



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY
Food and feed safety, innovation
Food information and composition, food waste

SUMMARY REPORT

EU PLATFORM ON FOOD LOSSES & FOOD WASTE

DG HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY (SANTE)

4th meeting, in the framework of the International Exhibition for Agriculture

and Food Industry – AgroBalt 2018

Lithuanian Exhibition and Congress Centre LITEXPO

Laisvės Ave 5, 04215, Vilnius, Lithuania

24 May 2018 – From 9:30 to 18:00

Chair: Sabine Jülicher, *Director, Food and feed safety, Innovation, DG SANTE*

Commission: Commissioner Andriukaitis, Arūnas Vinčiūnas (CAB); Marco Valletta (CAB); Vilija Sysaitė (CAB); **DG SANTE; JRC**

Invited experts/observers:

Food Innovation Australia

Member States represented (26):

AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK.

Private sector organisations:

BEUC: The European Consumer Organisation; BOROUME – "We Can"; City of Milan: Secretariat of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact; COGECA: European Agri-Cooperatives; COPA: European Farmers; ECPA – European Crop Protection Association; EDA – European Dairy Association; EFFPA: European Former Foodstuff Processors Association; EUCOFEL: European Fruit and Vegetables Trade Association; EUROCOMMERCE: the retail, wholesale and international trade representation to the EU; EURO COOP: European Community of Consumer Co-operatives; EUROPATAT – European Potato Trade Association; FEBA: European Federation of Food Banks; FEEDBACK GLOBAL; FOODCLOUD; FOODDRINKEUROPE; FRESHFEL: European Fresh Produce Association; INDEPENDENT RETAIL EUROPE; LES RESTAURANTS DU COEUR; OSTFOLD RESEARCH, Nofima and Matvett Consortium; RISE RESEARCH INSTITUTES OF SWEDEN AB; STOP WASTING FOOD MOVEMENT DENMARK; SLOW FOOD; WAGENINGEN UR: Wageningen University & Research; WRAP: Waste and Resource Action Programme; ZERO WASTE SCOTLAND.

Public entities:

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations; UN Environment.

Observers:

EFTA: Norway

Facilitator:

Stephanie Wunder (Ecologic Institute)

1. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME TO PARTICIPANTS

The Chair welcomed participants to the 4th meeting of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste, taking place in the framework of the International Exhibition for Agriculture and Food Industry *AgroBalt* 2018 in Vilnius, Lithuania. She extended her thanks to the Lithuanian authorities for hosting the Platform meeting and for organising a High Level Political Forum on food losses and food waste. Further on, she welcomed the presence of Vice-Mayor of Milan Anna Scavuzzo, who would present actions taken on the ground to promote sustainability and prevent food waste in the city of Milan and the initiative carried out in cooperation with EURO CITIES to collect best practices of municipalities.

The Chair offered an overview of the meeting's agenda, focussing on the progress made on key deliverables of the Circular Economy Action Plan and the work of Platform sub-groups, as well as a session dedicated to preventing food waste at consumer level.

2. EU PLATFORM ON FOOD LOSSES AND FOOD WASTE: KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND FUTURE CHALLENGES - PRESENTATION BY COMMISSIONER VYTENIS ANDRIUKAITIS, HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

In his presentation, Commissioner Andriukaitis referred to the Agriculture and Fisheries Council of 16 April 2018 and the High Level Political Forum taking place in the framework of *AgroBalt* 2018 as events providing further impetus for change and measures needed to reach the global target to halve food waste by 2030. He also took stock of work carried out in the implementation of the Circular Economy Action Plan, emphasizing the political agreement reached on the revised Waste Framework Directive, including new measures related to food waste prevention, and the corresponding legislative acts to help Member States monitor and report on food waste levels.

Commissioner Andriukaitis offered an update of the work of the Commission and the EU Platform on FLW, highlighting the recently published EU guidelines on the use of former foodstuffs as feed and looking forward to the Platform's first deliverable, a document to be published by end 2018 illustrating how Member States implement relevant legal provisions to facilitate food donation. Next, he focussed on the newly established 'date marking' sub-group, which will elaborate a coordinated action plan to promote better understanding and use of

date marking including EU-level scientific and technical guidance to support more consistent date marking practices.

Last but not least, Commissioner Andriukaitis highlighted the role of consumers in tackling food waste, encouraging Platform members to share best practices in building successful consumer intervention strategies during the afternoon session dedicated to the topic.

