



Information on the assessment of barriers and opportunities in redistribution of surplus food

- preliminary findings from the questionnaire – part I

Rikke Karlsson
Policy Officer
Farm to Fork Strategy unit
Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety

Assessment on food donation practices, policy and legislation across Europe

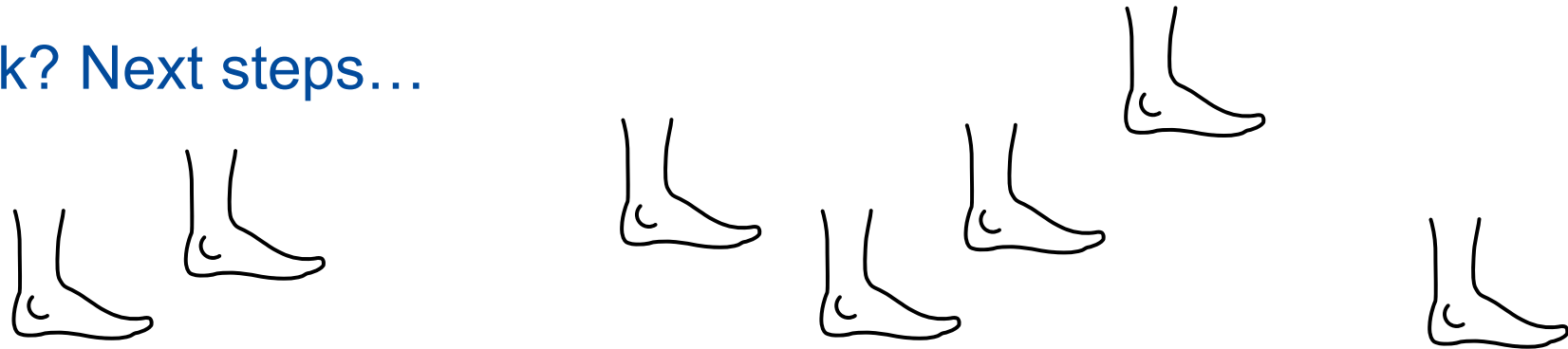
- **Objective:** to identify and assess both the barriers to food donation and opportunities to facilitate this practice as well as priority areas for action (including both regulatory and non-regulatory initiatives)
- **20 July – 20 November:** dissemination of questionnaire on challenges and opportunities to food redistribution across the EU
 - 18 Member States + Norway
 - 19 stakeholders
 - 14 FEBA Members

Set up of the questionnaire

- ❖ 6 sections: (targeted questions; governments, stakeholders)
 - ***General information, the “landscape”, strategies, VAs***
 - ***Recovering surplus from different sectors in the food supply chain***
 - Fiscal matters; VAT, Tax exemptions
 - Marketing standards on Fruit & Vegetables
 - Structural funds; ESF+, FEAD, REACT
 - Food safety; hygiene, traceability,
 - Labelling, consumer information

Objective of today's discussion:

- Presentation of **general findings**
- Presentation of the **barriers and opportunities** of recovering surplus food from actors in the food supply chain
- Discussion of findings
- Homework? Next steps...



Redistribution landscape

- ❖ All countries have actors involved in donating and recovering surplus food
- ❖ The food redistribution landscape in EU includes:
 - national/regional/local food bank, other redistribution organisations or business operators, auctions of primary producers, charity organizations, and intermediaries through digital platforms, such as apps and websites
- ❖ Knowledge of amounts saved through donation is sparse amongst countries (however food banks know...)
- ❖ Barriers identified relate both to practicalities, logistics, efforts and awareness
- ❖ Not enough opportunities have been identified – why



Authorities, the role and their tasks

- ❖ What is the role of relevant ministries, competent authorities (including regional and local levels)? How do they collaborate with each other or with food banks and other redistribution organisations?
- Competent authorities on food safety – control and guidance, issue national orders (BE, BG, DK, NO, IE, LV)
- Ministries – example from SK – issue of national orders and/or guidance on VAT exemptions
- National level – setting up of IT systems to connect donors and receivers (AU, PT) or giving financial support to IT systems (EI)
- One country – at ministry level – publishes lists of receiving operators (RO) or approves the receiving operators by issuing ministerial decree or certificate (FR and BG)
- Support by agricultural ministries in co-financing technical equipment (SI)
- Some countries points specifically to government bodies responsible for managing EFS+ funds (EE, ES, CZ?, FR)

Food redistribution as part of national strategy/ roadmap/ Food Waste Prevention Programme

- ❖ According to Article 9 (1) (h), in the **Waste Framework Directive**, Member States must include measures (in their food waste prevention programmes) that *encourage food donation and other redistribution for human consumption, prioritising human use over animal feed and the reprocessing into non-food products*;
- **Food Waste Prevention Programme** (or *national policies/ roadmaps*): (15 countries) AU, BE, BU, CZ, DE, EE, FI, FR, HR, IE, LV, PO, RO, SK, and NO.
- **Example from IT:** “*The Good Samaritan Law regulates the management and distribution of food surplus. In recent years, the amended law further facilitated food and pharmaceutical surplus redistribution as social solidarity actions by simplifying bureaucracy, tax deductions, and subsidies for public or private donors.*”

