

Recommendations for Action in Food Waste Prevention

Developed by the EU Platform
on Food Losses and Food Waste

12 December 2019



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EC – European Commission

EU – European Union

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organisation

KPI – Key Performance Indicator

NGO – Non-governmental organisation

SDG – Sustainable Development Goal

SMART objective – Specific, measurable, assignable, realistic, time-related

SME – Small and medium-sized enterprise

DISCLAIMER

The 'key recommendations for action' are an output of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste.

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EDITORIAL

As Chair of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste, I am extremely pleased to announce this important publication which reflects the contribution, knowledge and experience of some 70 organisations including international and EU institutions, experts from the EU Member States and private sector organisations from farm to fork, as well as research institutes and universities, food banks, consumer-, environmental and other non-governmental organisations.

The EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste is a unique forum bringing together key actors representing both public and private interests in order to provide advice to all actors on measures needed to prevent and reduce food waste (including EU-wide actions), facilitate sharing of best practice and evaluate progress made over time.

From its very first meeting, members of the EU Platform expressed a very clear commitment to action, and to ensuring that its work and deliberations would make a difference and be of value in mobilising all players to take concrete steps to achieve the global food loss and waste reduction targets. They called for the establishment of a sub-group dedicated to 'action and implementation' and tasked this group with the establishment of the recommendations for action presented in this document.

Through the process of determining key recommendations for action, we have once again been confronted with the lack of an appropriate evidence base, and notably insufficient data on food loss and waste levels, needed to inform and guide effective interventions. The Joint Research Centre's report¹, assessing the effectiveness of food waste prevention initiatives, highlights these data gaps as well as the need to set clear objectives and design a common evaluation framework allowing actors to quantify the economic, environmental and social impacts of food waste prevention.

While EU action carried out as part of the 2015 Circular Economy Action Plan has focussed on prevention of food waste, in line with EU waste legislation, the Platform's mandate addresses both food loss and food waste prevention, as called for by the global Sustainable Development Target 12.3. The introduction of EU-wide monitoring and reporting of food waste levels, based on a common EU food waste measurement methodology, is a critical step which will allow the establishment of an EU baseline by 2023 and consideration of target setting in order to drive further action.

As regards food losses, the Commission will further discuss with the Platform the feasibility and technical possibility of monitoring food losses and/or resource flows in agri-food industries in the EU. In order to help inform this work, a scoping study on food losses would be a necessary first step in order to identify amounts, hotspots and opportunities for action, including valorisation of resources from primary production.

As the Commission embarks on the elaboration of a 'Farm to Fork' Strategy for sustainable food along the whole value chain, the prevention of food loss and waste will be ever-more critical. The contribution of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste lays down an important foundation for the future strategy.

Sabine Jülicher
*Chair of the EU Platform
 on Food Losses
 and Food Waste*



1 <https://eplca.jrc.ec.europa.eu/FoodSystem.html>

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INTRODUCTION

The EU and its Member States are committed to meeting the food loss and waste reduction targets adopted by the United Nations General Assembly as part of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. In order to support achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Target 12.3 on food loss and waste and maximise the contribution of all actors, the Commission established, in 2016, a multi-stakeholder platform dedicated to food loss and waste prevention.

Spearheaded by the Platform's sub-group on 'action and implementation,' the recommendations of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste were developed through a wide consultation process involving all of its members².

In line with the integrated, holistic approach needed to tackle food waste without compromising food safety, the recommendations of the EU Platform address action required at each stage of the food supply chain (including food redistribution) and involving all key players from the public and private sectors.

The primary focus of food waste prevention should be to act at the source by limiting the generation of surplus food at each stage of the food supply chain (i.e. production, processing, distribution and consumption) and, if such surplus arises, to recover them and ensure the highest value use of food resources, in line with the waste prevention hierarchy. All recommendations put forward in this document follow this guiding principle and aim to help actors in implementing it in practice.

The recommendations are forward-looking and include a set of horizontal or 'cross-cutting' recommendations, which are common across various stages of the food value chain, often involve multiple actors and are needed to achieve the global food loss and waste targets (SDG Target 12.3). Some of these focus on specific hotspots, such as food waste at the level of consumers, which requires further consideration, research and focussed action by all players concerned.

The recommendations are addressed to both public and private entities, suggesting relevant actions for specific players and, importantly, calling for cooperation amongst the different actors concerned. Whilst the recommendations are not an exhaustive list of all that can and should be done to prevent food losses and food waste, they provide important direction for all players including EU citizens themselves.

2 The key recommendations for action of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste were prepared on the basis of recommendations put forward by rapporteurs assigned to the different stages of the food supply chain and which can be found here https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/food_waste/eu_actions/action-implementation_en

CROSS-CUTTING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Who?

What/How?

National public authorities in cooperation with civil society actors

■ **Develop national strategies for preventing and reducing food loss and waste, in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 12.3.**

All Member States should develop a national strategy and roadmap/action plan to prevent and reduce food loss and waste, based on the ‘target, measure, act’³ approach and involving all key players⁴. National public-private partnerships to achieve food waste reductions at specific stages of the food supply chain could be established building on success of such efforts in Denmark, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Norway, as well as pilot projects carried out in Germany, Hungary and Spain. The Platform recommends that the EU’s progress as regards the 2016 Council conclusions on food loss and waste⁵ be reviewed in 2020 under the German Presidency.

European and national public authorities, including regional and local level with support from research community

■ **Integrate food loss and waste reduction as part of food policy strategies and programmes**

Food loss and waste programmes will have an impact on a number of other areas of food policy, including agricultural production, health/nutrition and food safety. Food loss and waste programmes should be integrated with EU and national food policies to ensure that positive impacts can be achieved across multiple outcomes (e.g. waste prevention and health) and that any trade-offs are managed. This should be supported by policy research to help understand these interactions, including the impact of food loss and waste prevention on agricultural production and land use.

For example, the effective transposition and implementation of the Unfair Trading Practices Directive⁶ can address practices contributing to food waste generation in the food supply chain, in particular within primary production.

European and national public authorities, including regional and local level

■ **Integrate food loss and waste reduction as part of climate action strategies and programmes**

Significant reduction of food loss and waste is essential for mitigating climate change and keeping global temperatures at safe levels. The EU is asked to consider inclusion of food loss and waste reductions as part of the Nationally Determined Contributions (to be revised in 2020). Member States and public authorities should integrate food loss and waste reduction as part of their climate action strategies (e.g. National Energy and Climate Plans). City and regional coalitions can also integrate food loss and waste prevention as part of sustainable food strategies and climate action plans.

