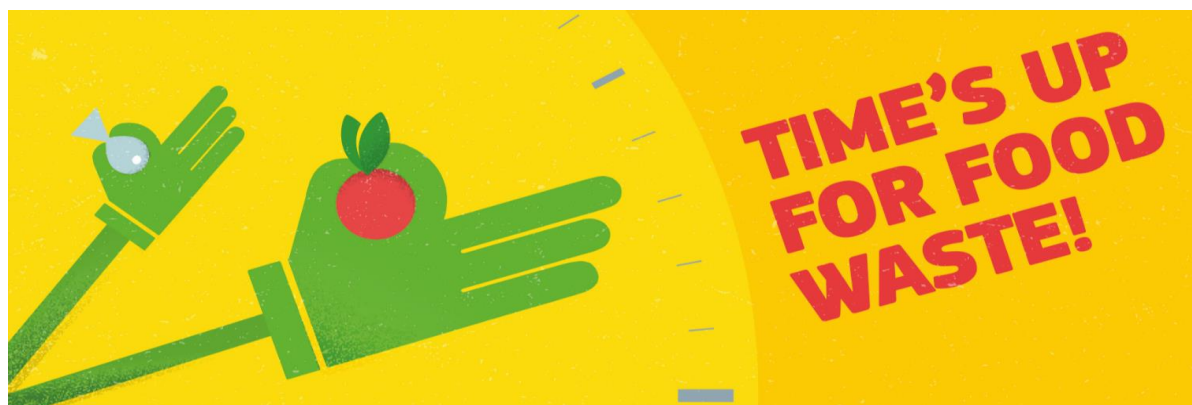


News from the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste

1st edition - Newsletter March 2020



Food waste prevention initiatives during the COVID-19 crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic is a health crisis that is putting governments, businesses, people and the economy, under severe pressure. While the focus of all actors is on protecting public health, the food supply chain is also impacted, and measures taken may, for some sectors, lead to increased food waste. Food banks and other charity organisations are also facing challenges as regards the availability of surplus food and/or volunteers. The first issue of the newsletter of the [EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste](#) focuses on food loss and waste prevention actions taken by its members in the different Member States of the EU in the context of this unprecedented crisis.



Denmark: flexibility on Regulations regarding food labelling

As regards food labelling, Danish authorities receive frequent requests for temporary actions within the area of food labelling and handling, due to difficulties related to the implementation of [Regulation \(EU\) 2018/775](#). In the current exceptional situation, Denmark's approach is to seek pragmatic solutions, which ensure food supply for all citizens and minimize food and packaging waste.

However, it is essential, that there are no food safety risks related to the temporary solutions. One of the challenges is the lack of supply of foods and ingredients from usual suppliers, which causes problems with packaging material already printed with the original origin, as well as foodstuffs without labelling in Danish. Temporary action has been taken in this area in order to avoid food waste.

In addition, Danish authorities have accepted temporary packaging of "bake off" bread and similar products, for hygienic reasons – without considering the foodstuffs as being prepacked and thus subject to requirement of full labelling.



Estonia: storage advice for consumers & donation of surplus food to food bank

As a response to consumers' storing of food due to COVID-19 measures, the Ministry of Environment published a [press release](#) explaining that food should be bought and stored in a sensible way

so that food waste is avoided. The press release in particular includes tips on how to avoid food waste by storing food correctly. Businesses such as restaurants, shipping companies, catering companies, cinemas, importers and producers of food products donated surplus food to the



Estonian Food Bank in order to avoid food waste. In addition, different restaurants, whose operations are disrupted, are helping the Estonian Food Bank by preparing soups.



Germany: responsible shopping and the importance of correct food storage

To reduce the negative outcomes of consumers' excess storing of food due to COVID-19, the Federal Minister for Food and Agriculture publicly stressed that Germany does not have a shortage of food supplies. The Minister called for responsible shopping and, to prevent food waste, avoiding excess stocking of food supplies by households which can end up being discarded.

The Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture and its subordinated agencies further informed consumers about the relevance of correct storage of food to prevent food waste through the internet platform "[Too Good for the Bin](#)", the [press](#), as well as different social media posts on Twitter and Instagram. A social media campaign called "[#kaufnurdubrauchst](#)" (*just buy what you need*) was launched, which includes pleas by famous German public figures.