UN Environment pointed out the influence of marketing strategies on consumer behaviour, not only in relation to food waste prevention but also regarding dietary choices more generally. Commissioner Andriukaitis agreed that commercial determinants were powerful instruments and called for societal debate on food and diet, emphasizing the need to inform consumers about choosing healthy, sustainable diets.

3. UPDATE ON THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY ACTION PLAN – EU FOOD WASTE PREVENTION INITIATIVES, PRESENTATION BY THE COMMISSION

DG SANTE offered an overview of actions taken under the Circular Economy Action Plan, covering the latest developments concerning the Waste Framework Directive, an update on the work of sub-groups and new Platform deliverables planned for 2018-2019. Such deliverables include a Platform document illustrating Member States food donation practices (2018) and future recommendations for action to prevent food waste at each stage of the food supply chain (2019). The latter will be developed by the sub-group on 'action and implementation', with support from the Joint Research Centre on collection and analysis of effectiveness of food waste prevention initiatives. DG SANTE called for volunteers for the 5 rapporteurs (one for each stage of the food supply chain) who would prepare draft recommendations for action in collaboration with sub-group members.

DG SANTE also focussed on the newly established 'date marking' sub-group and its key objectives and considerations for policy actions, announcing the establishment of a future task force to support drafting of EU scientific and technical guidance to support consistent date marking practices by all players. In order to facilitate the preparation of the latter, she called for volunteers to be involved in the drafting of guidance on date labelling.

Following the presentation, the Chair opened the floor for comments; a summary of the discussion is provided hereafter.

FEEDBACK GLOBAL and SLOW FOOD raised the issue of Member States' monitoring and reporting on food losses in primary production, in particular food which is "ready to harvest" but not harvested, which was not covered by the definition of food waste provided in the revised Waste Framework Directive. The latter also called for establishing binding targets to reduce food waste before 2023, the timeline put forward in the new waste legislation.

The Commission explained that the legal definition of "food waste" put forward in the revised Waste Framework Directive is based on the definition of food laid down in the General Food Law which does not include food pre-harvest; however quantification of such losses could be taken into consideration by the Platform and its "measurement" sub-group at a subsequent

stage. In regard to binding targets, it was explained that the possible future setting of targets at EU level would need to be consistent with availability of data. In the meantime, the revised waste legislation requires Member States to reduce food waste, at each stage in the food supply chain, in order to help achieve the SDG 12.3 food waste reduction target. Through this Platform, members can share solutions to tackle food waste, including leveraging cooperation between actors and initiatives on ground; recommendations for action will be defined by the Platform by June 2019.

In reply to BE, the Commission confirmed that the Directorates-General for Environment and for Health and Food Safety were actively collaborating on prevention of food losses and food waste. Joint meetings of the Expert Group on Food Losses and Food Waste and the Technical Adaptation Committee on Waste Directive were also announced, in view of the need to adopt a food waste measurement methodology by end of March 2019. The latter will take the form of a delegated act, thus it will be subject to consultations and feedback mechanism from stakeholders before its adoption.

The Commission confirmed additional research would be carried out on consumer understanding of date marking terminology across Member States, in reply to COPA's request for such action to be carried out at EU level.

FEBA suggested more visibility could be drawn to the topic of food waste by organising a flagship event at EU level (*eg* European Day) which could give more salience to initiatives organised in the Member States and highlight food waste prevention as a key policy area. The Commission indicated that such a suggestion could be further considered by relevant services and emphasized the role of the Platform and its sub-groups in facilitating synergies amongst actors who fight food waste at all levels of the food supply chain. Moreover, the identification of "best practice" and specific recommendations for action would be delivered by the 'action and implementation' subgroup in 2019. In regard to IE's request for further clarification in regards to the collection and analysis of food waste prevention initiatives, the Commission explained that this was a voluntary exercise carried out in the context of the "Action and Implementation" subgroup.

4. GLOBAL MONITORING OF FOOD LOSSES AND FOOD WASTE: SDG 12.3 TARGETS – JOINT PRESENTATION BY CAROLA FABI, FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION (FAO) AND JAMES LOMAX, UN ENVIRONMENT

The presentation offered an overview of the on-going work on the indicators for the two SDG 12.3 targets: the Food Loss Index (FLI) focusing on supply and the Food Waste Index (FWI) focusing on the demand end of the supply chain. Both speakers highlighted that the development of a global monitoring framework for SDG 12.3 was very much "work in progress," with UN Environment indicating the important role that the EU Member States would play in helping to lead the way forward (*eg* definition of baseline, measurement methodology *etc.*).

