



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Food sustainability, international relations
Farm to fork strategy

SUMMARY REPORT

EU PLATFORM ON FOOD LOSSES & FOOD WASTE (FLW) SUB-GROUP ON FOOD WASTE MEASUREMENT

DG HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY (SANTE)

5th meeting via WebEx Events

4 March 2021 – From 10:30 to 12:30

Chair: Bartosz Zambrzycki, Policy Officer, Food Waste, Farm to Fork Strategy, DG SANTE

Commission: DG SANTE; DG AGRI; DG ENV; DG RTD; ESTAT; JRC

Member States represented (12):

BE, DK, DE, ES, FR, IE, IT, LV, NL, RO, SE, SK.

Private sector organisations (7):

EUROCOMMERCE - the retail, wholesale and international trade representation to the EU; EUROPATAT - European Potato Trade Association; FOODDRINKEUROPE - European Food and Drink Industry Association; HOTREC - Hospitality Europe; OSTFOLD RESEARCH, Nofima and Matvett Consortium; WRAP - Waste and Resource Action Programme; ZERO WASTE SCOTLAND.

Public entities (1):

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.

A meeting of the [Food waste measurement sub-group](#), established under the [EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste \(FLW\)](#), took place virtually via WebEx Events on **4 March 2021** from **10:30 to 12:30** CET. The meeting provided the opportunity to discuss food waste monitoring and reporting activities by food business operators. Experts from French national authorities and WRAP took the floor to present relevant work carried out in this field, while the Commission provided an update on food waste measurement activities at EU level.

The speakers' presentations are published on the [European Commission's Food waste website](#).

In his opening remarks, the Chair reminded participants that the EU food waste monitoring and reporting obligations are addressed to Member States and do not include provisions directly for food business operators. However, Member States may introduce such obligations at national level. The Chair highlighted the **importance of food waste monitoring** and the **need for increased transparency** concerning food waste data, which are being addressed through various initiatives (e.g. [Code of](#)

[Conduct for Responsible Business and Marketing Practices](#), one of the first deliverables of the [Farm to Fork Strategy; Halving Food Loss and Waste in the EU by 2030: The Major Steps Needed to Accelerate Progress](#), WWF/WRAP report 2020). The Chair concluded his introduction by welcoming the interventions on the timely topic of food waste monitoring and reporting by food business operators, given from the perspective of a Member State (France) and a private sector organisation (WRAP).

1. Organisation of reporting in France: focus on food business operators: rules & tools, presentation by Laurence Gouthiere, Food waste prevention, Agency for ecological transition (ADEME) and Erwan De Gavelle, Food & Health Project Manager, French Ministry of Food and Agriculture [[ppt](#)]

In a joint presentation, representatives of the [French Agency for Ecological Transition](#) (ADEME) and the French Ministry of Food and Agriculture presented France's national food waste prevention policy, which is underpinned by the [national food program](#) and driven by the national target to halve food waste by 2025 in collective catering and retail, and by 2030 in other sectors. France has implemented a series of non-legislative¹ and legislative actions² on food waste prevention. The legislative framework to prevent food waste includes various provisions, among which the development of **mandatory action plans**, including **diagnosis** related to food waste prevention for food business operators.

ADEME supports French authorities in the implementation of food waste prevention policy, by conducting relevant studies³, developing communication campaigns and providing technical and financial assistance. As one of the strands of the National Pact against Food Waste focuses on monitoring, ADEME worked together with the actors of the food supply chain to establish a common observation system to monitor progress made in reducing food waste. Thanks to this [work](#), food waste data have been made available for a number of sectors. In addition, ADEME developed a series of **toolboxes**, in order to help businesses in the [collective catering](#) and in the [manufacturing](#) sectors to fulfill their legal obligations regarding food waste monitoring.

France explained that their quadrennial national **mandatory survey** on non-hazardous waste carried out within the manufacturing and retail sectors will be launched again in 2021, including new questions regarding food waste. A similar survey will be launched for the first time in 2021 for the food service sector (including collective catering), also including food waste related questions. Findings of these surveys will help France fulfill its food waste reporting obligations at EU level. France highlighted that, while the use of the tools developed by ADEME is not mandatory, the toolboxes can provide significant support and guidance to businesses, both in performing the mandatory food waste reporting activities at national level, as well as in answering the mandatory national surveys.

France also referred to the introduction of a **national 'anti-food waste' label** that can be granted to any legal entity contributing to the national objectives. Romania was interested to know whether the label will be available for all food products. France explained that work has just started in this area and that there are on-going discussions with the retail sector on this issue. France stated that the initial feedback received from the actors of the food supply chain regarding the 'anti-food waste' label is positive.