Member States in cooperation with civil society actors, EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste

■ **Scale up food loss and waste prevention action in the food supply chain**

Multi-stakeholder platforms should be created at national level to spread knowledge, find solutions and join up efforts to food waste prevention.

Identify and scale-up initiatives that have had the most impact on food waste prevention. Promote cross-sectoral cooperation (e.g. food redistribution networks integrating farmers and their cooperatives).

Launch an ‘EU Food Loss and Waste Fighters’ programme whereby public and private entities commit to reduce food loss and halve food waste in their operations and programmes by 50% by 2030.

3 The [Champions 12.3 coalition puts](https://champions123.org/2019-progress-report/) forward a three-step approach for reducing food loss and waste: target, measure, and act and reports annually on progress made towards SDG Target 12.3. <https://champions123.org/2019-progress-report/>

4 For example, the following Member States have implemented such programmes: Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom. —By 5 July 2020, Member States should integrate food waste prevention programmes in national waste prevention programmes, as required by EU waste legislation (Directive (EU) 2018/851 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 May 2018 amending Directive 2008/98/EC on waste). It shall be noted, that Norway also has such a programme in place.

5 Council conclusions on food losses and food waste, adopted by the Council at its 3479th meeting held on 28 June 2016 https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/fw_lib_council_food-losses-food-waste_2016.pdf

6 Directive (EU) 2019/633 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on unfair trading practices in business-to-business relationships in the agricultural and food supply chain, OJ L 111, 25.4.2019, p. 59

Who?

What/How?

European and national public authorities, food business operators, research community

■ **Address and fill the data gaps: improve availability and quality of data on food loss and waste levels and their related impacts (social, economic, environmental)**

Measurement of food loss and waste levels to contribute to global monitoring of SDG Target 12.3 and improving quantification of related impacts are critical to underpin both action and communications regarding food loss and waste prevention. Public and private sector actors at all stages of the food supply chain should increase data availability, consistency and transparency. For example, Italy has created a national observatory to study and assess food surplus, recovery and food waste and how the supply chain manages these surpluses and waste and the causes that determined them. Member States should ensure timely implementation of food waste monitoring (2020), with new consistent data provided to the European Commission by end 2022. Every sector in the food supply chain should pursue/strengthen food waste monitoring and reporting in their operations, thereby contributing to EU-wide monitoring efforts. In this context, it shall be avoided that food business operators face additional administrative burden, and if this were the case, relevant support could be provided to limit the extent of such burden.

EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste, research community and funding managers and policy makers

■ **Improve action design, monitoring, evaluation and knowledge sharing regarding food waste prevention interventions**

Create tools to help inform future interventions and promote replicability across Member States. Build on the work of the Joint Research Centre on the assessment of food waste prevention actions (2019), the REFRESH 2019 guidance on evaluating household food waste prevention initiatives and create a common evaluation framework for food waste prevention actions (for instance, common methodology to assess the impact of food donation), as well as an evidence hierarchy and action design guidelines. This should include longitudinal studies to assess the effectiveness of interventions over time; for instance, whether an impact on consumers' food waste is temporary or marks a step-change in behaviour. The tools should have an accessible format to facilitate their use by a wide range of practitioners.

Promote and facilitate analysis of food waste prevention and reduction actions and their impacts, open access data sharing and collaborative action development. Key success factors, barriers and data should be identified and shared to support development of future actions and enhance replicability and long-term sustainability of interventions. This could include creating a network of researchers and practitioners to champion evaluation; obtaining sufficient funding, further develop guidance, facilitating the use of evaluation findings, and conduct meta-analysis of findings.

All actors

■ **Integrate food loss and waste in education and professional training, both in public and private sectors**

Promote lifelong learning opportunities on how to prevent food loss and waste both through school and relevant professional curricula (e.g. hospitality sector studies) as well as on-the-job training. Companies should make food waste prevention a business priority, with clear KPIs and training programmes for staff. As regards consumer education, public authorities should consider how to integrate objectives and messages of campaigns and other interventions across sectors (e.g. sustainable diet and health, food waste prevention, climate action) for maximum impact and efficiency. Date marking should be a particular area of focus in order to help consumers better differentiate between 'use by' and 'best before' dates.

Who?

What/How?

All actors

- **Raise awareness of food waste prevention for all of us in our role as consumers, promoting value of food and working to shift social norms so that wasting food is no longer socially acceptable**

In implementing national strategies to prevent food waste, Member States should make full use of latest findings of behavioural science research and experience gained in other sectors (e.g. public health) to design effective interventions to curb consumer food waste. Linking food waste prevention to sustainable diet and climate action could provide new reasons for citizens to engage and help renew/strengthen citizens' response to the global challenge of halving food waste at the consumer level by 2030.

All actors

- **Provide information on involvement in food waste prevention actions**

Communicate directly about food waste prevention actions (e.g. on product or online) introduced within an entity's own operations for awareness raising and to support behavioural change amongst all players.

European and national public authorities, food business operators

- **Improve use of date marking**

Promote more consistent use of date marking throughout the food supply chain and by control authorities, supported by EU scientific and technical guidance⁷. Improve format, presentation and terminology of date marking, based on consumer research evidence, in order to better differentiate between 'use by' and 'best before' dates and facilitate consumer understanding of the meaning of these dates (that is, providing information, respectively, about safety and quality). All actors should strengthen joint efforts to reduce food waste generation in the supply chain linked to date marking.

European and national public authorities, food business operators

- **Strengthen capacity for innovation, promoting circularity and new market opportunities**

All relevant research and innovation as well as financial instruments should be utilised to support development and implementation of food supply chain innovation to prevent food loss and waste (e.g. Horizon Europe, FOOD 2030, future Single Market Programme, EIP-AGRI, EIT Food, the Digital Europe Programme etc.). A further area of focus should be in the area of primary production, aiming to turn discarded materials into new added-value products with market opportunities for farmers and cooperatives. New product development from co-products in food processing is another area of opportunity. Market opportunities for imperfect products, e.g. fruit and vegetables, could be considered by, for example, reviewing procurement practices. In particular, consumers, catering and the environment could benefit from such opportunities.