The retail sector and other stakeholders informed their customers about responsible shopping, storage and preparation of stored food on their own initiative (through their websites and information in supermarkets).



Latvia: hygiene rules for donation of food of animal origin

[Requirements](#) have been set for retail entities which carry out marginal, localised and restricted activities, laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin: a) when donating small quantities of products of animal origin, including poultry eggs, to other retail establishments and b) when supplying small quantities of poultry eggs to food chain businesses.



Netherlands: alternative destinations for surplus food

Initiatives have been launched to find alternative destinations for surplus food. Alternative options are also sought to continue sending food donations to food banks, which are also facing tremendous challenges due to the circumstances (e.g. lack of volunteers). For the larger amounts of products made available by farmers with no market access, the [Dutch Food Waste Taskforce](#) has launched a [B2B marketplace](#) to support the matchmaking process.

Regarding consumer food waste prevention interventions, emphasis is currently being given to the "value" of food as well as the aspects of shelf-life and storage (eg. promotion of the "[freezing sticker](#)"). In June 2020, a multimedia campaign on shelf-life and date marking will be launched.

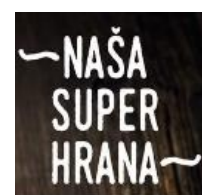


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Slovenia: various communications on food waste prevention

The [Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food](#) carried out various communications on food waste prevention in the context of the COVID-19 crisis through their central national website for promoting local food '[Naša super hrana](#)' (*Super food*), the portal's [Facebook page](#) and the [Super Food newsletter](#). Communications included [sharing of tips on how to prevent food waste](#), [suggested recipes to make use of Easter dishes leftovers](#), [advice on food shopping planning and date marking](#) and [general awareness raising on the food waste issue](#).





Boroume, Greece: donation of surplus food to municipal social pantries and awareness raising activities

The necessary measures taken to protect public health have led in some cases to increased food surpluses. [Boroume](#), the Greek non-profit organization, whose mission is to reduce food waste and fight malnutrition in Greece, has been called to mitigate this situation. While there are extra quantities of surplus food available, certain food charities had to suspend their operation, especially soup kitchens offering cooked meals, in order to avoid mass gatherings of people. At the same time, municipalities – through their social care units – have been entrusted by the state to provide additional support and relief to their beneficiaries and other vulnerable groups (e.g. aid at home to persons in self-isolation). Therefore, the organisation is directing much of the above mentioned quantities of donated food to municipal social pantries.



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www.boroume.gr

© Picture by [Boroume](#)

In parallel, Boroume gives great importance to awareness raising, which has been intensified due to the current health crisis, mainly through their social media channels ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#)).



City of Milan, Italy: actions to prevent food waste from school canteens & centralisation of food redistribution

The [municipality](#) carried out specific actions regarding access to food and food delivery, particularly for some vulnerable groups, while trying to avoid food waste. In the first weeks of the COVID-19 crisis, the municipality together with its public company in charge of school canteens, committed to collect all food that would have not been consumed due to school closings and donated it to charities that were still working in the city. Part of this food was also stored in view of opening local food hubs to serve the food aid system (described below). Additionally, the Municipality has supported local restaurants that have been forced to close, linking them with charities and organizations that could receive that food and redistribute it to the poor and other vulnerable groups.

The Food Aid System: The Municipality of Milan, in collaboration with many public and private actors, developed the Food Aid System, which aims to offset the closures of associations and charities active in Milan by centralizing the entire food supply chain. The System is responsible for the distribution of weekly food aid until the end of the COVID-19 crisis, with 8 temporary hubs being opened to prepare food aid packages for the elderly and people in need.

The municipality has also received considerable support from companies and the private sector through in-kind donations and financial support. With the new cooperation with the municipal fruit and vegetable wholesale market, fresh food will also be added to the food aid bags.

The Food Aid System helped the municipality to monitor the food to be collected and redistributed to families in need, and take measures to avoid food going to waste.

The municipality has also carried out a series of initiatives to help citizens purchase food from local stores, supermarkets, farms and farmhouses:

- “[Spesa a domicilio – Online shopping delivery](#)” was launched in order to map local grocery shops offering home delivery service; the list of food business operators is managed by the municipality.

- [A map with local farms and farmhouses](#) was also created, in order to promote their activities and the new service of home delivery.



