Fact Sheet: Food Waste in West Asia

Globally, there was almost a billion tonnes of food waste in 2019: 61% from households, 26% from food services and 13% from retail.

Household food waste estimations in West Asia range from 75 to 163 kg/cap year.

33% of survey respondents said their food waste increased since COVID-19.

200 participants in 10 countries in West Asia took an online survey in 2020:

- 89.8% of respondents use the expiry date as an influencing factor in the disposal of food items at home.
- 67% of respondents reported “no change” or “decreased” food waste generation since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic; however, around 33% answered that their food waste generation increased.
- Respondents frequently eat everything that they prepare at home, a practice that has increased since the start of the pandemic (from 63% - 72%).
- When people were asked about the use of leftovers in their households, figures reported an increase from 42.1% - 49.7%.
- Among the different fresh food categories, fruits, vegetables and salads were reported as the most frequent contributors to food waste generation (20.5%).
- When asked whether they would buy imperfect or blemished produce, even if the prices of these items were lower, only 16% of respondents agreed.

The State of Food Waste in West Asia report was commissioned by the United Nations Environment Programme West Asia Office.