Voluntary agreements including measures on food redistribution

- ❖ Countries with voluntary agreements in place, with measures on food redistribution: AU, DE, EE, EI, HR, NO
 - Obligations for FBOs to cooperate with redistribution
 - Measures to support/facilitate donations of surplus food
- ❖ Other ways to facilitate besides VAs: DK (“One\Third), SE, FR
- ❖ In developing stages: BG

Specific objectives and/or targets defined for food donation

- ❖ **No countries** have specific objectives/targets on amounts of recovered surplus food
- ❖ Stakeholders: Les Restau du Cœur in Belgium has a target to increase donations by 30%.

Legislative measures and/or obligations to donate


- ❖ Obligations to donate (imposed on various parts of the food supply chain, mainly retailers: CZ, SK, FR, PO)
- ❖ Obligations to report on amounts of donated food: AU,
- ❖ Obligations to donate when safe and with reasonable cost: FI

Voluntary reporting to EU on donated amounts

- ❖ According to the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/2000, Member States *may* report on the amounts of food redistributed for human consumption, on a voluntary basis.
- ❖ *Countries* who monitor the quantities of donated food in view of reporting these data to the Commission or for national use: **1**
 - Example - France: 92.000 tons redistributed from processing, retail and food services
- ❖ *Food banks* have data via FEBA: AU, CZ, EE, DE, HU, IT, NL, PL, RO and SL.
- ❖ *Stakeholders*: “Data of donated food is monitored individually by organisations, as this is part of business monitoring standards. Sometimes, national retail associations send yearly questionnaire to their members requesting data on the number of donations and food waste.” (EuroCommerce)

Question: *Are data from individual food banks shared with national authorities? Could or should these data be included in MS policy making? Are they only useful for food banks?*

New trends and practices

- ❖ Digital tools and networks
- ❖ New business models, - apps, platforms, *TooGoodToGo*, *Motatos*, *Munch*, *Olio*, facebook groups, “FoodCloud” in collaborations with apps
- ❖ Webpages informing of where to find surplus food, or how to donate
- ❖ Community fridges, “food cupboards”, food recycling cabinets on solar energy
- ❖ Social restaurants 

Types of foodstuffs recovered from the food supply chain

Primary Production:	Fruit and vegetables, potatoes, eggs
Processing and manufacturing:	Unsold seasonal products, products with faulty labelling, broken/damaged packaging, products with long durability, dry food products and yoghurt
Retail and other distribution:	Dairy products, salads, prepared meals, vegetables, frozen products
Food services and hospitality:	Sandwiches, soups

Barriers – primary producers

- Finding partners, little knowledge amongst PPs (BE,
- Organising transportation to/from the farm (BE,
- Finding workers/volunteers to collect in the field (BE,
- Washing the products etc. (BE)
- Limited knowledge of IT system available/ models (CZ)
- Products not suitable for donation (EE)
- Seasonal donations, depending on harvest (FI)
- Tax exemptions for donation does not include farmers (FR)
- Lack of funding, awareness for possibility to donate, as it is easier to give to animals, or for biogas generation.
- “Nature of products - fresh fruit more difficult to handle/store
- “Ministries should do more” (as noted by a food bank)

“A backlash from farmers for whom the donation is costly and time consuming, so the produce is kept in soil or ploughed in it as fertilizer. Alternatively used for biogas station or for animal feed” (SK)

“The crops are not aesthetically pleasing – too small, too big, too crooked, badly cut or have an unsuitable colour often remain in the field to be plowed. Due to these properties, farmers are not able to sell these crops to the retail chains.” (CZ)

Opportunities – primary producers

- Charter for ‘glanage solidaire’ in Wallonia” (BE),
- “A potential to explore” (CZ)
- Local initiatives between food banks and farmers (CZ)
- *“Agricultural donations are growing, thanks to Solaal that facilitates the link between producers and organisations” (FR).*
- 5% of food received from Bulgarian Food Bank is donated from the primary sector in 2022.
- Contact farmer organisations, not individual farmers

Discussion – findings from primary production

- What are your views on these findings? What is your perspective, do you see other barriers or opportunities?
- Do you agree that these are barriers?
- How would you address the practical barriers for recovering surplus food from this sector?