Copa Cogeca

Agri-food cooperatives donate surplus food to social facilities, food banks and people in need

The temporary closure of hospitality and food services businesses has prompted Spanish agri-food cooperatives to donate surplus food or food already processed for HORECA operators to social facilities (elderly homes, hospitals etc.), food banks and charities. Such foods include [meat](#) and [dairy products](#), [fruits](#) and [vegetables](#), [sugar](#), oil etc.

The reduction in consumption of certain foods (e.g. Iberian ham, goat cheese), mainly because of the closure of restaurants, led to a decrease in the purchase of these products for further processing. In order to compensate for this immediate reduction and to avoid diverting these products out of the food chain, cooperatives have promoted the reduction of production and have taken further action regarding the processing and storage of available foods.

In Italy, Coldiretti organized the [“Suspended Course”](#) campaign to donate fruit, vegetables, flour, cheeses, meats and other essential agricultural products to families in need, in agreement with elderly centres, Caritas, parishes and municipalities (96,000 kg of food have been donated in a week to 22,000 most disadvantaged families). Coldiretti has also activated an IBAN code for collecting donations for the “Suspended Course” campaign. More news about these initiatives can be found on the [Fondazione Campagna Amica website](#), as well as on its [Facebook page](#).



© Picture by [Campagna Amica](#)

Food deliveries directly from primary producers to customers’ homes

In Italy, Coldiretti has activated the “Farm course” home delivery service throughout the country, that consists of agricultural products supplied directly at home by farmers belonging to the [Campagna Amica network](#), as well as the delivery of ready-made dishes, cooked in agri-tourism establishments belonging to Terranostra network. In the last week of March, 700,000 deliveries of “Farm courses” have been made directly to consumers’ homes.

Not-for-profit platform to combat food waste

In the UK, the fresh produce trading platform [FruPro](#) has launched a free scheme to help tackle food waste and keep the fresh produce supply chain moving, providing users with a way to buy or sell produce with an “offer and search” function. FruPro developed the platform to ease major supply chain disruptions resulting from social distancing measures, which have badly hit several sectors of the economy. Currently, FruPro is focusing on diverting produce to independent retailers – food markets, corner shops and smaller greengrocers, as well as the growing fresh produce delivery sector. The company is also developing a mechanism for transferring stock to food banks.

Retailers increasing flexibility on specification

UK retailers have worked with suppliers to become more flexible on specifications. This action aimed to allow suppliers to be more efficient and ensure food remained on shelves. An indirect benefit of this was a reduction of food waste.



Eurocoop: urgent food bank supplies appeal & 'suspended grocery shopping'



dal 2017
ogni giorno vicini
a chi ne ha più bisogno.



[Coop Italy](#) launched the '[suspended grocery shopping](#)'. Since 2003, with the Buon Fine (*Good End*) project, Coop Italy has donated to the associations of the ONLUS territory the goods that are no longer sellable - nearing expiring date or defects in the packaging - but still perfectly consumable.

© Picture by [Coop Centro Italia](#)

However, since the beginning of the coronavirus emergency, the quantities donated through the Buon Fine have decreased. For this reason, Coop Italy launched the 'suspended grocery shopping'. Inspired by the Italian tradition of the 'suspended coffee', i.e. the advance purchase of a cup of coffee for someone who needs it. Coop Italy introduced the opportunity for those willing, to make a donation of 1 euro or 100 points from the membership card to the foundation 'The Heart Melts', which will double the value of the donation. The money collected will be used to buy groceries, which will be then distributed to the people in need.

The British retailer [Co-op](#) is looking to help vulnerable people such as the elderly and those on lower incomes at this difficult time. The food retailer launched an [urgent food bank appeal](#) to support its charity partners, after they reported a major fall in donations, at the same time as a spike in demand.



European Food Banks Federation (FEBA)

The [European Food Banks Federation](#) offers daily support to its members in this challenging period. FEBA is sharing learning and organizes a weekly meeting for its membership. Moreover, FEBA drafts weekly reports on the situation of European food banks to map how COVID-19 is affecting everyday activities and how European food banks are responding and adapting their activities to prevent food waste and help charities and those most in need. FEBA disseminates this report, promoting the sharing of best practices inside the network in order to stimulate new innovative approaches to deal with the situation.

