



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)

5th meeting

Brussels, 99-101 Rue Belliard (Jacques Delors building), JDE 52

6 December 2018 – From 9:30 to 18:00

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

Commission: Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis, Marco Valletta, Vilija Sysaitė (CAB); **DG SANTE; DG AGRI; DG RTD; DG EMPL; DG MARE; DG TAXUD; DG GROW; JRC**

Invited speakers:

Hilke Bos-Brouwers – Wageningen University and Research; Saskia Nuijten – European Institute of Innovation and Technology Food (EIT Food); Professor Peter Rudahl Jensen – Technical University of Denmark.

Member States represented (24):

AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, FI, HR, HU, IE, IT, LU, LV, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, UK.

Private sector organisations (30):

AIBI: International Association of Plant Bakers AISBL; BEUC: The European Consumer Organisation; BOROUME – "We Can"; COGECA: European Agri-Cooperatives; COPA: European Farmers; 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; FOODSERVICEEUROPE; FoodWIN (Food Waste Innovation Network); FRESHFEL: European Fresh Produce Association; HCWH Europe: Health Care Without Harm; HFBA: Hungarian Food Bank Association; HOTREC: Hospitality Europe; IATA: International Air Transport Association; INDEPENDENT RETAIL EUROPE; LES RESTAURANTS DU COEUR; RISE RESEARCH INSTITUTES OF SWEDEN AB; STOP WASTING FOOD; SLOW FOOD; WAGENINGEN University & Research; WRAP: Waste and Resource Action Programme; ZERO WASTE SCOTLAND.

Public entities:

EESC - European Economic and Social Committee, COR – European Committee of the Regions; OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; FAO – Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.

Observers:

EFTA: Norway; **Food SCP Roundtable:** European Food Sustainable Consumption and Production Round Table Secretariat.

1. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME TO PARTICIPANTS

The Chair welcomed participants to the 5th meeting of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste. She extended her thanks to the Committee of the Regions for hosting the meeting and reminded participants of the interpretation services available and the web streaming of the event.

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; she further highlighted the afternoon sessions dedicated to EU innovation and research programmes and information sharing by members.

2. ACCELERATING OUR PROGRESS TOWARDS SDG 12.3 - PRESENTATION BY COMMISSIONER VYTENIS ANDRIUKAITIS, HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Commissioner Andriukaitis took stock of the progress made towards EU's commitment to halve food waste by 2030, through the lens of Champions 12.3 'target, measure, act' strategy and findings from the coalition's 2018 global progress report¹. He also emphasised the importance of innovation in strengthening sustainability of the food supply chain and illustrated how EU research and innovation programmes can support actors in implementing change.

EUROCOMMERCE and FEBA thanked the Commissioner for setting up the Platform and facilitating dialogue between actors across the food supply chain and public authorities. COPA highlighted the need to make consumers aware of the value of food and advocated for creating an EU day against food waste and setting up information campaigns. Commissioner Andriukaitis agreed a symbolic day would help raise awareness on the issue and explained that nowadays citizens have lost connection with agriculture and food production. FAO announced ongoing discussions at UN level to establish an International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste as well as an International Year of Fruits and Vegetables in 2021.

FEEDBACK GLOBAL stressed the need to set targets that cover food losses in the agricultural sector, pointing out that the current draft EU measurement methodology does not include such losses. Commissioner Andriukaitis explained that food waste in Europe was generated most at consumer level and that the proposed methodology was based on the revised Waste Framework Directive as agreed and adopted by the Council and the European Parliament. Nevertheless, he highlighted that food losses would be further discussed and addressed, beyond the boundaries of the proposed methodology, as part of the work of this Platform.

¹ <https://champions123.org/2018-progress-report/>

In answer to WRAP's question on the role of the European Commission in combatting food losses and food waste on the global stage, Commissioner Andriukaitis referred to the Commission's proposed strategy to act against climate change and stressed the need to create a network of networks connecting the different actors and targets set out in the global sustainability agenda. STOP WASTING FOOD underlined the issue of lack of funding, proposing the establishment of a global foundation to finance projects to fight food waste across the world. Commissioner Andriukaitis explained that the EU was using different financial instruments to address food waste and had already established strong collaboration with relevant international institutions.

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 work of the Platform and its sub-groups, the recent webinar on EU actions organised in the context of G7, including future perspectives for the Platform. The Chair thanked Platform members for their active involvement and contributions, which helped offer global visibility to the Commission's work in preventing food losses and food waste.