At the end of the intervention, the Commission reiterated that even though food losses were not covered by the scope of the revised Waste Framework Directive, prevention of such losses was part of the mandate of this Platform and would be considered separately at a subsequent stage. Moreover, the future measurement methodology to be adopted by the Commission was designed to accommodate the possibility to report on food losses, should Member States wish to go beyond the minimum requirements laid down in EU legislation. The Commission also stated that there were instruments beyond waste legislation, such as the modernised Common Agricultural Policy which could offer tools to bolster resource efficiency and address the reduction of food losses in primary production.

5. CITIES' ACTIONS TO PREVENT FOOD WASTE AND PROMOTE FOOD DONATION: THE EXAMPLE OF MILAN AND COOPERATION WITH OTHER EUROPEAN CITIES – PRESENTATION BY VICE-MAYOR OF MILAN ANNA SCAVUZZO

Vice-Mayor of Milan Anna Scavuzzo presented the work of the city of Milan to promote sustainability and prevent food waste, the latter being among the key objectives of the Milan Food Policy. Amongst the new initiatives implemented, the Vice-Mayor mentioned the introduction of a 20% reduction in waste tax for businesses which engage in food donation. In addition, she also offered an update of EUROCITIES' initiative to collect best practices of municipalities in tackling food losses and food waste, developed in the context of its Working Group on Food, chaired by the City of Milan. The mapping of urban case studies in food waste prevention would be made available as a contribution to the work of the "Action and Implementation" sub-group.

6. CONSUMER FOOD WASTE: UNDERSTANDING CAUSES AND DETERMINANTS; SHARING INSIGHTS AND EXPERIENCE FOR EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

The Chair introduced the session on prevention of food waste at the level of consumers which aimed to share experience, learnings and insights in order to design and implement effective intervention strategies to reach the Sustainable Development Goal target of halving food waste by 2030. The session was designed with the support of Dr. Erica van Herpen, Associate Professor at Wageningen University, leading REFRESH work on consumer understanding in relation to food waste generation; and it was facilitated by Stephanie Wunder, Ecologic Institute, leading communication and dissemination of REFRESH work and findings.

Ms. Wunder introduced the 3 speakers from STOP WASTING FOOD Movement Denmark, the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture in Germany and WRAP, who presented their respective experience in designing food waste prevention campaigns targeted at consumers. Speakers were then asked to indicate the key factors that contributed to the outcomes of their campaigns and insights/learning gained:

- WRAP highlighted the importance of measuring and identifying most wasted foods, carrying out market research and understanding consumer behaviour, testing various

approaches with focus groups when designing a campaign as well as modelling the long-term benefits of implementing certain behaviours.

- DE emphasized the importance of integrating consumer campaigns as part of a broader national food waste prevention strategy and the need to disseminate information through various media channels to reach a wider audience, while also assessing the outreach of the campaign on a regular basis.
- In response to the Chair's inquiry on how to approach working with online influencers, WRAP explained that during the *Love Food Hate Waste* campaign, online influencers from different backgrounds were chosen based on the content produced and their willingness to volunteer in the campaign. Successful candidates were provided with statistics, resources and guidance; however they were free to design their own content and communications approaches.
- The floor was then given to Dr. van Herpen, who guided Platform members through the main results of the research carried out by REFRESH in the area of consumer understanding. The study indicated that descriptive norms (social norms of what others do) have a more powerful effect on consumers' discarding behaviour than injunctive ones (telling subjects what they should do in a situation) or simply raising awareness about the levels and consequences of food waste. Consumers' own priorities in relation to food and at times conflicting goals (*eg* freshness, catering to guests *etc*) can also affect household food waste. Following the presentation, UN Environment suggested people had biased opinions regarding their personal diets and that raising awareness regarding food losses and food waste could have beneficial effects on other social norms, such as eating healthily – an idea which was also supported by Dr. van Herpen. In reply to a query from EFFPA regarding consumers' own optimistic bias about their own behaviour, Dr. van Herpen indicated that consumers could be motivated to improve their habits by showcasing good examples and sending positive messages.
- WRAP mentioned their on-going collaboration with BBC to change the way in which food waste is portrayed on television, following the model of previous campaigns against smoking. Following the success of *The Blue Planet* (n.r. a BBC nature documentary) in raising awareness regarding the use of plastics, IE inquired whether a similar strategy could be used in order to push food waste higher up the public policy agenda. WRAP explained that the powerful impact of the series also relied on previous sustained efforts to change the social norm around recycling and reducing the use of plastics.
- Responding to a question from Food Innovation Australia (observer attending the Platform meeting), Dr. van Herpen explained that the research did not find significant differences in social norms across countries, but rather a common feature of consumers to follow descriptive norms (*ie* what other people like them do).