Challenges and urgent needs of European food banks due to COVID-19: results from the survey launched by FEBA

On Monday 23 March 2020, FEBA circulated a survey to its membership in order to have a comprehensive overview on the situation in the different countries and assess the main challenges and needs in this period. Main findings: over 80% of European food banks are experiencing an increase of food demand; 42% of European food banks are looking for more employees and volunteers; almost 80% of European food banks need additional funding to ensure their activity. Find out more in the [report](#) of the survey.

European COVID-19 Social Emergency Fund

FEBA launched a [European COVID-19 Social Emergency Fund](#), in an effort to secure the activity of European food banks. FEBA calls on corporations, foundations, organizations, and private citizens to join efforts and contribute to the funding.

Online skill-sharing session on “SDGs and Partnerships: How to tackle the COVID-19 today and tomorrow together”

FEBA organized this virtual skill-sharing session in collaboration with the Serbian ‘Banka Hrane Beograd’ on 17 March 2020. The session aimed to share best practices and experiences about private-public partnerships, going beyond traditional food donation and financial support. 9 European countries shared experiences about the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more from the [report](#) of the event.



© Picture by [FEBA](#)

European food banks’ initiatives to prevent food waste

FEBA also shares news on actions taken by European food banks at a national level to prevent food waste during the crisis. Across Europe, food banks recover surplus food from retail and food services businesses and redistribute it to people in need, directly to households, or to various social services and quarantine-closed cities. Various other companies (importers, hotels, spas, ferry companies, caterers for airplanes, food producers, cinemas, and supermarkets) give European food banks surplus food, which would otherwise be marketed and sold. Discover the efforts made by [Albania](#), [Austria](#), [Czech Republic](#), [Estonia](#), [France](#), [Germany](#), [Greece](#), [Ireland](#), Italy ([here](#) and [here](#)), [Lithuania](#), [Norway](#), [Portugal](#), [Serbia](#), [Slovenia](#) (non-exhaustive list). Find out more on [FEBA’s website](#).

Recovery of surplus food from European Commission’s restaurants and cafeterias

[Ciano International](#), the catering service responsible for some restaurants and cafeterias of the European Commission in Brussels, partnered with FEBA to donate surplus food to the most deprived. 350 kg of perishable food, including dairy products and fruit and vegetables, have been donated. Learn more [here](#).



Foodwin, Belgium: collective action to ensure food redistribution

One of [Foodwin](#)’s member organisations, Herwin, is responsible for the social redistribution platform [Foodsavers](#), active in Flanders, Belgium. While Foodsavers has been put on hold, the City of Mechelen, part of Foodsavers Mechelen, continued the effort to collect donated food and food surplus, under the campaign [“Hoard for someone else”](#). The distribution is done by city employees, volunteers, interns etc. Thanks to the campaign, close to 500 food packages have been distributed. Food is brought to Foodsavers by food companies, youth movements, schools, restaurants, and dozens of individuals. In addition, the city of Bruges called upon restaurants and market vendors to donate their surplus in order to refill the stock of [The Kaba](#), the only social grocery store which remains open.



Stop Wasting Food, Denmark: best practices to continue operations for actors of the food supply chain

[Stop Wasting Food](#) has launched a [campaign in the Danish press](#) to inform people about how to make food last longer, offering storage advice and tips on how to use leftovers. The organization has also published a [list of best practices](#) through which farmers, retail businesses and food services entities can keep their operations running during the crisis.



© Picture by Josephine Amalie Moldow



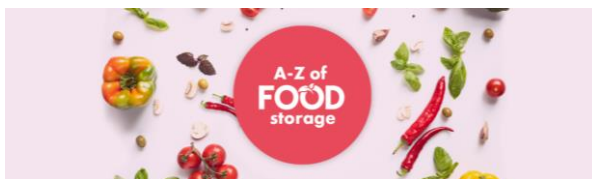
WRAP, UK: emergency funding, guidance on food redistribution and the ‘Love Food Hate Waste’ campaign.

Through the Resource Action Fund administered by [WRAP](#), £3.25m have been made available to facilitate partnerships between food businesses who have surplus and those who can make use of it. The [COVID-19 Emergency Surplus Food Grant](#) will be delivered in three phases.

WRAP have a suite of guidance documents and other resources aimed at facilitating the redistribution of surplus food, developed in conjunction with the Courtauld 2025 Redistribution Working Group. A new central [webpage](#) has been created to enable easy access to all of these, and new emergency guidance is being developed with government authorities. This will encourage more redistribution of food beyond its ‘best before’ date.



