



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



29 September
**International Day of Awareness
of Food Loss and Waste**



GET INVOLVED!

www.fao.org/international-day-awareness-food-loss-waste
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#FLWDay

THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF
AWARENESS OF FOOD LOSS
AND WASTE (IDAFLW)
WILL BE OBSERVED FOR THE THIRD
TIME ON 29 SEPTEMBER 2022.

The IDAFLW will make a clear call to action for public and private entities, from across the food system, and consumers, to work together to **cut food loss and waste to enhance the efficient use of natural resources, mitigate climate change, and support food security and nutrition.**

STOP FOOD LOSS AND WASTE. FOR THE PEOPLE! FOR THE PLANET!



The food supply chain in many countries is on course to overtake farming and land use as the largest contributor to greenhouse gases (GHGs). Food processing and packaging, together with transport and food waste, are pushing the food supply chain to the top of the list of GHG emitters globally (Box 1) GHGs are generated at every step of the agrifood supply system - from production through handling, transportation, storage and distribution - regardless of whether the food produced is consumed. In particular, food waste - that takes place at retail and consumption stages of the supply chain - rotting in landfills generates methane, a potent greenhouse gas that has 84 times the warming power of carbon dioxide over a 20-year period.

An estimated 14 percent of the world's food is lost after harvest, up to - but not including the retail stage of the supply chain, and an estimated 17 percent is wasted in retail and at the consumption level.

This food loss and waste account for 8 to 10 per

cent of the total global GHGs - contributing to an unstable climate and extreme weather events such as droughts and flooding. These changes negatively impact crop yields, reduce the nutritional quality of crops, cause supply chain disruptions and threaten food security and nutrition.

An estimated 3.1 billion people worldwide do not have access to a healthy diet and some 828 million people go hungry. All of this means there is an urgent need to accelerate action to reduce food loss and waste.

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.

With eight years left to reach the target, the urgency for scaling up action to reduce food loss and waste cannot be overemphasized.

Reducing food loss and waste presents an opportunity for immediate climate benefits while improving the overall sustainability of our food systems. A necessary transformation to ensure better planetary and nutritional outcomes for current and future generations.

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE AGRIFOOD SYSTEM IS A MAJOR EMITTER OF GHGS?



- In 2019, global agrifood system emissions were 16.5 (95 %; CI range: 11 to 22) billion tonnes (GtCO₂ eq. yr⁻¹), corresponding to 31 percent (range: 19 percent – 43 percent) of total anthropogenic emissions.
- In 2019, emissions from pre- and post-production processes – manufacturing of fertilizers, food processing, packaging, transport, retail, household consumption and food waste disposal – were 5.8 Gt CO₂ eq. yr⁻¹.
- During the period 1990 to 2019, agrifood system emissions increased in total by 17 percent, largely driven by a doubling of emissions from pre- and post-production processes.
- In 2019, in terms of individual greenhouse gases (GHGs), pre- and post-production processes emitted the most CO₂ (3.9 Gt CO₂ yr⁻¹), preceding land use change (3.3 Gt CO₂ yr⁻¹) and farm gate (1.2 Gt CO₂ yr⁻¹) emissions.
- In 2019, pre- and post-production processes were also significant emitters of methane (49 million tonnes CH₄ yr⁻¹), mostly generated from the decay of solid food waste in landfills and open dumps.

Source: [Tubiello et al. 2022](#)

