



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Food safety, sustainability and innovation

Farm to Fork

SUMMARY REPORT

EU PLATFORM ON FOOD LOSSES AND FOOD WASTE (FLW): MEETING OF CONSUMER FOOD WASTE PREVENTION SUB-GROUP

DG HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY (SANTE)

Online via WebEx

24 October 2024 (09:00-13:00 CET)

Co-chairs: Ms Cristina Lisetchi, DG SANTE, Ms Sanne Stroosnijder, Wageningen University and Research and Mr David Rogers, World Resources Action Programme

Commission: DG SANTE, Joint Research Centre (JRC)

Member States represented (13): BE, EE, ES, FR, GR, IE, IT, HR, NL, PT, SE, SI, SK

Private sector organisations (12): BEUC – The European Consumer Organisation, EDA - European Dairy Association, Euro Coop, Harokopio University, IFWC – International Food Waste Coalition, Independent Retail Europe, Matvett-Norsus-Nofima Consortium, Regal Normandie, Too Good To Go, , WUR - Wageningen University & Research, WRAP - Waste and Resources Action Programme, Zero Waste Scotland

Observer: NO

Invited experts: University of Bologna, Universitat Jaume I de Castellón

1. Welcome and adoption of the agenda

The Commission co-chair opened the meeting and introduced the agenda.

2. Raising awareness, changing behaviours

a. The Food Waste Free Week 2024 in the Netherlands, presentation by the Netherlands Nutrition Centre

The Netherlands Nutrition Centre shared key learnings and insights from the Food Waste Free Week, an annual initiative funded by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture to raise awareness about the food waste issue. Using a five-step approach, from creating a scientific framework to evaluating and optimising interventions, the campaign promotes practical actions like smart cooking and food storage. Activities range from targeted campaigns on commonly wasted foods, such as bread, to partnerships with supermarkets, municipalities, and caterers, who are encouraged to promote food waste reduction and evaluate their efforts. The initiative highlighted the success of multi-stakeholder collaboration, but acknowledged challenges in sustaining long-term behaviour change and maintaining consistent funding for food waste prevention actions.

The Commission inquired about the campaign's most effective messages. **The Netherlands Nutrition Centre** noted that messages about reducing "leftovers" resonated particularly well with consumers, as many may not self-identify as people who waste food, but rather as people who have leftovers. This framing opens conversations about mindful purchasing and proper storage. The campaign's annual costs are estimated at 400,000 euros, covering communication materials and external services. These costs did not include the expenses of participating partners.

International Food Waste Coalition asked whether local community involvement (local stores and restaurants) could help change social norms. **The Netherlands Nutrition Centre** noted that food waste is often invisible, with individuals assuming they waste less than others. Campaigns have focused on highlighting collective responsibility and positive examples. Although local community engagement has not been fully explored, raising awareness and encouraging shared accountability remain priorities. **Regal Normandie** asked whether local authorities require a distinct outreach approach. **The Netherlands Nutrition Centre** explained that around 30 municipalities participated in the Food Waste Free Week and this number grew steadily from previous editions, creating a "snowball effect" as the campaign gained visibility. Channels used to disseminate information include national and regional government communications, partnerships with waste collection services and direct outreach.

Portugal inquired about the timeline for organising the event. **The Netherlands Nutrition Centre** explained that preparations for next year's initiatives had already begun, noting the importance of engaging stakeholders early on. Typically, a kick-off meeting takes place in February to ensure commitment from stakeholders (particularly large companies and major retailers), with outreach starting at least six months before the event.

The European Commission queried how schools, with limited flexibility in their curriculums, engage in the initiative and use campaign materials. By collaborating with intermediaries, such as educational programmes like Taste Lessons, the Food Waste Free Week reaches thousands of schools. Campaign materials, such as quizzes on food waste, are shared through newsletters, enabling schools to integrate the topic into their curriculum.

Asked to explain the distinction between a "campaign" and "movement" (**JRC**), the **Netherlands Nutrition Centre** explained that the Food Waste Free Week is as a movement due to its collaborative, multi-stakeholder nature, which extends beyond media outreach to include practical tools and local events, fostering visible, community-driven change.