© Picture by WRAP



© Picture by WRAP

Through the [Love Food Hate Waste](#) campaign, WRAP have been supporting the public to help them be ‘food wise’ during the crisis – providing advice and information on how to plan their shopping, how to store items and use up the food they buy.

WRAP have also provided a dedicated resource package for businesses to use, to help quickly and easily inform their customers of the key messages around food storage, and refrigeration. WRAP are also working with partners to ensure communications are consistent and appropriate as the situation changes.



FAO: section dedicated to COVID-19, series of policy briefs & educational leaflet on food waste prevention

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, FAO has produced a series of policy briefs [available online](#), involving qualitative and quantitative analysis on matters of the food supply chain that have been

impacted by the pandemic. These briefs cover the topic of food waste in the context of COVID-19 and provide policy recommendations for Member States.

FAO has also a [dedicated section](#) to the Novel Coronavirus focused on food and agricultural systems where potential disruptions are analysed with solutions given based on past experiences and monitoring of the ongoing crisis. The issue of food waste is addressed along with challenges to food recovery, redistribution interventions and possible solutions. More detailed information pertaining to food waste reduction and other associated impacts of COVID-19 can also be found on the [FAO Community of Practice \(CoP\) on food loss reduction](#) website. Comprehensive briefs have been produced on the different components of food waste and an extensive resource library has been developed providing access to the links of food waste COVID-19 articles.

An engaging educational leaflet designed for young people on how to value food and reduce waste through [9 easy tips](#) is also available.

As the situation is progressing and continuously evolving, the documents and guidance developed by FAO are continuously updated on a day to day basis to guarantee that readers have access to the latest information.



© Picture by [FAO](#)



European Commission

Food donation guidelines

The European Commission [EU food donation guidelines](#) aim to facilitate the recovery and redistribution of safe, edible food to those in need. The guidelines were developed in consultation with the [EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste](#) to clarify relevant provisions in EU legislation and to help lift barriers to food redistribution within the current EU regulatory framework; as for example, that the placement on the market or redistribution of food past the 'best before' date is not prohibited by EU legislation. These guidelines, together with the document [Redistribution of surplus food: Examples of practices in the Member States](#), adopted by the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste, can be particularly helpful during these times of crisis in relation to food redistribution.

Proposed measures for the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD)

The coronavirus crisis presents an unprecedented challenge for the operations supported by the [Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived](#) (FEAD). Logistical and human resource constraints, notably due to the confinement and social distancing measures increasingly impede the distribution of food and basic material assistance, as well as social inclusion support.

Therefore, the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived will evolve to meet the challenge: in particular, the use of electronic vouchers to reduce the risk of contamination will be introduced, as well as the possibility of buying protective equipment for those delivering food aid. The proposed

changes can also have a positive implication for food donation, if this activity is included in Member States' operational programmes.

The [proposed changes](#) are intended to enable Managing Authorities, partner organisations and other actors involved in the implementation of the Fund to react quickly to the emerging additional needs of the target groups that are exposed to further hardship stemming from this crisis. Through the COVID-19 related emergency responses (with eligibility from 1 February), Member States can amend FEAD operational programmes without decision from the Commission and, should they wish to do so, may include food donation as part of their activities. The [European Social Fund](#) (ESF) will complement the support provided by the FEAD, notably as regards the related social inclusion challenges.

The Commission's proposed amendments to the FEAD regulation are currently under discussion with the co-legislators.

Don't miss the Digital World Disco Soup Day 2020 on 25 April!



© Picture by [Slow Food](#)

The 'Disco Soup' is a gastronomic, activist and musical event against food waste in which volunteers are invited to collect, wash, clean, cut and cook the leftover foods. The [Slow Food Youth Network](#) (SFYN) organises the [World Disco Soup Day](#) (WDS) every year on the last Saturday of April, during which the whole world is hosting Disco Soups to have a bigger impact.

This year, in light of the restrictions due to the COVID-19 crisis, this special day will still take place but [under a new format](#): passionate World Disco Soup Day hosts will now be chopping, cooking, and dancing in their own homes while streaming it live online. The SFYN invites people to make the shared challenge of COVID-19 a chance for everyone to show the power of helping each other, and a step in the right direction for building a better food future.