KEY MESSAGES



- Food loss and food waste are symptoms of larger inefficiencies in agrifood systems. Food losses, in particular, have negative impacts on food security and nutrition, as well as on economic development and environmental sustainability. Innovation plays a critical role in stepping up the fight against food loss and waste.
- Prioritizing the reduction of food loss and waste is critical for the transition to sustainable food systems that enhance efficient use of natural resources, lessen planetary impacts and ensure food security and nutrition.
- As the world's population continues to grow, our challenge should not be how to grow more food; but reducing food loss and waste in a sustainable manner, is an immediate need if we are to maximize the use of food produced to feed and nourish more people ([FAO, 2019](#)).
- Climate smart innovation, technologies and infrastructure to reduce food loss and waste are key to increasing efficiency and reducing food system emissions.
- Good governance, human capital development, collaboration and partnerships are key in maximising the positive impacts of reducing food loss and waste.
- “Reducing Food Waste” is one of the most impactful climate solutions ([Project drawdown](#)).
- Food is never waste: By applying circular practices, lost and wasted food can be converted to compost, or used to produce biogas, thereby avoiding harmful methane emissions.
- In the home, we each waste 74 kg on average every year, more than the weight of every person ([UNEP, 2021](#)).
- Behaviour change pertinent to reducing food loss and waste, livestock management and the adoption of healthy diets, could reduce methane emissions by 65 - 80 tonnes/year over the next few decades.

DID YOU KNOW?



- Data and measurement are key in creating a case for action, tracking progress to 2030 and understanding which interventions are most effective in reducing food loss and waste in national contexts and how to scale them up across contexts ([FAO, 2019](#)).
- Approximately 14 percent of the food produced for consumption globally each year is lost between harvest and the wholesale market ([FAO, 2019](#)).
- The annual global food loss includes 28 million tonnes of wheat, which is more than the entire annual wheat production of Ukraine, the fifth largest wheat exporter.
- Consumer food waste is a global challenge. An estimated 17 percent of total global food production is wasted (11 per cent in households, 5 per cent in the food service sector and 2 percent in retail ([UNEP, 2021](#))).
- Reducing food loss and waste - which accounts for 8 -10 percent of all GHG emissions - could reduce emissions by 4.5 Gt CO₂e per year. ([WWF et al. 2020](#)).
- Climate change puts the food supplies of all countries at risk.
- Rising carbon dioxide levels may make staple crops such as rice and wheat less nutritious ([Medek et al. 2017](#)).
- Climate change has become a very serious concern for the fruit and vegetable sector in temperate countries, as extreme and volatile weather has led to falling crop yields, and field losses.

AREAS FOR ACTION



Reducing food loss and waste is a shared responsibility that necessitates the action of stakeholders at all levels: governments; the private sector; civil society; development agencies; research and academic institutions, and consumers.

Collaboration is needed at all levels – particularly among the public and private sectors, and with research and development institutions.

Actions must resonate across outreach initiatives and campaigns. World Food Day will echo the importance of minimizing food loss and waste, critical to ensuring no one is left behind through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, sustainable and resilient agrifood systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life.

We all have a role to play in realizing the vision of a world without hunger and malnutrition where no one is left behind. By respecting food, buying what we need and wasting less, we can show compassion for those who often go without. **Every one of us**, including **youth**, can work towards a better future, showing greater responsibility and mindfulness in our actions.

What can governments and decision makers do?

- Commit to transforming national agrifood systems in favour of healthy diets, preventing natural resource degradation and supporting the achievement of climate goals.
- Target investments and create incentives to boost efforts to reduce food loss and waste to improve human and planetary health.
- Promote and incentivize the adoption of climate friendly technologies across agrifood systems.
- Design strategies and policy approaches to guide public and private actions to reduce food loss and waste; improving food-related outcomes; and create space to work together across sectors.
- Promote greater recognition of the values associated with food through education and awareness - raising.

- Engage in partnerships with private entities to mobilize resources, knowledge and innovation to reduce food loss and waste and address climate change.
- Set measurable commitments to transform their food systems, include food loss and waste targets as part of nationally determined contributions and measure food waste across the supply chain. and in households.

Private actors of the food supply chain

- Reduce, re-use or improve food packaging – excessive or unsustainable packaging adds to the environmental cost of food.
- Donate surplus food that is compliant with food safety regulations to food banks or other institutions that support social programmes.
- Invest in research and innovation that is climate friendly

and take action to apply and scale up successful innovations that reduce food loss and waste across the supply chain.

- Commit to working on transforming national agrifood systems in favour of healthy diets for all and in support of achieving climate goals and preserving the natural resource base.
- Engage in public-private partnerships to reduce food loss and waste across agrifood supply chains and develop behaviour change programmes to help citizens to reduce food waste in the household.
- Invest in circularity approaches that manage unavoidable food waste and losses.