Barriers – processing and manufacturing

- Limited awareness of the Czech model for VAT relief (CZ)
- Donations due to e.g. wrong labelling can be very large ones and this can cause some obstacles for receiver/charity organizations (FI)
- Transportation and cost of identifying surplus food available across the industry and getting this to redistribution in a timely manner (EI, BE)
- Duration - redistribute the food products to beneficiaries before the expiration date (RO)
- “*Not common at all*”. Difficulties with the logistics and transports (SE)
- Excise duties for alcohol free drinks and coffee are to be paid when donating encouraging destruction over donation (BE)
- Packaging charges on drinks are to be paid when donating (BE)
- Finding partners
- Lack of staff
- Logistic system – donation not introduced as a possibility
- Competition from other players on market, e.g. intermediary apps/platforms buying surplus at cheap prices

Opportunities – processing and manufacturing

- Use media campaigns
- Voluntary agreements with big companies,
- Tax incentives
- Work together with freight forwarders and other logistics operations - skips the need for food banks own infrastructure
- Raise awareness
- Run campaigns addressing large producers

“Donations from this segment are not compulsory, they are voluntary, so we try to emphasise the benefits of donating for both business and society.” CZ food bank

*“With some big companies, it took **12 years of lobbying** from our side before they started donating” – a food bank*

Discussion – findings from processing and manufacturing

- What are your views on these findings? What is your perspective, do you see other barriers or opportunities?
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Barriers – food services and hospitality

- Requires a **close cooperation** between the donor and the receiver.
- The rules are **clear but strict** (only unused quantities in the kitchen, nothing what was already presented for self-service caterings or buffets).
- The **nature of food** from this sector (no packaging, already offered in self-service) measures to reduce food waste starting with the guests themselves (as take-away with specific wrapping/boxes) or specialised charity organisations which are able to manage it in due time.
- Associated **heavy logistics** (accessibility problems for collection vehicles in urban areas)
- Smaller portions, small quantities, **low volumes**
- Ready prepared meals can only be donated “on the same day”, or “within 3 hours”, short donation time frame e.g. warm meals (**food safety**)
- Finding partners
- Ensuring good packaging for safe redistribution
- Storage for surplus meals is expensive
- Logistics, lack of workforce
- Not common, particularly not in the public sector
- Poor **predictability**

Opportunities – food services and hospitality

- See Investment into specific technology equipment (vacuumed packed portions, cooled).
- New legislation allowing cooling or freezing of hot dishes within the time limit set for their serving.
- *“The advantages of catering donations are that they are of excellent quality and ideal for donations to beneficiaries with no meal preparation facilities, and for associations that do not serve” (FR).*
- ❖ Examples of good practices:
 - Panier Solidaire’s experience with a hospital’s mass catering (BE)
 - NGO Zachraň jídlo (Save Food) connecting public catering with social sector as recipient of surplus meals (HU)
 - Nesnězeno (Not Eaten), a mobile application connecting restaurants with potential customers of unsold and safe meals (HU, CZ)
 - ResQ Club, an application facilitating the sale of surplus from horeca sector (FI)
 - Project „Zachraň oběd“ (<https://zachranobed.cz/>).

Discussion – food services and hospitality

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Barriers – retail and other distribution

- Standard, but declining (improved warehouse facilities, planning, accepting to sell incomplete assortments of perishable products)
- Competition I: Traders buy surplus at cheap prices to resell at lower prices rather than for food aid
- Competition II: Between private food waste digital platforms and food aid organisations, receiving “trash”...
- Competition III: Big, importing trade companies prefer to send surplus for bioenergy use rather than donation
- Finding partners (**franchises are less willing** to donate)
- Organising donation in stores (personnel, space)
- **Complexity of procedures** that have to be established for donation
- Possibility to donate from school canteens (however not used in practice due to **HACCP/food safety requirements**)
- Certain types of foods are not donated due to **managers understanding of the law** and **lack of willingness**
- **Disadvantages:** declining donations (quantity and quality), offers not specifically oriented towards sustainable and local purchases, cumbersome logistics for associations, **many ultra-processed products** (FR)

Opportunities – retail and other distribution

- Import taxes on donated fruits and vegetables would be the driver against traders sending surplus for bioenergy (BE)
- Good practices: written **partnership** agreement
- **Contact person** in store who manage the surpluses...
- **Weekly frequencies** are more practical for everyone with an allocated time and day.
- Good **description** of the products and **expiry date** to react faster.
- **Regular feedback** between donator and organizations
- Being part of a VA
- **Predictability** - daily donations, ease of implementation, diversity of donated products, proximity and volumes (FR)

Discussion – retail and other distribution

- What are your views on these findings? What is your perspective, do you see other barriers or opportunities?
- Do you agree that these are barriers?
- How would you address the practical barriers for recovering surplus food from this sector?

Next steps

Next meeting in the subgroup Q1 2024, 2-3 hours, virtual

- **Objective:** To present preliminary findings on legal or administrative barriers (fiscal matters; marketing standards, use of structural funds; ESF+, FEAD, REACT, food safety; and consumer information).
- Participants **homework** - consider if you would like to present identified barrier(s)
- **SANTE homework** - invite SANTE and AGRI colleagues to explain legislation identified as barriers

Thank you



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