Germany inquired about cooperation agreements with larger companies. The **Netherlands Nutrition Centre** confirmed that participation was open to everyone, without agreements or fees. Participants simply communicate their involvement and organise activities, making participation straightforward.

b. Too good for the bin! National action week 2024 in Germany, presentation by the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture

The Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Germany provided an update on its “Too Good for the Bin” campaign, which focuses on reducing food waste through practical tools (such as the “Eat Me First” stickers) and public engagement (e.g. the XXL fridge tour). With households responsible for 60% of Germany’s food waste (6.3 million tonnes annually), the Ministry acknowledged the challenge of shifting consumer behaviour. Moving forward, the Ministry plans to expand partnerships and collaborate with universities to measure the campaign’s effectiveness in reducing household food waste.

WUR asked for more information about how the fridge tour was organised. **The Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Germany** responded that the fridge tour was organised with the support of a PR agency and local consumer organisations, who were present on site to engage with the public, offering practical advice on food storage and other waste prevention tips. Feedback on the initiative was positive. The fridge, designed to be both educational and entertaining, highlighted common food waste causes, such as older items being forgotten at the back of the fridge.

The European Commission inquired about the campaign’s main target audiences. **The Ministry** identified three consumer groups: families with children, one-person households and seniors. Families were prioritised due to the diverse preferences within households often leading to over-purchasing and waste. One-person households, particularly younger individuals with active lifestyles, often have unpredictable schedules which frequently lead to food waste.

c. Zero waste, more taste! EU campaign, presentation by the European Commission

The European Commission presented the Zero Waste More Taste campaign, launched on September 29th for the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste. In partnership with the EU-funded Life Programme Smart Chefs project, the campaign featured a recipe book showcasing

how to use commonly discarded ingredients in waste-free meals. The campaign also included ten videos showcasing recipes and a social media strategy supported by paid ads. The campaign reached 1.3 million unique users and 2.1 million video downloads within the first weekend, leading to over 5 million engagements and 12 million video plays.

Italy inquired about the total cost of the campaign and the funding sources. **The European Commission** clarified that DG SANTE allocated 350,000 EUR for the campaign, covering the production and design of the cookbook and videos by an external contractor as well as some paid advertisement. DG SANTE team and communications colleagues were involved throughout the project.

3. Successful national programmes on consumer food waste – preparation for the workshop, presentation by WUR and WRAP

WUR and WRAP presented the building blocks of a successful national strategy/programme, using examples from the UK and the Netherlands. WRAP shared insights from the UK's evidence-based "Love Food Hate Waste" campaign. WUR presented Dutch strategies on shifting consumer behaviour, using tools like refrigerator organisers or measuring cups for recipe ingredients.

WUR and WRAP presented the idea of a specialised workshop in Brussels for the Consumer food waste prevention subgroup in the first half of 2025, with the aim to support Member States in implementing impactful consumer food waste prevention actions within their territories. The workshop aims to elevate current efforts and guide Member States and other stakeholders in addressing the challenges faced when taking actions to reduce consumer food waste, both in- and out-of-home. Members were asked to reply to a few questions in Slido to gather feedback about their needs and expectations concerning the workshop:

- *Who would be the best-placed persons from your organisation/ Member State participating in this workshop? Please consider those practitioners who are implementing national actions.*
 - *Would you like to suggest any other contacts from your network, who are not Platform members?*
 - *Who funds work on consumer food waste prevention and reduction in your country?*
 - *For which type of action are you looking for funding? (e.g. information or educational campaigns, tools for households, regular monitoring of consumer food waste etc.)*
 - *Can you please share a visual example (image/ pdf) of the most recent consumer campaign / intervention in your Member State/organisation?*
 - *Would you like to receive tailor made support for your Member State to strengthen the national programme/ strategy/ plan tackling consumer food waste?*
 - *What would be the topics that you would like to deep-dive into the workshop?*
- For example:*
- *Private sector involvement*
 - *How to fund your long-term strategy*
 - *Intervention design*
 - *Impact evaluation of the national programme/ strategy/ plan*

Key takeaways from members' replies:

- Funding consumer food waste prevention actions requires a mix of government (often Ministries of Agriculture), EU (Single Market Programme, Horizon Europe and Interreg funds) and private contributions.
- There is a need for funding for various initiatives, particularly for communication campaigns, consumer education tools and monitoring systems. Many respondents emphasized the importance of tools to measure food waste and the integration of behavioural science research to effectively engage diverse audiences.
- There was a strong interest in tailored support to enhance national strategies, with participants seeking practical exchanges on campaign implementation and the optimization of strategies, intervention design and partner management to ensure effective outreach and sustained engagement in food waste reduction efforts.
- Topics of interest included securing long-term funding, increasing private sector involvement, and effective impact evaluation techniques.
- Respondents highlighted the value of learning from both successful and unsuccessful initiatives to refine future strategies.

