide 10) and clarified that the Commission will be involved in all the work, projects and deliverables that the sub-groups will create. The Commission will discuss bilaterally with co-chairs to understand their ambitions and see the best way in which the Commission can contribute.

As regards organisation of hybrid meetings, **Europatat, STOP WASTING FOOD MOVEMENT DENMARK, EDA, EUPPA, HAROKOPIO UNIVERSITY, WRAP, Ireland, Poland and Slovenia** expressed their support for this idea.

The Platform adopted the rules of procedure, without any further comments from members.

Concerning the EU Food Loss and Waste Prevention Hub, **STOP WASTING FOOD MOVEMENT DENMARK** suggested that the back-end should allow the selection of multiple tags at the same time. The **Commission** confirmed that this suggestion has been proposed to the IT team.

6. Platform operations: sub-group mandates ([slides](#))

The Commission gave an overview of the draft mandates for all sub-groups, including background information, objectives and tasks. A summary of main points raised by members in the discussion is provided below.

Venturis Horeca asked about the results of the sub-groups in the Platform's previous mandate, more specifically about lessons learned, achievements and on-going work, in order to prevent duplicating efforts. The **Commission** explained that such information is briefly presented in the sub-group mandates, while materials from sub-groups meetings, including summary reports of what has been discussed, can be found on the dedicated pages of the [Food waste website](#).

6.1 Food loss and waste monitoring

- **WWF, Slow Food, EuroCoop, Fruta Feia CRL** and **Rabobank** support the investigation of food losses at the production stage.
- **FAO** supports the objectives and tasks of the sub-group and would like to work on aligning food waste indicators for the EU and global reporting for SDG 12.3.
- Replying to **EFFPA**'s request, the **Commission** suggested that issues related to feed be discussed in the Action and Implementation sub-group, while clarifications concerning the definition of food waste and of products utilised for animal feed would be tackled in the Food loss and waste monitoring sub-group.
- In reply to a query from **IFWC**, the Commission indicated that the Platform can provide opportunity for exchange of information on food waste levels monitored at company or sectorial level; however, Member States are best placed to consider how to integrate sectorial data into their national reporting on food waste levels.
- **EUPPA** explained that a sector-specific template for collecting of food waste data for the Dutch potato processing industry has been developed together with WUR. The data are consolidated by WUR and shared with the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture as input for EU reporting.
- **WWF** asked about inter-sectoral connections along the value chain and whether these will be considered systematically in this sub-group in order to address and avoid shifting food waste up and down the value chain. The **Commission** indicated that this systemic issue related to the functioning of the food supply chain might be better addressed by the Action and Implementation sub-group.
- **Regal Normandie** expressed support for all the proposals made by members and highlighted one of their goals as being to connect initiatives carried out at local level with broader European and international work to achieve SDG Target 12.3.

6.2 Food donation

- **WUWM** mentioned they are working with the [The Global Food Donation Policy Atlas initiative](#) led by the Harvard Law School Food Law and Policy Clinic and would be glad to share information about this work with the Platform. The Commission confirmed that it had been in contact with the Platform – notably for sourcing speakers for related webinars- and would keep members informed of events organised by this project.
- **FEBA** has developed an efficient system for data collection and analysis to quantify the impact of its members’ food recovery and redistribution activities on food waste prevention and reducing food insecurity, supported by a grant from DG SANTE. As regards next steps, FEBA proposes that the sub-group focus on assessing food donation practices across the EU as well as developments in relevant EU and national policies and legislation (an idea also supported by **FoodCloud**). The aim is to make recommendations on EU policy and legislation to facilitate food donation and accelerate action in Member States, creating synergies, promoting incentives for donors as well as supporting those who are redistributing surplus food. The **Commission** suggested that the pilot project on food redistribution, carried out between 2018 and 2020, would be a good starting point for an assessment of food donation in the EU. Considering the Platform’s recommendations for action on food donation, these could be made more specific and focussed on key areas where action is needed. The Commission welcomed the contribution of FEBA and its members to quantify the impacts of food redistribution on food waste prevention, especially in the context of upcoming stakeholder consultations on setting food waste reduction targets. Data on food redistribution activities can also support reporting for the SDG Target 12.3. The Commission also referred to the ESF+ fund and how the sub-group could support further exchange of information on the use of Simplified Cost Options – currently employed only by a limited number of Member States – to facilitate financing of food donation through FEAD.
- **Venturis Horeca** pointed out that as not all food recovered from the supply chain is actually redistributed (for instance, due to limited shelf life), it is important also to try measure food waste linked to food donation initiatives.
- **WRAP** shared [an example](#) of country level data on food donation.
- **EUROCOOP** asked about synergies between the Platform sub-group and the working group on food donation under the Fit for Europe Platform, which will provide suggestions to streamline legislation to facilitate food donation. The **Commission** is aware that the Fit for Europe Platform will discuss traceability requirements applying to food donation, needed to ensure food safety, and has been asked to provide an opinion on this matter.