SLOW FOOD inquired about the possibility to remove 'Best before' dates in order to prevent food waste while the Commission pointed to findings that suggest it would be better to clarify the two concepts (i.e. 'use by' and 'best before'). Further consideration to these aspects would be given in the context of the work of the 'date marking' sub-group. FOODDRINKEUROPE asked for clarifications concerning the work of the Task force on date marking to gather recommendations for action against food waste. The Commission explained that the Task force was working on the preparation of technical and scientific guidance to clarify relevant EU legislation in order to promote more consistent date marking practices. In addition, the Commission sounded the task force for possible input on date marking for the recommendations for action in food waste prevention, to be proposed by the Platform in 2019. In closing, the Chair highlighted the importance of data as a driver for effective food waste prevention action.

4. UPDATE ON FOOD WASTE MONITORING (EU/GLOBAL) – PRESENTATION BY THE COMMISSION WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CAROLA FABI, FAO

The Commission presented an overview of key elements of the delegated act on food waste measurement, with a focus on definition, scope and methods, as well as expected outcomes and next steps in development of monitoring legislation. The Commission announced a meeting of the sub-group on food waste measurement to take place early 2019, with a focus on quantifying food losses on farm level – a topic that is outside of the scope of the EU Waste Framework Directive.

FAO offered an update on the indicators and measurement methodologies for SDG 12.3 targets: the Food Loss Index (FLI) led by FAO and the Food Waste Index (FWI) led by UN Environment. While the FLI had already been approved and was ready to be employed, the FWI is still categorised as Tier 3 i.e. 'internationally agreed methodology not yet developed and data largely unavailable'². In the case of the latter, UN proposed using proxy variables - hence the two possible models to estimate food waste: by using the mass balance approach (looking at the food supply chain and consumption, estimating what is consumed and what is

² <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6919e.pdf>, page 6

discarded) or composition analysis of municipal waste fractions that are later on scaled up for the whole country. Furthermore, FAO reassured Platform members that despite the different terminologies in the definitions for food losses and food waste used by UN and the EU, in practice the scope of measurement is the same.

OECD endorsed the idea of addressing measurement of food losses at farm level at a future sub-group meeting and expressed support for aligning methodologies developed by FAO and the EU. FEEDBACK GLOBAL also welcomed the future subgroup meeting and inquired about means of including voluntary reporting on food losses under the appropriate EU policies and legislative instruments (e.g. Waste Framework Directive, Common Agricultural Policy). The Chair reiterated the EU's commitment to reduce food losses under the SDG 12.3 Target, that basic data were lacking and expressed confidence that this issue would be addressed in future in the appropriate policy framework. COPA highlighted the scope of the measurement methodology as to reduce food waste rather than food losses and pointed to external factors, beyond the responsibility of farmers, which influence agricultural production. IT reiterated the need to quantify surplus and saving of food resources including side-streams, and announced it was gathering data on the inedible parts of foods going to waste.

5. REDISTRIBUTION OF SURPLUS FOOD: EXAMPLES OF PRACTICES IN THE MEMBER STATES - PRESENTATION BY THE COMMISSION

The Commission recalled the aim of the draft document prepared by Ecorys/Wageningen on behalf of the EU Platform on FLW, as to illustrate how Member States implement EU rules to facilitate food donation in practice. National competent authorities were asked to review and validate the content of the draft document in writing, by 18 January 2019. It was explained that practices that might be in contradiction with EU legislation had been removed, pending clarification from Member States (e.g. freezing of food of animal origin for food donation purposes). Members were encouraged to address questions to the various Commission services representatives present at the meeting.

An official from DG SANTE's Food Hygiene Unit offered an update on the guidance to be developed by the Commission following the publication of the second EFSA opinion on simplified food safety management systems for certain categories of retailers who wish to donate food³. The future guidance would incorporate both EFSA opinions on hazard analysis processes for smaller retailers (from 2017⁴ and 2018, respectively) with annexes for sectoral practices, while taking into account Member States' experiences from the field.

FEBA pointed out that some countries have updated national guidelines to address new developments such as the safe redistribution of cooked food and inquired whether the future Commission guidance, integrating recommendations from the two EFSA opinions, would also address this aspect. The Commission explained that such a suggestion could be taken up, together with any other relevant issues, following further discussions with relevant national competent authorities and stakeholders in the field.

³ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/181107>

⁴ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/170302>

6. EU PILOT PROJECT ON FOOD REDISTRIBUTION – PRESENTATION BY DR. HILKE BOS-BROUWERS, PROJECT COORDINATOR, WAGENINGEN UR

The presentation included an overview of the outcomes of Task 1 (overview of policy and regulatory frameworks for food redistribution in Member States), an outline of the ongoing work on Task 2 (analysis of operational frameworks), as well as plans for carrying out Tasks 3 and 4 (dissemination in Member States of the EU guidelines on food donation and stakeholder engagement activities, and assessment of the efficiency respectively). The Platform will be actively involved in communications activities to be carried out throughout 2019.

