

## 2024 IDAFLW Social Media

### Key Messages:

- The world wasted 1.05 billion tonnes of food in 2022, about 1/5 of all the food that was available to consumers.
- Households waste over 1 billion meals worth of edible food every day, the equivalent of 1.3 meals every day for everyone in the world affected by hunger.
- Food waste is costly, financially and environmentally: costing upwards of \$1 trillion dollars a year globally and generating 8 to 10 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions.
- Food that goes to waste is a wasted opportunity to protect food security, in addition to being a waste of water, energy, time, labor, and agricultural land.
- Every meal is an opportunity to reduce food waste. This is one of the most immediate, tangible climate actions we can each take to reduce our environmental footprints.
- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – specifically SDG 12, target 12.3 – calls for halving per-capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reducing food losses along production and supply chains.
- Japan and the UK have successfully cut their food waste by 31% and 18% respectively. And Netherlands achieved a cut of 23% at consumer and 17% retail level.
- Cities have great potential for food waste reduction and circularity. With 80% of food to be consumed in cities by 2050, food waste is and will continue to be an urban issue.

### Key Figures

- In 2022, the world wasted 1.05 billion tonnes of food. This amounts to one fifth (19 per cent) of food available to consumers being wasted, at the retail, food service, and household level. That is in addition to the 13 per cent of the world's food lost in the supply chain, as estimated by FAO, from post-harvest up to and excluding retail (UNEP, 2024).

- Most of the world's food waste comes from households. Out of the total food wasted in 2022, households were responsible for 631 million tonnes (60%), the food service sector for 290 and the retail sector for 131 (UNEP, 2024).
- Reducing food waste provides compounding benefits: Food loss and waste generates 8-10 per cent of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions – almost five times the total emissions from the aviation sector. Food waste occurs while millions (783 million in 2022) are affected by hunger and a third of humanity faces food insecurity (UNEP, 2024).
- The disposal of food waste at landfill accelerates land degradation and is significant methane emitter, a short-lived but potent climate pollutant with a warming effect more than 80 times that of carbon during its first two decades in the atmosphere. ([Global Methane Pledge](#))
- Households waste at least one billion meals a day: On average, each person wastes 79kg of food annually. The equivalent of at least one billion meals of edible food is being wasted in households worldwide every single day, using a very conservative assessment on the share of food waste that is edible. This is the equivalent of 1.3 meals every day for everyone in the world impacted by hunger (UNEP, 2024).
- Food waste is not just a 'rich country' problem. Following a near doubling of data coverage since the 2021 Food Waste Index Report was published, there has been increased convergence in the average per capita household food waste. High-income, upper-middle income, and lower-middle income countries differ in observed average levels of household food waste by just 7 kg/capita/year (UNEP, 2024).
- Countries such as the UK and Japan show that change at scale is possible, with reductions of 18 per cent and 31 per cent respectively. Governments, cities, municipalities, and food businesses of all sizes should work collaboratively to reduce food waste and help householders to act (UNEP, 2024).
- Research has suggested that for every \$1 invested in food loss and waste reduction, a \$14 return can be achieved (Hanson and Mitchell 2017).
- Food that will never be eaten is using up 28% of the world's agricultural land, with profound and needless impacts on biodiversity while squandering a quarter of the agricultural industry's water and fertiliser ([WRI](#)).
- Food waste costs the global economy 1 trillion USD annually. There is a strong business case for cities, restaurants, grocers, and consumers to reduce food waste. A Champions

12.3 study found the average return on investment for businesses to invest in food waste prevention was 14:1. When applying the same study to city investment, the ROI observed was 92:1, when including benefit to residents in the city. ([Champions 12.3](#))

### Shareable Tips:

Changing a few habits can make a big difference:

- Schedule a weekly 'Use It Up' Day or 'Use It Up' Meal to make the most of leftover ingredients:
- Designate a shelf in your fridge for 'Eat Me First' perishable foods.
- Write a shopping list and avoid bulk promotions.
- Buy loose produce, so you can buy exactly the amount you need.
- Measure portion sizes for rice, couscous and pasta.
- Store food optimally and understand date labels.
  - Don't wash berries until ready to consume to avoid mold
  - Understand which areas of fridge are cooler (ex: doors are often warmer)
  - Freeze food that cannot be finished (ex: loaf of bread)
- Share leftovers with friends and neighbours or donate food, especially before going away and after holidays.
- Grow your own fruits and vegetables to enjoy them at peak freshness. Preserve or donate surplus.
- Help glean in your community, recovering edible landscape like tree fruits and nuts.
- Compost any remaining food waste and inedible parts or ask your local government about food waste collections.