7 The Commission has initiated work on date marking guidance, supported by scientific advice from EFSA. EFSA advice will develop a risk-based approach to support decision making of food business operators on date marking. The EU date marking guidance is expected to be finalised by 2021. More information can be found on Commission's website: https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/food_waste/eu_actions/date_marking_en

Who?

European and national public authorities, including regional and local level

What/How?

■ **Incentivise food waste prevention**

Public authorities should consider how to best ensure that food waste prevention is more economically viable than treatment as waste. In addition to the business case for food waste prevention, use of economic instruments may, where utilised in a targeted and time-bound manner, foster change of business practices in line with the waste prevention hierarchy. For instance, in some Member States⁸ the implementation of corporate tax credits or the combination of food donation with the reduction of waste collection city tax have been successful in promoting donation of surplus food. Integration of food waste prevention in public procurement specifications. Evaluating the possibility to set waste prevention targets in contractual conditions can be also considered as an effective mean of scaling up actions to prevent food waste, e.g. in contract catering for schools, hospitals.

European and national public authorities

■ **Ensure financial (and other) support to help players take action in their operations (focus on SMEs, farmers)**

All relevant EU and national financial instruments (e.g. Rural Development Programme, Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived/ESF+, future Single Market Programme...) should be utilised to support food loss and waste prevention. As regards SMEs, public authorities should implement targeted programmes in order to help these companies integrate food waste prevention in their business model (e.g. carrying out a food waste audit, design of an implementation plan and support roll-out, share best practices). Member States could establish as appropriate a national *Food Waste Prevention Fund* in order to provide sustained financial support for national initiatives, projects and organisations in their fight against food waste.

8 To date the following Member States adopted such measures Austria, Bulgarian Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Platform document 'Redistribution of surplus food: Examples of practices in the Member State, 2019 (https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/fw_eu-actions_food-donation_ms-practices-food-redis.pdf). It should be noted that also Norway has adopted such measures (food donors benefit from a VAT exemption on donated products provided that the food is redistributed to charity).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION FOR *PRIMARY PRODUCTION*

Food waste ⁹ can occur at any stage of the food supply chain, including primary production. Farmers, however, are especially concerned by food losses, including edible food left unharvested in the field, often due to factors outside of their control. Within this sector, agricultural products, which are not placed on the market for human consumption, are used for processing into non-food products, animal feed, bioenergy purposes or soil improvement. While acknowledging the positive impact of these actions, there is still considerable potential to improve resource efficiency of food production and address food losses and food waste at the farm level. Primary producers are important actors in the food supply chain and should be closely involved in the implementation of food loss and waste prevention actions along the food supply chain.

Who?

What/How?

European and national public authorities, academia and farmers associations'

■ **Carry out further research on marketing standards**

While taking into account the result of the 'Evaluation of marketing standards' ¹⁰, further research is required on the relation between marketing standards and food waste. Consideration should be given to avoiding waste of resources by preventing the generation of food waste, both for economic and environmental reasons.¹¹

National public authorities

■ **Strengthen the position of food producers in the food supply chain**

Transpose and effectively implement the Unfair Trading Practices Directive ¹² at national level in order to protect primary producers from unfair practices (e.g. short notice cancellations and unilateral contract changes).

Support for the establishment and functioning of farmers' cooperatives and producer organisations, where these are under-developed.

European and national public authorities

■ **Better align supply with demand**

Improve farmers' access to data/information on market outlooks so that they can better align supply with market needs and avoid over-supply.

European and national public authorities

■ **Improve resource efficiency and reduce food losses in agriculture by improving animal health and welfare and access to innovation**

Provide easier access to innovation and greater uptake of breeds and varieties and farming practices, which can boost resilience and longer shelf-life.

Provide easier access to low-risk plant protection products.

Support development of sustainable animal production with good animal health and welfare, to reduce losses as well as the risk of antimicrobial resistance.

Support availability and affordability of new veterinary medicines (VMPs).

⁹ "food waste" means all food as defined in Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council that has become waste", Article 4a of Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives, OJ L 150, 14.6.2018, p. 109

¹⁰ Evaluation of marketing standards [this exercise is currently ongoing by external contractor on behalf of DG AGRI]

¹¹ European Court of Auditors, Special Report: Combating Food Waste: an opportunity for the EU to improve the resource-efficiency of the food supply chain, 2016 (https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR16_34/SR_FOOD_WASTE_EN.pdf)

¹² Directive (EU) 2019/633 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on unfair trading practices in business-to-business relationships in the agricultural and food supply chain, OJ L 111, 25.4.2019, p. 59

Who?**What/How?****National public authorities**

- **Strengthen financial support to farms to drive modernisation with a focus on tackling food losses and food waste**

Support sustainable, short food supply chains to maximise their contribution to reduce food losses and food waste.

Support markets for food and its parts which are currently lost or wasted and the creation of new products.

Support reduction of food losses and food waste on farms by improving harvest, storage and logistics techniques.

European and national public authorities academia and farmers

- **Include farmers and their cooperatives and farming service providers in research and innovation activities from the beginning of the process**

Involvement of farmers is expected to further improve uptake of innovative solutions and technologies within the sector. Foster discussions and exchange of views between researchers, farmers and their cooperatives, in order for the latter to explain the challenges and difficulties that they are encountering. Information and co-creation of solutions to address farmers' challenges are key.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION AT *MANUFACTURING STAGE*

According to the latest estimates, around 19% of the total food waste generated in the EU comes from the processing sector¹³. Food waste prevention is a key priority for food and drink manufacturers, and many companies make it part of their internal environmental management system and overall sustainability strategy. For manufacturers, tackling food waste entails a close collaboration with other stages of the food supply chain, both upstream and downstream.

While the primary focus for manufacturers is to drive out inefficiencies within supply chains and prevent food waste from occurring in the first place; where surpluses cannot be avoided, redirecting food to people should be a first consideration in accordance with the waste prevention hierarchy¹⁴. If this is not possible, redirecting surplus food for animal feed should be facilitated¹⁵. The main areas of opportunity to prevent and reduce food waste in this sector are improving processing practices, finding innovative packaging solutions, offering a diversity of portion sizes, raising consumer awareness on date marking, redistributing surplus food and promoting circularity through food, feed and non-food uses.