Members were asked to provide their further feedback on the workshop following the meeting, via email and Slido.

3. Updates from EU funded projects

a. The COMBINE project, presentation by IFWC

The International Food Waste Coalition coordinates the **COMBINE** project, which kick-started in 2024 and is funded through a grant under the EU Single Market Programme. The project focuses on reducing consumer food waste in schools, homes, and workplaces, involving partners across Finland, Italy, Portugal, and France. The project aims to evaluate and implement effective intervention combinations that foster positive behavioural changes and reduce food waste. Early activities include establishing local partnerships and conducting food waste assessments to shape targeted interventions. Key challenges include consumer segmentation and accurate impact measurement.

The European Commission emphasized the importance of the Combine project's mission, noting that the project responds to a research need identified in the Compendium of the European Consumer Food Waste Forum.

Italy inquired if the project is implemented in Italy. **The International Food Waste Coalition** replied that schools were identified in the Milan region, and they are open to support a potential expansion.

The European Commission asked if Platform members could participate in the project and whether activities are still planned for the indicated Member State. **The International Food Waste Coalition** replied that while no specific collaboration plans with the group are currently in place, but they were open to exploring opportunities. They highlighted ongoing engagement with networks such as

Chorizo and ToNoWaste projects and referred to the Sustainable Food Systems Network as a tool to facilitate collaboration among EU projects.

b. The CHORIZO project, presentation by the University of Bologna

The University of Bologna presented **CHORIZO**, a Horizon Europe project launched in September 2022 to model food loss and waste behaviours. Experiments in eight hotels tested communication strategies during breakfast services to reduce food waste. Findings showed that sustainability-aware guests and business travellers generated less food waste, while smaller plates led to more waste due to over-serving. While positive public messaging reduced food waste, negative or accusatory messaging turned out to be counterproductive. On-going analyses focus on food waste in domestic settings and consumer behaviours.

The European Commission expressed appreciation for the insights on understanding behaviors and found the findings, such as the impact of plate size on waste, particularly intriguing. DG SANTE co-chair suggested exploring collaboration with the Combine project, as both initiatives address consumer food waste in catering and buffet settings, while also commending the approach of testing different combinations of actions to reduce waste. **The University of Bologna** emphasized the importance of integrating modelling approaches with real-life case studies in order to validate these models through practical applications. They noted the potential for collaboration, suggesting the model could be validated with case studies from the Chorizo project or other initiatives, such as the Combine project.

The European Commission asked which countries were involved in the Chorizo project. **The University of Bologna** stated that the involved countries include Norway, Belgium, Italy, Spain and Slovenia. They mentioned experiments conducted in Norway and case studies on household food waste based in Belgium and Spain, with additional case studies in Slovenia.

c. The ToNoWaste project, presentation by Universitat Jaume I de Castellón

The ToNoWaste project encourages all actors to use science and evidence-based tools and learnings in order to prevent food waste. The project aims to create solutions for policymakers, food businesses and consumers. Key achievements include developing a sustainability assessment framework with KPIs, implementing prevention strategies in pilot regions such as Valencia and Vienna, and advancing ICT tools for better impact assessment of actions. The project encourages collaboration with other initiatives in Halandri, Greece and the county of Hälsingland, Sweden to maximise its effectiveness.

The European Commission commended the project for linking various stages of the food supply chain to consumer behaviour and sustainability, noting the importance of social, economic, and environmental factors. The European Commission highlighted the Joint Research Center's work on an impact calculator with useful indicators. Additionally, The European Commission suggested sharing collaboration opportunities and project findings on the EU Food Loss and Waste Prevention Hub and promoting them through the monthly newsletter.

4. Conclusions and wrap up

The DG SANTE co-chair thanked participants for the lively discussion and announced the dates for the next EU Platform meetings. Members were encouraged to provide further input on the workshop on effective national actions to reduce consumer food waste that would take place in 2025, via email and through the Slido form, which remained open until 15 November. In closing, all members were asked to publish their resources and announce their activities on the [EU Food Loss and Waste Prevention Hub](#).