Research and academia

- Engage in inter-disciplinary research to understand the causes and drivers of food loss and waste.

- Engage in applied research to tackle the complexity of addressing the reduction of food loss and waste in a sustainable manner.
- Help build the business case for reduced food loss and waste by further quantifying potential benefits for food security, nutrition and the planet as well as potential trade-offs.

Consumers

- Reduce food waste at home to reduce your climate footprint.
- Speak up, and help make wasting food socially unacceptable.
- For more tips on how to reduce food waste click [here](#)



COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

Here below is a list of materials to promote the IDAFLW in the six official languages of FAO, which are accessible on the [IDAFLW website](#) in the [IDAFLW 2022 Asset Bank](#). Share them with external partners or providers and follow the website for updates as new material will be added over the coming months.

IDAFLW poster

Can be downloaded from the [IDAFLW 2022 Asset Bank](#). The standard measurement is 100 x 70 cm, with both horizontal and vertical formats available.



Web banners

IDAFLW 2022 web banners [Long top banner (480x271 px, 640x360 px) and web button (210 x 146 px) formats] are provided in the IDAFLW 2022 Asset Bank.



IDAFLW ribbon

You may find that your partners cannot always use the full IDAFLW visual. For example, they may have their own branding for an event. In these cases, the IDAFLW ribbon can be used. This is an important tool for reinforcing the IDAFLW brand and message. Send an email to Food-Loss-Waste-Day@fao.org if you need the ribbon for your own events or wish to distribute it to partners.

Gadgets

The IDAFLW 2022 Asset Bank provides graphics for the local printing or production of: t-shirts, mugs and bags.





HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Organize an IDAFLW event

Take advantage of this important opportunity to call for action. Take a fresh approach by considering different activities or new formats for events – either by going digital or respecting any physical distancing measures. Organizing events, such as food tastings, cooking demonstrations (including with leftovers) concerts, festivals, roundtables or public lectures with a food loss and waste message that can be as effective online!

Bring the IDAFLW to your town or city

Approach municipalities, outdoor advertisers, transportation companies (e.g. city metro, buses or trains), shopping malls, cinemas or airports, to place IDAFLW visuals.

Engage young people -of all ages- in food loss and waste reduction activities

Engage students in food loss and waste reduction activities at schools, on college campuses and in youth events. This way, young people can learn about food loss and waste and become proactive in reducing food waste.

Recreation and Sport

Platforms, such as Skype and Zoom, have become modes for organizing online activities for exercise. Organize an online exercise class, such as aerobics, yoga or zumba, to promote food loss and waste reduction. Encourage people to get involved in their communities, committing to take action and calling on others to do their part.

Use the IDAFLW visual

Download the IDAFLW web banners, share them and update your web page with them, linking them to the IDAFLW website. You can also produce a range of promotional materials – t-shirts, mugs and bags, using our free graphics. Remember to use the IDAFLW visual as much as possible across events and activities, even if online!

Let us know about your IDAFLW event!

As you can see, there are many ways to celebrate the IDAFLW. Remember to tell us about your events or efforts to promote. Photograph and/or record your event and send us your best photos so we can feature them in an IDAFLW Flickr Album. All high-resolution photos should be accompanied by photo credits and information about the event so we can publish them.

Spread the word

Inform, educate, and engage audiences with information about food loss and waste reduction. Join the #FLWDay campaign by sharing our free material on digital channels. Identify and engage with local and national digital influencers in the food sector (bloggers, celebrities, public figures, photographers, chefs, experts) to amplify our messages around # reducing food loss and waste. Publish photos, messages, or videos to show your actions to reduce food loss and waste!

Get the media involved

Spread the key messages through your participation in talk shows, discussion panels, media briefings and radio or TV call-in shows.