Who?	What/How?
Food manufacturers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage integration of food waste prevention throughout the business/supply chain (from raw material buying to marketing, logistics etc.) <p>Encourage/improve the training of personnel, and raise awareness within the organization on how to prevent food wastage at all levels of operation (e.g. production, marketing, procurement, logistics etc.). For example, improve the training of personnel to reduce technical errors during processing.</p>
Food manufacturers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Better planning/forecasting for raw material buying <p>Encourage/Introduce the use of digital tools that will help the organization better plan raw material buying in order to balance the demand and supply forecasts.</p>
Food manufacturers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Monitor, measure and report on food loss and waste quantities in order to identify and take action on hotspots <p>Introduce digital tools to identify, monitor and measure food waste in order to help optimise processing operations. Use tools such as the Food Waste Atlas to publish and report food waste data publicly.</p>
Food manufacturers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Take full account of critical role of packaging in ensuring food quality, safety and preventing food waste <p>Work across the value chain on packaging solutions that enhance food quality, freshness and safety, including by looking for packaging solutions that allow shelf-life extension. Find a balance between reducing packaging material and ensuring food safety and waste prevention. Make use of innovative and interactive packaging solutions such as temperature sensitive sensors (e.g. shelf-life indicators). Ensure that packaging enables the consumer to make full use of its content.</p>

¹³ [FUSIONS](#), 2016

¹⁴ Directive (EU) 2018/851 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 amending Directive 2008/98/EC on Waste, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32018L0851>

¹⁵ Commission Notice – Guidelines for the feed use of food no longer intended for human consumption C2018/2035

Who?

What/How?

Food manufacturers

■ **Offer consumers right portion sizes**

Offer a range of portion sizes as different packaging sizes and in-pack portioning to cater to different lifestyles and household needs. For example, portion-sized pre-packaged foods are a helpful measure for one-person households or consumers with insufficient or inappropriate storage.

Food manufacturers

■ **Improve date marking practices and consumer understanding of date marking and other relevant food information jointly with other stakeholders**

Facilitate correct and consistent implementation of the provisions of the Food Information to Consumers Regulation¹⁶ regarding the 'use by' and 'best before' date ('use by' to be used only for safety reasons and 'best before' for quality reasons, and setting appropriate shelf-life). Provide clear and meaningful 'open life' instructions to consumers that differentiate between safety and quality concerns, whenever appropriate. Provide clearly legible and visible date marking indications that facilitate consumers' safe and informed consumption.

Food manufacturers and European and national public authorities

■ **Where food surpluses cannot be avoided, prioritise food redistribution to humans before facilitating safe food to feed transition**

Continue to raise awareness about the possibilities to redistribute food within the food and drink sector through the dissemination of guidelines such as FoodDrinkEurope's 'Every Meal Matters' joint food donation guidelines¹⁷ and the EU guidelines on food donation¹⁸ that are in line with the food wastage hierarchy¹⁹.

Create local or regional food hubs to support the redistribution of food.

Facilitate food-to-feed transition to allow usage of surplus food for animal feed when it is not possible to redistribute it to humans, ensuring the implementation of EU guidelines for the feed use of food no longer intended for human consumption²⁰.

Food manufacturers and European and national public Authorities

■ **Increase sales of co-products and create more innovative products that utilise such co-products**

Encourage the allocation of more funding (private and public) dedicated to research and innovation in order to develop new products derived by co-products. This could be especially beneficial to SMEs. Show innovative examples of processing co-products and surplus food such as use of breakfast cereals (spent grains) and bread in beer, use of carrot peels for producing food colours etc.

Food manufacturers and primary producers

■ **Increasing the diversity of market opportunities through processing**

For example, producers of fruits and vegetables should identify other possible uses for their produce (use imperfect produce to create new products). Instead of only selling their products as fresh, they can divert some of their products to manufacturers of juice, marmalade or soup. This will widen their customer base.

16 Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18

17 https://www.fooddrinkurope.eu/uploads/publications_documents/Every_Meal_Matters_Food_Donation_Guidelines.pdf

18 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2017.361.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ:C:2017:361:FULL

19 FoodDrinkEurope, Every Crumb Counts [Joint Food Wastage Declaration](#), 2013

20 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52018XC0416%2801%29>

Who?**What/How?****Food manufacturers****■ Provide on-label or on-line information to consumers about better food management**

Provide on-label or on-line information to inform and educate consumers about the product characteristics, proper storage, date marking and shelf-life, meal planning (e.g. possibility of freezing), safe food handling, and cooking recipes for preparing the food in multiple different ways in order to avoid waste.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION AT *RETAIL STAGE*

The latest figures indicate that approximately 5% of the total amount of food waste in the EU is generated in the wholesale and retail sector (around 5 million tonnes)²¹. The cost of food waste and price discounts for European retail is estimated at €13 billion, corresponding to 1.64% of total sales²². Retailers and wholesalers have a pivotal role to play in contributing to the reduction of food waste along the supply chain. Taking action often involves collaboration with food business operators from other stages (primary production, manufacturing) and providing enabling conditions to reduce food waste. The causes of food waste are varied, such as changes in seasonal supply or knowledge of the precise level of consumer demand, inappropriate sizes or packaging compared to the type of households, esthetical considerations for fresh produce or lack of consumer understanding concerning the difference between ‘best before’ and ‘use by’ date markings.

The main areas where the retail sector can improve its operations in order to prevent and reduce food waste are supporting upstream suppliers, improving logistics and stock in store, and building consumer awareness on the issue of food waste. The retail sector often drives sustainability issues through voluntary action at company or more global level, such as the 2012 Retail Agreement on Waste²³ and the Food Waste Resolution of the Consumer Goods Forum²⁴, under which leading food companies and retailers have pledged to halve the amount of food wasted within their operations by 2025. Co-operative retailers also champion food waste reduction through multiple actions, including extensive educational campaigns²⁵ in line with the co-operative values and principles²⁶.

Who?

What/How?

Retailers

■ **Establish trustful relationships with suppliers and share data and forecasting information to match supply and demand**

Coordinate food waste prevention in a joint business plan among supply chains to develop volume demand forecasting, which will contribute to linking primary food production to other markets (process) to avoid waste in case of surplus.

Where demand forecasting is not possible due to unpredictable climate conditions, consider measures to share risks of variable supply and demand with suppliers.

Promote price transparency and agree on benefit splits with primary producers to ensure more food reaching the market and create a fairer supply chain.

Use digital and automatic ordering to avoid human error and to improve shelf management practices.

Improve return policies between suppliers and retailers in order to facilitate supply chain management to prevent food waste.