¹ An example of a non-legislative measure undertaken is the [National Pact against Food Waste](#), a multi-stakeholder initiative involving the public and private sector, who adhere to 10 concrete commitments to tackle food waste. The first Pact was initiated in 2013, the second in 2017.

² Examples of legislative measures: [Garot Law](#) adopted in 2016, [EGalim Law](#) adopted in 2018, [AGEC Law](#) ('Anti-waste law for a circular economy') adopted in 2020.

³ [Food losses and waste – Inventory and management at each stage in the food chain](#) [FR], ADEME, 2016, [Executive summary in EN](#)

The Chair inquired about the **reaction** of food business operators to the recent legislative measures introduced, but also about how these obligations translate into businesses' operations. France reported that even if the majority of the legislative obligations are well respected, mandatory diagnosis in collective catering has not been set up by all actors. Moreover, it seems that businesses in the collective catering sector are more motivated to engage in food waste monitoring and reporting activities, as compared to the manufacturing and retail sectors. France outlined that communications on the importance and the need to measure and report on food waste will continue.

FAO asked whether there has been work carried out in France on monitoring **food losses**. France explained that there is also a quadrennial mandatory national survey on issues related to agriculture, and relevant authorities have initiated discussions to include questions on food losses in this survey. France also outlined the challenges of collecting reliable and solid data on food loss and waste levels. While recognising the challenges associated with such measurement and reporting, the Chair emphasized how vital it is that such activities are carried out across Europe, paving the way for future studies that will help improve the quality of available data.

Concerning data reliability, the representative of FoodDrinkEurope inquired about the **quantification methods** used in France, given the difference in consumer food waste levels between France (33% - baseline 2016) and Germany (more than 50% - baseline 2015). The French experts replied that several methods are used (qualitative/quantitative surveys, on-site observations etc). FoodDrinkEurope explained that the assessment of food waste levels by food business operators, across the German food supply chain, is to some extent based on estimations. France also clarified that the 'consumption' stage in their study, which has been assessed responsible for 33% of the total food waste occurring across the French food supply chain, includes not only food waste at household level, but also from collective catering businesses and other food services.

Upon Belgium's request, France shared two **examples of food waste related questions**⁴ included in the national surveys, while explaining that the surveys are not yet publicly available, as they are still in a pilot phase. France also clarified that, while the tools developed by ADEME provide guidance on each of the 3 levels of food waste analysis that food business operators can implement (from level 1: an overall estimate of food waste, to level 3: a detailed diagnosis), the mandatory national surveys seek input on food waste measurement activities carried out according to the first level of analysis.

Denmark took the floor and enquired about how the Commission tackles differences in the reported amounts of food waste from the various Member States: for example, if 20% of the total national food waste is generated in Danish households and this percentage differs across comparable Member States. Comparing this suggested percentage with the ones presented by France and Germany, the differences in food waste levels estimations among Member States become apparent. Therefore, Denmark expressed interest in knowing more on how the Commission plans to tackle this issue and proceed with the proposal of setting legally binding targets to reduce food waste, as foreseen in the Farm to Fork Strategy. The Chair explained that work on setting the targets will begin after the reception and further processing of data from Member States. The [European Union's Statistical Office](#) (Eurostat) added that the first two years of reporting (for 2020 and 2021 reference years) will be exploratory and that further input will be sought from Member States in case explanations on how reported food waste amounts were assessed are not sufficient, or if there are significant deviations

⁴ Example question 1: 'How much food waste from your catering operations did you produce in 2020?'

Example question 2: 'What percentage of the food waste that occurred within your operations is inevitable?'

from the EU-average. ESTAT also reiterated that the [model for food waste measurement at EU level](#), which is based on mass flow analysis and was developed by the [Joint Research Centre \(JRC\) of the European Commission](#), will be utilised by the Commission as a complementary method to compare the food waste amounts reported by Member States.

The Chair informed participants that the Commission is preparing an **Inception Impact Assessment**, which will contain information on the Commission's roadmap for setting EU-wide targets. Upon publication, an **extensive public consultation** will be launched. Platform members will be closely involved in this process.

2. Reporting from food business operators - global examples, presentation by Mike Falconer Hall, Product Development and Delivery Manager, WRAP [\[ppt\]](#)

While praising the various initiatives worldwide that aim to achieve the [Sustainable Development Goal Target 12.3](#), WRAP underlined how challenging gathering consistent quality data on food waste levels from businesses can be, especially when there is a variety of different reporting methods. In order to support food business operators report on their food waste data in a credible and consistent manner at international level, WRAP has been working with global partners to develop the [Data Capture Sheet](#), which complies with the international [Food Loss & Waste Standard](#). The benefits of having a **common template** to report on food waste data are several: a reduced reporting burden for businesses, one template for multiple food loss and waste reduction initiatives and the possibility for benchmarking.