It was explained that the grey areas from the comparative analysis tables shown in the presentation indicated existing information gaps. Members were encouraged to identify the missing information from their respective countries and get in touch with the project team in order to update the charts.

FI inquired whether the analysis could indicate the most favourable or recommended food redistribution regulatory and policy tools. The contractor clarified that the study focussed on national measures, many of which did not address food donation in particular, but rather as part of a wider array of complementary actions (e.g. food use hierarchy). The research highlighted the importance of national strategies and joint agenda setting; voluntary agreements and communication strategies have been highlighted as tools that could potentially encourage action by key players. On awareness campaigns promoting food redistribution, WRAP raised a series of questions about their target audience, the message and the link to food waste prevention.

EESC pointed to an ongoing discussion in Italy on food surplus utilised for anaerobic digestion, emphasizing that, in line with the food use hierarchy, safe and edible food should not be utilised for energy production, but rather prioritised for human consumption. FEEDBACK GLOBAL expressed interest in identifying national measures that support food redistribution in line with the food use hierarchy.

STOP WASTING FOOD required further information on an ongoing trend present in DK: shared community meals coordinated through social media. It was explained that the scope of the EU guidelines did not cover such private donor initiatives, however such practices would need to be acknowledged and their legal compliance checked. In response to a question from FOODCLOUD as to whether any new, future opportunities had been identified for food redistribution, Wageningen explained that the pilot project does not focus on identifying the biggest opportunities to redistribute surplus food but rather gives an overall mapping of food redistribution activities across Member States. Another area of interest is identifying sources of fresh produce surplus, which could be then considered in the context of public procurement for school meals, for instance (FEEDBACK GLOBAL).

The Chair asked Member States to help fill in the information gaps from the report and in light of the barriers identified under Task 1 requested Member States to take further action to facilitate food donations and the removal of administrative/legal barriers to the redistribution process (*eg* facilitating redistribution of food past the “best before” date, in line with the EU regulatory framework). The Chair also mentioned a European petition calling for EU level legislation obliging retailers to donate surplus foods, similar to the French law, and highlighted the importance of also considering the impact of voluntary initiatives in facilitating food donation.

7. EIT FOOD: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF WORK RELATED TO FOOD WASTE – PRESENTATION BY MS. SASKIA NUIJTEN, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATION, EIT FOOD

The presentation kicked off with information about the EIT Knowledge and Innovation Community on Food and its strategic objectives, followed by an overview of their main actions focussed on food waste prevention (Food Ambassadors Programme, Food Waste Challenge, Consumer Flagship Initiatives *etc*).

Through the Rising Food Stars programme, EIT Food created a European community of start-ups and small enterprises tackling agrifood challenges of the food supply chain, whose ideas are supported and scaled up by bigger partners in the field. The beneficiaries of the project are selected on a regular basis through open calls for application. In reply to a query from FoodWin, Saskia Nuijten informed that the scope of the Rising Food Stars programme was not only focussed on food waste prevention but agri-food innovation more generally (*eg* alternate protein sources). WAGENINGEN UR announced a future meeting with EIT in order to identify collaboration opportunities with the REFRESH project.

WRAP inquired about insights on how cultural factors influence food waste-related behaviours across the EU. The EIT representative expressed interest in the field and highlighted the need for further research on the issue, which could support the creation of more efficient consumer campaigns.

8. FOOD2030: A POLICY FRAMEWORK TO FUTURE-PROOF OUR FOOD SYSTEMS – PRESENTATION BY THE COMMISSION

The European Commission presented an overview of the FOOD2030 research and innovation policy framework, tackling the challenges of the food supply chain by focussing on four priorities (nutrition, climate, circularity and innovation). Further information was offered on funding opportunities and ongoing food waste-related projects under Horizon 2020, as well as possible orientations in Horizon Europe.

In reply to SLOWFOOD's inquiry, the Commission official from the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD) confirmed agroecology as an area of interest and announced further collaboration in the field with the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI). Moreover, DG RTD was also cooperating with other relevant Directorates-General of the European Commission. Members were encouraged to register for the [Fit4FOOD2030 Engagement Platform](#) in order to stay up to date with the latest events and activities of FOOD2030, and join the stakeholder network offering regular input that shaped the priorities of the programme.

HFBA pointed to resource barriers in identifying funding options in the complex EU landscape and requested a roadmap to help pinpoint such opportunities. The Commission acknowledged the difficulties above and recommended members to reach out to their national contact points for further assistance, as well as to collaborate with partners who share similar interests. The EU Platform on FLW also aims to facilitate information sharing by inviting Commission representatives from relevant programmes (LIFE, FOOD2030 *etc.*) to participate in Platform meetings and present possible funding opportunities. Members will be kept up to date via the [Digital Network](#)'s newsletter, while the Commission will look into ways to streamline the information sharing process.