21 [FUSIONS](#), 2016

22 EuroCommerce

23 [Retailers' Environmental Action Programme \(REAP\)](#), 2012

24 Consumer Goods Forum, [Food Waste Resolution](#), 2015

25 [Euro Coop Members' Best-Practices in Tackling Food Waste](#), 2018

26 [Co-operative Values and Principles](#), International Co-operative Alliance.

Who?

What/How?

Retailers

■ **Make food waste prevention/reduction a company priority**

Engage and train staff on the importance of food waste reduction, provide incentives for internal collaboration across company departments, and set KPIs for measuring food waste reduction.

Train staff on frequently marked-down products to support waste prevention, and create a coherent marketing system that does not encourage excessive buying of the same foods, but rather offers price discount deals. Promote 'close to the end of shelf-life' food at reduced prices putting them in special places in the stores.

European and national public authorities, primary producers, food manufacturers and retailers

■ **Date marking: agree on accurate date marking to provide long shelf-life without compromising safety or quality and consider the role of innovation (e.g. bar codes)**

Align the food supply chain (primary production, manufacturers and retail) to agree on consistent date marking practices in the EU ²⁷. Provide guidance to both food business operators and to consumers on the difference between 'use by' (safety concerns) and 'best before' (quality concerns) labelling.

Collect data on the impact of the current date marking rules for eggs (i.e. 28-day 'best before' set in marketing standards and the 21-day 'sell by' date) on food waste, in order to assess whether a revision is necessary. As for all foods, food business operators should determine date marking.

Consider the role of innovation and the potential to use technologies such as bar code scanning to keep track of products close to the end of their shelf-life. This will allow retailers to give consumers promotions on those products. Smart phone apps and other innovations can be considered, that link 'near end of shelf-life' products to potential buyers.

Promote packaging innovation within the industry that prolongs the shelf-life of products, ensures food safety and reduces packaging material.

Retailers

■ **Greater use of food repurposing in store (e.g. processing unsold fruit/vegetables)**

Create, where possible, in-house re-processing capacities at retail level to process foods, which are close to the end of their shelf life.

Retailers

■ **Use consumer research to better understand causes of food waste at home and tailor products, discounts and promotions to help consumers prevent food waste at home**

Use digital tools to allow consumers to report their experiences of food waste through the bar codes and QR codes. This will give both consumers and retailers awareness of consumers' waste habits and allow for identification of areas for improvement, both at home and at retail level through adaptation of products, packaging, promotions and discounts.

Create awareness raising campaigns targeting the consumers, especially during the 'food waste seasons', e.g. Christmas and Easter.

Provide information in store to consumers on actions to reduce food waste, e.g. correct storage and recipe ideas for special offer foods.

27 The study estimates that up to 10% of the 88 million tonnes of food waste generated annually in the EU are linked to date marking. Of food product types used in the market research, the greatest opportunities for prevention of food waste in relation to date marking exist for milk and yoghurts, fresh juices, chilled meat and fish. <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/e7be006f-0d55-11e8-966a-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

Who?**What/How?**

Retailers, European and national public authorities

■ **Monitor, measure and report on food waste quantities in order to identify and take action**

Establish a baseline to measure progress as well as a monitoring system that allows retailers to report on their findings.

European and national public authorities

■ **Put in place a favourable framework to encourage food waste reduction**

Develop an appropriate framework to make food redistribution of surplus food more cost-effective for retailers than discarding and waste treatment.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION IN *HOSPITALITY/FOOD SERVICES*

According to latest estimates, the food service sector accounted for 12 % of the total EU food waste (11 million tonnes)²⁸. The sector is very heterogeneous, with sub-sectors differing in size, organisation and services: hotels, restaurants, contract catering, event catering etc. It is also very fragmented: 99 % of its 2 million business are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); 90 % are microenterprises. Moreover, the vast majority of businesses do not produce standardised meals, change their menus and ingredients regularly, often do not have highly standardised procedures and work in small kitchens. These factors create unique challenges. Interventions in the sector should focus on bridging the knowledge gap on food waste through the development of guidance, making use of cooperation with third parties to build further knowledge and engaging both businesses and customers.

Who?

What/How?

European and national public authorities, trade associations, researchers

■ **Provide support to small businesses to increase their knowledge and capacity-building**

Develop and disseminate guidance and training materials for businesses, promoting food waste prevention and reduction in all processes (ordering, storing, preparing, serving and waste managing of food products). The materials must be simple and easy-to-use; their format fit for purpose (e.g. graphic materials, short videos, interactive tools). Staff and management should be involved in the development of training programmes and awareness raising activities. Besides technical support, facilitate the access of SMEs to public funding to enable them to reinforce technical and human resource capabilities in food waste prevention.

Trade associations

■ **Motivate and engage businesses to adopt measures against food waste in their operations**

Showcase successful examples where such measures led to a fast return on investment/ short-term economic benefits, as this can be a strong incentive for businesses with reduced profit margins to take immediate action. Trade associations should promote the benefits of making food waste prevention and reduction measures a part of businesses' corporate social responsibility policies.

European and national public authorities, trade associations, food service businesses and redistribution organisations

■ **Identify solutions to the logistical challenge linked to the collection of small quantities of food in multiple locations**

Use public-private and inter-sectorial cooperation to foster the development of technological solutions that can better connect offer and needs and help decentralise the collection of surplus food. Encourage community-based interventions to redistribute surplus food based on the principles of proximity, offer and demand.

Who?

Food service businesses, trade associations, and third-parties designing food waste reduction actions

What/How?

■ **Monitor actions' efficiency and effectiveness by setting SMART objectives and KPIs**

The SMART objectives and KPIs should take into consideration the challenges and logistic burdens related to their implementation. Suggested KPIs to be adopted:

1. when measurement of food waste is possible
 - 'Total amount of food waste prevented'/ 'Total amount of food waste'
 - 'Food waste per meal' (difficult to use when the precise number of individual meals cannot be assessed e.g. open buffets)
2. When measurement of food waste is not possible:
 - 'Number of businesses entering the programme'
 - 'Number of businesses enrolled in national labelling schemes that have a direct or indirect positive effect on food waste reduction'

Food service businesses, national public authorities, consumer and environmental NGOs, consumer organisations

■ **Help to influence consumer expectations/behaviour to reduce and prevent plate waste**

Businesses should ensure that front-of-house personnel can communicate with customers on aspects such as portion sizes, menu choice etc. Nudging techniques can also help consumers make good choices according to the availability of dishes, sizes of servings etc. by:

- identifying 'decision points' in restaurants/canteens and then targeting appropriate spatial design/displaying communications in these points;
- adopting payment policies in line with the operations and profiles of businesses (e.g. pay per food weight, charging customers for plate waste in 'all you can eat' buffets)
- allowing customers to order smaller quantities or share a meal
- running awareness campaigns to inform customers that the food service business is engaged in the fight against food waste
- introducing 'take all what you can eat – but remember to eat all what you take' campaigns at the canteen/restaurant buffets

Businesses should be encouraged to allow customers take their leftovers home upon request.