The Data Capture Sheet gathers quantitative and qualitative information and includes a **reporting template**, which provides output based on data inserted. With the explicit consent of food business operators, data collected through this tool can be published on the [Food Waste Atlas](#), a platform jointly developed by WRAP and the [World Resources Institute](#) (WRI) through which businesses can share food loss and waste data in a consistent and transparent way, in line with the Food Loss & Waste Standard. Food business operators can also opt for publishing their data in an anonymized way. The Food Waste Atlas enables stakeholders to gain insights on food loss and waste and allows benchmarking. WRAP indicated that food loss and waste data from European countries, collected according to [EU-FUSIONS methodology](#), are also available on the Food Waste Atlas.

FAO took the opportunity to inform participants about its [Food Loss and Waste database](#), which contains food loss and waste data officially reported by countries or taken from scientific literature. Data are displayed in percentage terms (not in total quantities) by country, commodity, year and stage of the value chain.

WRAP's Data Capture Sheet is intended for common use by food business operators not only in the United Kingdom, but also **worldwide**, as WRAP is actively supporting international food loss and waste prevention initiatives (e.g. Voluntary Agreements). For example, the [United States multi-stakeholder non-profit ReFED \(Rethink Food Waste through Economics and Data\)](#) has developed a **food waste calculator**, which intakes readily available data from retailers and populates reporting templates from multiple organisations, including the Food Waste Atlas from WRAP, making it easy for businesses to report to any of these platforms.

WRAP also referred to the [Food Waste Index Report 2021](#), issued by the [United Nations Environment Programme](#) (UNEP) and published on the same day of the meeting (4 March 2021). The report contains estimates of food waste and provides guidance for countries to measure food waste, according to

their level of maturity and experience in the field. Finally, WRAP informed participants of the [UK's first Food Waste Action Week](#), aiming to raise awareness on the environmental consequences of food waste.

The Chair inquired whether the Data Capture Sheet can be easily modified by food business operators, in order to fit their needs and the unique characteristics of their operations. WRAP explained that if the tool undergoes adjustments on a case-by-case basis, then the concept of having a common reporting template will fail. In addition, the template standardizes the data that feed into the Food Waste Atlas. If some pieces of the template are modified, then the information uploaded on the Food Waste Atlas might not be correctly displayed. However, WRAP stated that the template can easily be edited by food business operators, should they wish to use it for internal purposes and reporting.

3. Update from the Commission on state of play in food waste measurement and reporting [[ppt](#)]

The Commission reminded participants of the upcoming **plenary meeting of the Platform** (18 March 2021) and announced that a **3rd webinar** to support Member States in their legal obligations as regards measurement and reporting on national food waste levels is envisaged to take place in the week before or the week after Easter break. Member State experts will be invited to the webinar, as soon as more information is known, while discussions will be web streamed for interested stakeholders. More information on the previous two webinars held can be found on the [Commission's food waste measurement dedicated webpage](#).

With respect to the grants to support food waste measurement activities (for both Member States and civil society actors), offered in the framework of the new [Single Market Programme](#), these are not yet available as the related legislation has been agreed in trilogue but is not yet published (expected as from mid-2021). The Commission will inform Platform members as soon as relevant information becomes available.

FoodDrinkEurope took the floor and inquired whether the Commission foresees inclusion of commitments related to food waste measurement activities by food business operators in the Code of Conduct for Responsible Business and Marketing Practices. More specifically, given that stakeholders' commitments under the CoC will be monitored using an accompanying monitoring framework, FoodDrinkEurope was interested to know whether Trade and Business Associations might be invited to provide food waste data to support the monitoring exercise. The Chair stated that there is a clear intention to include in the CoC actions that foster stakeholders' sustainability performance, such as food waste prevention and reduction actions, and that the interest in data transparency starts to gather momentum, as indicated in the introductory remarks. However, the Code of Conduct is still at early stages of development and content is not yet defined by stakeholders.

4. Conclusion and wrap up by Chair

The Chair thanked Platform members and speakers for their participation and for sharing their experience with food waste measurement and reporting activities. The Chair also encouraged Member States to indicate their interest to present their work on food waste measurement at the upcoming webinar. Finally, the Chair invited Platform members to share information on the methods and tools used by their organisation/Member State to measure and report on food waste through the [Digital Network](#) of the Platform, in order to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and best practice.