Later in the meeting, a representative of the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME) of the European Commission announced a new call opening under the LIFE programme in March 2019 and invited Platform members to apply.

9. UPDATE FROM DENMARK ON RECENT FOOD WASTE PREVENTION INITIATIVES – PRESENTATION BY MS. ZANNE DITTLAU, MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FOOD, DK

The speaker offered a brief update on the recent Danish initiatives to prevent food waste: the 2018 World Food Summit, part of the ‘Better Food for More People’ global initiative, as well as the establishment of a think tank to enhance cooperation between actors across the food supply chain and help shape national policies to tackle food waste.

10. CONTRIBUTIONS FROM INDUSTRIAL SIDE STREAMS TO FUTURE PROTEIN SOURCES – PRESENTATION BY PETER RUDAHL JENSEN, PROFESSOR, Ph. D, TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF DENMARK

The presentation highlighted ongoing research and innovation projects from DK, aiming to valorise production side streams (e.g. from breweries, dairies) in order to create valuable products and possible future protein sources. On the environmental impact of green mass biorefining (WRAP), the speaker explained that the process did not involve the use of heat, making it considerably energy efficient. COPA inquired about the energy impacts of food production methods that respect the natural cycles of the environment as compared to the current food production system. FEEDBACK GLOBAL referred to the high environmental impact of meat and dairy production and called for the introduction of taxes on meat consumption and a target to reduce the latter by 50%. DK argued the tax would affect the most vulnerable and highlighted importance of finding alternative products to replace meat proteins.

In reply to a question received from the Commission, Professor Jensen explained that the nutritional quality of proteins was not affected when utilising low temperature processing techniques.

In regard to barriers to the further development and scale up of such practices (EFFPA, Commission), DK pointed out that the issue often stemmed from a lack of communication between public authorities and the private sector, in particular concerning what is possible within the current regulatory framework. Public-private partnerships were thus identified as an important solution to support innovative production techniques. Professor Jensen also referred to the importance of cooperation between research and industry, which was sometimes limited by the conservatism of the industry to maintain traditional food production techniques. COPA asked about the possibility of transferring the innovative processes to the agricultural sector and adapting them to a smaller scale (e.g. a farm). It was explained that this could be done through central biorefining facilities and processing units in order to ensure the practice would be economically viable.

11. LAUNCH OF FOOD WASTE ATLAS; UK FOOD WASTE REDUCTION ROADMAP – PRESENTATION BY DR. RICHARD SWANNELL, DIRECTOR, WRAP GLOBAL

[The Food Waste Reduction Roadmap](#) is based on the [Champions 12.3](#) approach to ‘target, measure, act’, and gathers top companies across the UK food supply chain which have

committed to measure and report on their food waste. WRAP identified measurement as being a strong incentive for companies to prevent and reduce food waste in their operations.

[The Food Waste Atlas](#) is a free online resource bringing together global food loss and waste data, as reported by companies, academia and governments. The tool allows tracking data across food types, sector of the supply chain and geographical location. The reporting of data can be done on an anonymous basis; nevertheless, WRAP reported a tendency for companies to share their food waste data as best practice.

FEEDBACK GLOBAL welcomed the creation of the Food Waste Atlas and appreciated the inclusion of data across the whole food supply chain. FEBA inquired about a possible collaboration to help gather data on the food redistribution sector and WRAP expressed interest to collect such information, along with city level data.

For businesses operating on a smaller scale (FOODWIN), WRAP has developed resources (e.g. webinars, guidance) and set up working groups on sub-sectors of the food supply chain in order to offer support in measuring their food waste.

As for future steps (FOODCLOUD), WRAP explained the focus of the organisation was on supporting development of public-private partnerships within and outside the EU.

12. CONCLUSIONS AND WRAP-UP BY THE CHAIR

The Chair thanked members for the open discussion, reflecting the diversity of interests and experience and maturity of the Platform. She then emphasised measurement as a powerful driver for change and highlighted the Commission's commitment to deliver on the legal obligations set down in the revised Waste Framework Directive, following which food losses would be addressed. In this regard, she referred to a future meeting of the food waste measurement subgroup dedicated to this issue.

Before closing the meeting, the Chair underlined immediate actions to take. Members were asked to review and validate the Platform document illustrating Member States' practices in food redistribution and the list of relevant national guidelines by 18 January 2019. The Commission would consider ways to further facilitate information exchange on innovation and research opportunities for Platform members as well as channelling input of the Platform concerning future deployment of EU research. Finally yet importantly, the Chair reminded all members of their commitment to a "zero waste Christmas" as announced by Commissioner Andriukaitis and announced that the next plenary meeting of the Platform would take place on 6 May 2019.