Public authorities and NGOs should run awareness campaigns to shift consumer expectations when eating out of home. Synergies with other areas of interest for consumers can help reinforce key messages e.g. healthy diets, sustainable foods etc.

Public and private entities should review their contracting practices impacting food waste, such as clauses regarding availability of food selection during non-peak hours.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION AT *CONSUMER LEVEL*

Across Europe, over 50 % of food waste (47 million tonnes) is estimated to come from households ²⁹. Household-focused interventions are therefore essential to deliver ambitious overall food waste reduction, with significant environmental, economic and social benefits. However, as highlighted in recent reviews ³⁰, it is generally difficult to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of such actions. Many consumer-focused initiatives do not have a monitoring system, do not determine KPIs nor do they set SMART objectives ³¹. Providing information is the most widely used intervention, however, there is little robust evidence for its effectiveness in isolation from other factors ³².

Although households are significantly influenced by other sectors' actions and external factors, consumers are aware of their role in reducing food waste. According to a Eurobarometer survey on food waste carried out in 2015 ³³, the majority of people living in the EU (76 %) were aware that food waste prevention is something for which the individual consumer bears responsibility, along with other actors. Food is an emotive subject, associated with many aspects of human behaviour; therefore, it is crucial to account for a wide range of audiences when designing consumer/citizen-targeted interventions.

Who?

What/How?

Consumer organisations,
citizens

■ Individual and community behaviour change

Citizens can take action within their daily lives and communities to reduce food waste in the home, when shopping, at work and in restaurants, cafes and hotels (examples available below). They can also influence the actions of every other sector of the food supply chain (e.g. through their consumption patterns).

Consumer organisations also have an important role to play in raising awareness about food waste among consumers and supporting behaviour change, through providing recommendations and practical tips to cut food waste at home.

Funding programme
managers, researchers,
academia

■ Develop and use a wider range of methods to better understand consumer behaviour as regards food waste and design effective solutions

Promote and facilitate the use and development of a wider range of behaviour change methods, through an active collaboration between researchers and practitioners. The methods should focus on influencing social norms to trigger behaviour change, rather than only providing information and increasing awareness of the issue. Positive solutions, displaying desirable behaviours and highlighting the benefits of saving food should be favoured over messages highlighting the negative impacts of food waste. Such solutions should also take into account the different motivations of consumers to prevent food waste e.g. saving money, environmental concerns etc. Synergies with other areas of intervention can help reinforce key messages and give consumers a more holistic understanding of the dynamics of food systems (e.g. emphasizing the environmental and ethical aspects of foods and food choices; changing consumers' mindsets and values by challenging consumerism patterns).

29 [FUSIONS](#), 2016

30 [JRC Report](#), 2019, Reynolds et al, 2019

31 JRC Report, 2019

32 [REFRESH Policy Brief: Reducing consumer food waste](#), 2019

33 [Flash Eurobarometer 425, Food waste and date marking](#), Oct 2015

Who?**What/How?**

Researchers and practitioners supported by funding managers and policy makers

■ **Increase use and development of audience segmentation**

Researchers and practitioners should work closely together to develop a deeper understanding of target audience segments (taking into account for instance the number of members in households, age, income, lifestyle etc.), the associated barriers to behaviour change and capacity to change. This will help identify consumer food waste hotspots, tailor more effective interventions and facilitate their transferability at local, national and EU levels (e.g. communications activities involving different influencers to reach various target audiences).

What can you do to reduce food waste in your daily life?

■ **At home**

- Plan your portions/meals – not cooking more than you need will save food, money, time, the climate and your waistline!
- Use your leftovers – they can be delicious, will save you money, and there are lots of exciting recipe ideas to help you online (e.g. imperfect fruit can be transformed into smoothies/pies; wilted vegetables into soup etc.).
- Grab a smaller plate, spoon and fork – serve yourself food on smaller plates, using service spoons, smaller knives and forks so you don't take more than you can eat.
- Know your dates – know the difference between 'use by' (informs about food safety) and 'best before' (informs about food quality; judge for yourself if the food can be eaten after this date).
- Freeze! – you can freeze many more foods than you might think, and it means you can have healthy meals ready for when you are short on time (Tip: store separate batches of food for ready-made portions and label them accordingly).
- Store your food properly – check the labels for storage instructions, keep your fridge between 1 and 5°C, your freezer at -18 C and know what is in your cupboards.
- Rotate and check the dates – place newly bought items at the back and bring older items to the front of the fridge/cupboard, reducing the risk of foods going off before you can use them.
- Share food – share surplus food with your friends, colleagues or neighbours.

■ **At the shops or market**

- Write a list – check your food storage at home before making a shopping list; only buy what you need and don't be enticed by multi-packs or offers in order to save money and avoid waste.
- Don't shop when you're hungry and take your time – otherwise you might come back with more than you need!
- Buy only the quantity you need – choose the right portion size or buy loose foods.
- Choose imperfect fruit and vegetables – Look out for discounts or other promotions on imperfect fruit and vegetables that are perfectly edible and nutritious.

■ **At work/school/university**

- In the canteen – don't take more than you can eat and ask for smaller portions.
- The office fridge – remember what you have left in the fridge and make sure to use it up before it goes bad.
- Check the office fruit basket – take any ripe fruit with you and eat it over the weekend.
- Spread the word – Share your food waste reduction tips with your colleagues.