Further on, Ms. Wunder introduced the panellists: representatives from the Alliance of Lithuanian Consumer Organisations (ALCO)/BEUC, the European Dairy Association (EDA)/FoodDrinkEurope and EuroCommerce. The three were asked to provide the main

insights, key barriers and learning for the future from the consumer-oriented campaigns against food losses and food waste that they had carried out:

- EDA highlighted the importance of collaboration between actors across the food supply chain in designing effective consumer intervention strategies. Further on, EDA referred to the food industry's engagement to help consumers prevent waste through their products (*eg* packaging that empties correctly), by helping to inform/educate consumers on how to use and store foods (*eg* through apps) and often working in cooperation with other actors (*eg* in-store communications at retail). In terms of lessons learned, EDA explained that finger pointing and negative messages might have an impact short-term but did not have a long term effect on consumers' behaviour, while positive and constructive messages (*eg* what would you do with money from the food you have saved in a year?) were a more effective approach. In terms of future projects, EDA mentioned an on-going pan-European campaign to promote the consumption of dairy products that engaged national influencers.
- EuroCommerce stressed the relevance of working with consumers and understanding their needs, as changes in demographics and social norms heavily influence consumption patterns and discarding behaviours. In-store advice and digital tools were mentioned as instruments to educate consumers; the organisation has produced a brochure of retailers' best practices in food waste prevention. In regard to lessons learned, EuroCommerce indicated the need to focus on positive advice and to make full use of digital communications while avoiding to overwhelm buyers with information.
- ALCO reiterated the importance of collaborating and sharing responsibility among actors of the food supply chain, and also highlighted the beneficial impact of good coordination between government entities. ALCO then referred to several consumer campaigns to curtail food waste carried out across the EU and emphasized the importance of tailoring messages to different consumer groups, take account of country differences and measure their effectiveness throughout.
- Replying to FOODCLOUD's question on how to engage food suppliers and retailers in food waste prevention actions from an early start, both EuroCommerce and EDA highlighted the common interest of all actors involved as a strong incentive to act together, indicating the EU Platform on FLW as a catalyst for joining efforts to tackle food waste. WRAP pointed to research findings indicating that consumers would spend the money saved from avoiding food waste on higher value items, which helped motivate retailers in the UK to get involved in voluntary agreements to reduce food waste and inform consumers accordingly.
- In reply to a question regarding TESCO's initiative to remove 'best before' dates from certain products (EFFPA), WRAP explained that the retailer was following recommendations issued in collaboration with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Food Standards Agency (FSA). The Chair clarified that products concerned were included in Annex X of Regulation 1169/2011, which provides derogation from "best before" labelling for certain food items with long shelf-life. Further on, EDA emphasized the need to accompany any measures

with education campaigns in order to inform consumers about how to make best use of the products.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND WRAP-UP BY THE CHAIR

The Chair thanked panellists, speakers and participants for a successful interactive session on prevention of food waste at consumer level, which revealed the value of social norms in the design of effective communication campaigns. She also extended her thanks to the Lithuanian authorities for the opportunity to organise the Platform meeting in the context of *AgroBalt* 2018, and to the organisers and interpreters for running a successful event. The Chair reiterated the call for volunteers to act as rapporteurs for proposing key recommendations for action at each stage of the food supply chain and to support the preparation of EU-level scientific and technical guidance on date marking. In the end, she highlighted the leading role of the EU in the global fight against food losses and food waste and announced that the next plenary meeting of the Platform would take place on 6 December 2018 in Brussels.

High Level Political Forum on Food Losses and Food Waste¹

A High Level Political Forum on food losses and food waste took place in the framework of the 22nd International Exhibition for Agriculture and Food Industry *AgroBalt* 2018, with keynote speeches from the Minister of Agriculture of Lithuania Giedrius Surplys; European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Vytenis Andriukaitis; Director General of UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Jose Graziano da Silva and Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Food and Forestry of the Republic of Bulgaria Verginiya Krasteva. Ministers and high ranking representatives for Agriculture from China, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Poland, the Slovak Republic, the Republic of Slovenia and the United States of America acknowledged the paramount importance of tackling food losses and food waste across the whole food supply chain, in order to contribute to food security, resource efficiency and environmental protection.

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http://zum.lrv.lt/uploads/zum/documents/files/LT_versija/Veiklos_sritys/Bendroji_zemes_ukio_politika/Outcomes%20of%20the%20Forum%20on%20Food%20Losses%20and%20Food%20Waste.pdf