6.3 Date marking

- **Ireland** asked whether the sub-group would collaborate with the Expert Group on the provision of food information to consumers. The **Commission** explained such collaboration would take place as needed, as work on date marking progresses. There will be synergies in the work of the two groups when food labelling and food waste prevention are discussed, as was the case in the consultation held in November 2021 on date marking policy options elaborated in the context of consumer research³.
- The **Commission** took note and will consider the comment made by **STOP WASTING FOOD DENMARK** on the [summary report](#) of the consultation on date marking policy options from November 2021.

³ For further information about this work, please consult the *Consumer research related to date marking – information* tab on [this webpage](#).

6.4 Consumer food waste prevention

- **FAO** pointed out potential overlap between the tasks of the Date Marking and Consumer Food Waste Prevention sub-groups. The **Commission** confirmed that it would ensure collaboration on topics that concern more than one sub-group.
- **Foodwin** and WRAP suggested that this sub-group should discuss the effect of food business operators' practices on consumer food waste (e.g. 'Buy One Get One Free' promotions on perishable items in retail). The **Commission** agreed that this could be an important topic for the sub-group, which also goes beyond the retail stage (for example, in food services, communication to customers, portion sizes and other aspects can impact on food waste).
- **WRAP** suggested that the sub-group should consider scaling up implementation of consumer food waste prevention interventions to help build momentum to fight consumer food waste at national level. **THÜNEN-INSTITUT** supported this idea and proposed having joint meetings with other sub-group for specific issues. The **Commission** agreed and is counting on Platform members to share elements and actions from national food waste prevention programmes and strategies that aim to change consumer behaviour.
- **Venturis Horeca** proposed for the sub-group to measure the impact of awareness campaigns to see how efficient they are in terms of reducing food waste. **WUWM** supported this idea. The **Commission** agreed that evaluating actions is critical in order to understand their efficiency and referred to related work carried out by the European Consumer Food Waste Forum. The Forum will work on adapting the [evaluation framework](#) for food waste prevention actions developed in 2019 to be more focused on consumer food waste and to support the evaluation of such interventions. There will be synergies between the Forum and the sub-group on consumer food waste prevention.

6.5 Action & Implementation

- **CONSORZIO BESTACK** considers this sub-group can identify the best experiences and innovations, to support the operational application of actions and tools to fight food waste. **CONSORZIO BESTACK** suggested the latter could be done by economically supporting innovative companies and increasing their visibility on the market.
- **Norway** expressed support for the comments made by the Matvett-Nofima-Norsus Consortium on the mandate of the sub-group, mainly to include a reference to the importance of smart technology and promoting innovation (smart packaging, open and closing solutions, QR codes etc.) as well as on the need to organise more field visits to stimulate collaboration between members and uptake of best practices. The **Commission** replied that one of the sub-group's tasks refers to the role of the sub-group to '(...) *assess technologies* and innovative solutions with a potential of being transferred and/or scaled up (...)', which covers also smart technologies. In terms of field visits, the Commission agreed that these could be very helpful and would consider such meetings when the sanitary situation allows, for instance a field visit to a company coordinating a food waste prevention project under the LIFE programme.
- **FAO** suggested that it would be important to make a choice and either integrate food loss and waste policies in other related policies or to develop a dedicated policy, arguing that a mix of both approaches could lead to a partial implementation of food waste policies. **Ireland** agreed that integration of policies

is an important topic for the sub-group. The **Commission** commented that the two approaches were not mutually exclusive, and that national food waste prevention programmes can federate actions taken at sectoral level.

- **Foodwin** highlighted that the scope of the sub-group is quite wide and asked how a prioritisation of sector-specific actions would be done, arguing that approaches to food waste prevention will be different depending on the sector. The **Commission** suggested that, given the level of the challenge, national strategies and programmes should be prioritised; the implementation of voluntary agreements could also be an important topic. **WWF** would be interested in sharing their experience regarding voluntary agreements. Some initiatives may have a more long-term effect (i.e. school programmes) and the Platform also needs to understand their role and related impacts.
- **Zero Waste Scotland** referred back to WRAP's comment on the Consumer food waste prevention mandate and pointed out that scaling up actions should also be a task of this sub-group.
- **CINEA** announced it would publish on 17 May 2022 [new Calls for proposals](#) for EU LIFE funding that include Standard Action Projects (SAPs) and Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs) that co-finance food waste prevention and reduction actions.
- **EFFPA** suggested that this sub-group could work on guidelines for the food industry and retailers engaged in marketing former foodstuffs for feed use. The **Commission** confirmed that feed could be an important topic on the agenda of this sub-group and that guidelines for the industry and retailers could be a deliverable that perhaps EFFPA might wish to coordinate.

7. Conclusions and wrap-up by the Chair

In closing the meeting, the Chair thanked all members for their active participation and invited them to share their preferences for participating in sub-groups by 24 February via the online survey, provide comments on draft mandates and share news about activities and valuable resources through their publication on the [EU Food Loss and Waste Prevention Hub](#).