■ **In cafés, restaurants and hotels**

- Grab a smaller plate – at the buffet try a smaller plate so you don't take more than you can eat or try two starters instead of a starter and a main course.
- Take away your leftovers – if you cannot eat everything ask for a box or bag (or bring your own) to take it away for later.
- Manage your expectations – don't expect a full range to be available at all times of the day as this can mean cafes and restaurants end up wasting food.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION FOR *FOOD DONATION*

In the EU, 110 million people were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2018 and 36 million people were not able to afford a quality meal every second day³⁴. At the same time, around 88 million tonnes of food waste are generated annually in the EU with associated costs estimated at 143 billion EUR³⁵. In accordance with the waste prevention hierarchy, the primary focus of food waste prevention should be to act at source by limiting the generation of surplus food. When food surpluses occur, the best destination, which ensures the highest value use of edible food resources, is to redistribute these for human consumption³⁶.

Food donation not only supports the fight against food poverty but can be an effective lever in reducing the amount of surplus food put to industrial uses or sent for waste treatment and ultimately to landfill. Food donation can be also a tool to reduce the need for emergency food aid. However, even though redistribution of food surplus is a growing phenomenon and food manufacturers and retailers are willing to donate their surplus to food redistribution organisations³⁷, the amount of food redistributed still represents a small fraction³⁸ of the overall edible surplus food available in the EU.

Food donation is strongly linked and affected by actions put in place at other stages of the food supply chain. Due to the cross-sectoral nature of food redistribution, many recommendations for action in this area can be found under the relevant section on ‘cross-cutting’ recommendations. It should also be noted, that because of their complexity, the implementation of all recommendations for action concerning food donation should be carried out in close cooperation with the different actors, such as European and national authorities, food redistribution organisations and other actors of the food supply chain.

Who?

European and national public authorities in collaboration with food redistribution organisations and other actors of the food supply chain

What/How?

■ **Promote the uptake of the EU guidelines on food donation and, where needed, adopt national guidelines and/or legislation to further facilitate food donation**

Promote the uptake of the EU guidelines on food donation. The EU guidelines on food donation (2017) clarify the application of relevant EU rules in relation to food donation. It is key that national competent authorities use and refer to the guidelines in the national context of food donation. The EU guidelines on food donation need to reach all actors involved in food donation as soon as possible.

If there is a need, foster the adoption of national legislation and/ or guidelines to facilitate food donation. Where there is the need to adopt additional national legislation and/or guidelines to clarify aspects relevant for food donation in the national context, national competent authorities should take action in this respect (e.g. guidelines for food hygiene – Article 8 of Regulation (EC) 853/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs). National guidelines issued in relation to food donation should leverage the experience gained in other Member States. European and national competent authorities, in cooperation with relevant stakeholders, should reflect on the need for sectoral guidelines to facilitate food donation.

34 Eurostat, 2018

35 Estimates of European food waste levels', FUSIONS (March 2016)

36 According to the waste prevention hierarchy, priority should be given to prevention of food waste, followed by recycling, recovery and disposal. The primary focus of food waste prevention should be to act at source by limiting the generation of surplus food. However, when surplus food occurs, the best destination, which ensures the highest value use of edible food resources, is to redistribute it for human consumption. If the surplus food is not fit for human consumption, the food may be used as animal feed, provided it complies with relevant legislative requirements (Commission Notice, C 133, 16.4.2018, p. 2)

37 The redistribution network of surplus food in the EU is complex, involving different types of actors and operating processes. For detailed description, please visit the EU guidelines on food donation (Commission Notice, C 361, 25.10.2017, p.1)

38 The European Food Banks Federation (FEBA) distributed 781 000 tons of food to 9,3 million people in 2018; <http://www.eurofoodbank.eu/en/impact-and-beneficiaries>

Who?

European and national public authorities in collaboration with food redistribution organisations and other actors of the food supply chain

European and national public authorities in collaboration with food redistribution organisations and other actors of the food supply chain

What/How?

■ **Promote the use of surplus food for food donation both in quantity and quality**

Leverage the donation of surplus food throughout the food supply chain. The different actors of the food supply chain shall ensure that food donation is considered as an integral part of the chain and, where relevant as part of the private or public actor's cooperate social responsibility policy.

Promote the use of surplus food for food donation. Public and private actors should ensure and may introduce mechanisms for the proper and timely implementation of the food use hierarchy³⁹. European, national and local authorities shall look for appropriate methods to incentivise directly or indirectly food donation in order to make it more attractive for businesses, especially for SMEs, than the use of surplus food for biobased purposes. Food redistribution organisations shall identify new sources of supply, with particular attention to surplus food from the retail sector, mass caterers and primary production.

Increase the nutritional quality of donated food. It is key that donated food made available to those in need is safe and takes account of the principles of a balanced diet and is delivered in a dignified manner. For instance, public and private actors may put in place systems that allow timely processing of fresh foods to facilitate their storage and conservation while maintaining their nutritional value. This can improve the nutritional quality of food used for food donation purposes.

■ **Innovate and modernise food donation**

Ensure financing for innovation and modernization of food donation systems. Funds and/or other financial mechanisms (e.g. tax incentives, financial support for operational expenses, innovation grants) could be developed to enable food redistribution organisations to modernize and innovate, in particular to address logistical challenges that such organisations face due to the increasing amount of food donated.

Establish stable partnerships between different actors participating in food donation. One of the key foundations of food donation is well-functioning partnerships. For this reason fostering partnerships in operational and relational terms by different means (e.g. financial support, sharing of expertise and involvement of employees) should be a key focus for the different actors participating in food donation. In particular, municipalities can play a key role in innovation and modernization of food donation systems, taking into account their first-hand contacts and involvement in the practical implementation of food donation at local level. Where appropriate, national public-private partnerships can be used to enhance and increase the effectiveness of, and participation in food donation across the food system.

39 FAO, [Food losses and waste in the context of sustainable food systems](#), 2014

ANNEX 1 – LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE EU PLATFORM ON FOOD LOSSES AND FOOD WASTE

■ Member States

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom

■ Private stakeholders

AECOC Asociación Española de Codificación Comercial, AIBI – International Association of Plant Bakers AISBL, BEUC The European Consumer Organisation, BOROUME 'We Can', CITY OF MILAN – Secretariat of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, COPA COGECA, ECPA – European Crop Protection Association, ECSLA – European Cold Storage and Logistics 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 Food Banks Federation, FEEDBACK GLOBAL, FEFAC – European Feed Manufacturers Federation, 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, OSTFOLD RESEARCH, Nofima and, Matvett Consortium, RISE RESEARCH INSTITUTES OF SWEDEN AB, SLOW FOOD, STOP WASTING FOOD MOVEMENT DENMARK ('Stop Spild Af Mad'), SMEUnited, WAGENINGEN UR Wageningen University & Research, WRAP Waste and Resource Action Programme, ZERO WASTE SCOTLAND

■ Invited organisations

Committee of the Regions (CoR), European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment)

■ Observer

EFTA countries

ANNEX 2 – CONSUMER TIPS LEAFLET



European
Commission

HOW TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE IN YOUR DAILY LIFE



AT HOME

- + Plan your meals
- + Use your leftovers
- + Know your dates ('use by' informs about food safety and 'best before' informs about food quality)
- + Grab a smaller plate and refill as needed
- + Freeze! (ready-made portions)
- + Store food properly (check the labels for storage instructions, make sure your fridge is between 1° and 5°C)
- + Know what is in your pantry and fridge
- + Rotate food stored at home– 'first in, first out'!



**TIME'S UP
FOR FOOD
WASTE!**

Health and
Food Safety



AT THE SHOPS OR MARKET

- + Write a shopping list
- + Don't shop when hungry
- + Buy only the quantity you need (the right packaging size or loose foods)
- + Choose imperfect fruit and vegs (often on discount)



AT WORK/SCHOOL/UNIVERSITY

- + Ask to be served the right portion for you (at the canteen)
- + Keep an eye on the office fridge/fruit basket
- + Spread the word – share your tips to prevent food waste with colleagues



IN CAFÉS, RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS

- + Grab a smaller plate and refill as needed
- + Take away your leftovers
- + Manage your expectations concerning availability of food, depending on the time of the day

ANNEX 3 – POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

This section lists actions, which did not qualify as key recommendations of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste due to the lack of consensus amongst the members

Cross-cutting

Who?

European public authorities

What/How?

Amend Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC Text with EEA relevance in point 10 of Article 5 (Methods for calculating estimated procurement value). In order to case less emission and less food losses and waste, the method of calculation for public procurement for food shall be raised from 20 % to 50 %, including a relative increase of 80,000 euro in case of food from a local area (short chain supply).

National public authorities

Member States could choose to establish legally binding statutory targets to reduce food waste by 50 % from farm to fork by 2030, and regulatory enforcement to support these targets such as requiring large food businesses to measure and publish their individual food waste data.

Primary production

Who?

European and national public authorities

What/How?

Ensure that free trade agreements concluded by the EU do not stand in the way of its commitment to fighting food waste by leading to over-supply situations on EU agricultural markets.

European and national public authorities, farmers

Establish routines, procedures and practices that can improve the valorisation of food losses in agriculture, e.g. by donating these food losses from the farm to charity organisations or by subsidising short food supply chains, e.g. for food that does not meet cosmetic standards.

European and national public authorities, academia and farmers

Establish more and better data and monitoring concerning the exact nature and primary causes of food loss in agriculture.

National public authorities

Implement pilot studies to measure national-level food waste at primary production level, including edible food left unharvested in the field – with sufficient quality data to use as a baseline for reduction targets. Member states can make efforts to find this research themselves, or apply for Horizon 2020 and other appropriate EU funding for this purpose. Research should also be undertaken to ascertain the causes of this food waste, and farmers organisers should be consulted on which solutions would be most beneficial to farmers – such as changes in retailer and buyer policy to reduce the risks and costs of food waste for farmers. Food wasted at subsequent levels of the supply chain but returned to primary production for uses such as landspreading should be counted at the stage of the supply chain at which the food waste arises, as otherwise this creates a loophole in reporting and an incentive for other food producers to dump food waste on farmers.

Manufacturing

Who?

Food manufacturers

What/How?

Make use of additional date labelling for 'best before' when appropriate.

Retail

For whom?

Retailers

What/How?

Establish trustful relation with suppliers and share data and information on forecasting to match supply and demand

Do not punish suppliers with fines or threats of delisting in cases of undersupply where this can reasonably be explained by variation in weather, to reduce structural incentives for overproduction.

Consider measures to share risks of variable supply and demand with suppliers, such as whole crop purchasing agreements.

Relax cosmetic specifications to maximize the proportion of suppliers' production, which can make it to market.

Retailers

Make a corporate commitment to SDG 12.3 to halve food waste at retail level by 2030, measure company baseline and track progress over time.

Retailers

The action 'support short food supply chains' (see primary production) can be complemented by adoption of big supermarkets of business strategies that promote local producers by offering and promoting special seasonal products produced by local farmers.

Consumer

Who?

Consumers

What/How?

Be aware of your behaviour! – buy products close to their expiration dates if you know you will eat them soon and don't leave products behind on random shelves if you change your mind about buying them.

Food donation

Who?

**National public
authorities**

What/How?

Where food redistribution of food waste occur, such food surplus could be absorbed and redistributed by the state through Universal Basic Services and public procurement. This can have the benefit of guaranteeing a right to food for people in food poverty integrated into other social safety nets, where voluntary charities often have more limited and variable resources and coverage.

**National public
authorities**

Make sure that households are only for a very limited amount of time dependent on food donations, take appropriate structural measures in the field of social protection and social support that households can regain the power to make individual choices following their needs as citizens, households and members of specific cultural communities.

CORRIGENDA

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION IN FOOD WASTE PREVENTION

Developed by the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste

23 FEBRUARY 2021

- On page 2 the following items are added to the list of abbreviations:
EIT – European Institute of Innovation and Technology
EIP – European Innovation Partnership
- On page 6, footnote 4: *‘Directive (EU) 2018/851 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 May 2018 amending Directive 2008/98/EC on waste’* is replaced as follows: *‘Directive (EU) 2018/851 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 amending Directive 2008/98/EC on waste’*.
- On page 7, under the recommendation *‘address and fill the data gaps: improve availability and quality of data on food loss and waste levels and their related impacts (social, economic, environmental)’* the following sentence *‘Member States should ensure timely implementation of food waste monitoring (2020), with new consistent data provided to the European Commission by end 2022’* is replaced as follows: *‘Member States should ensure timely implementation of food waste monitoring (2020), with new consistent data to be provided to the European Commission by 30 June 2022’*.
- On page 10, footnote 9: *‘Article 4a of Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council’* is replaced as follows: *‘Article 3(4a) of Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council’*.
- On page 12, under the recommendation *‘Monitor, measure and report on food loss and waste quantities in order to identify and take action on hotspots’* the link to the Food Waste Atlas included in the following sentence *‘Use tools such as the Food Waste Atlas to publish and report food waste data publicly’* shall be added in footnote: <https://thefoodwasteatlas.org>