FAO RESOURCES ON FOOD LOSS AND WASTE REDUCTION

©Joshua Hoehne

FAO's support to the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste is particularly important as FAO is the UN specialized agency that leads international efforts to defeat hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition and is mandated to raise levels of nutrition and reduce food loss and food waste, taking into account sustainable production and consumption practices. FAO is working in partnership with national governments, the private sector, civil society and academia to promote awareness about food loss and waste and its impacts in an effort to stimulate efforts and actions to address the issues and to bring about behaviour change.

FAO is committed to working together to promote more ambitious collective action to address food loss and waste reduction in support of achieving the 2030 Agenda through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable, agrifood systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life, leaving no one behind.

Key Technical Resources on food loss and waste reduction:

- The Technical [Platform on the measurement and reduction of food loss and waste](#) is a dynamic platform that serves as a gateway to FAO's work in collaboration with a range of partners, to address food loss and waste prevention, reduction, measurement and policy.
- The [FAO food loss and waste database](#) is the largest online collection of data on both food loss and food waste and causes reported throughout the literature. The database contains data and information from openly accessible reports and studies measuring food loss and waste across food products, stages of the value chain, and geographical areas. <http://www.fao.org/food-loss-and-food-waste/food-loss-and-waste-data/en/>
- The [Food Loss Index and data collection methodology](#) developed by FAO, to measure and monitor progress on SDG 12.3 at the national level.
- An on-line [e-learning course on the FAO food loss analysis methodology and its application](#).
- An [Educational Package](#) titled “Do Good: Save Food!” on food waste reduction, developed by FAO in collaboration with the International Food Waste Coalition, targeted to children ranging in age from 5 to 14.
- The [State of Food and Agriculture: Moving forward on food loss and waste reduction](#). Rome, 2019.
- [Mitigating risks to food systems during COVID-19 - Reducing food loss and waste](#). Rome, 2020.
- [Voluntary Code of Conduct for Food Loss and Waste Reduction](#). Rome, 2021. The Code of Conduct (CoC) presents the actions and measures that countries, partners and stakeholders should take or put in place in order to contribute to FLW reduction.



UNEP'S RESOURCES ON FOOD WASTE REDUCTION

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UNEP is the custodian of the SDG 12.3 indicator. As custodian of the Food Waste Index, co-host of International Day of Awareness on Food Loss and Waste, and mandated by UNEA Resolution 4/2, UNEP builds capacity and advocates to improve the enabling conditions to halve food loss and waste. UNEP also supports knowledge creation, pilots, enabling frameworks and guidelines as well as high-level advocacy to accelerate action on expanding sustainable food cold chains.

- [The Food Waste Index Report](#) aims to support the goals of SDG 12.3. It does so by presenting the most comprehensive food waste data collection, analysis and modelling to date, generating a new estimate of global food waste; and publishing a methodology for countries to measure food waste, at household, food service and retail level, to track national progress towards 2030 and to report on SDG 12.3.
- [Reducing Consumer Food Waste Using Green and Digital Technologies](#) provides an overview of the causes of consumer food waste and the opportunities for its reduction through technological solutions, behavioural change, and public and private initiatives. The report is combined with case studies and outreach activities in five cities in five regions, in close cooperation with local partners: [Bangkok](#), [Belgrade](#), [Bogota](#), [Doha](#), [Kampala](#).
- A range of tips to reduce food waste at the consumer levels are also available on UNEP and WWF joint campaign entitled [Vivir sin Desperdicio](#)
- [The State of Food Waste in West Asia](#), published in 2021, sets out a comprehensive view of the current situation across the region, in which around 34 percent of the food served is wasted, with an estimation ranging from 100 to 150 kg/cap of food waste occurring at the household stage.
- Educational Package titled “[Kitchen Lessons](#)” on food waste, developed by UNEP in collaboration with the Edible Schoolyard Project, targets children ranging in age from 10 to 14.
- [The Global Methane Assessment](#) shows that human-caused methane emissions can be reduced by up to 45 percent this decade, and identifies three behavioural changes, reducing food waste and loss, improving livestock management, and the adoption of healthy diets that could reduce methane emissions by 65–80 tonnes per year over the next few decades.
- [The Summary Briefing of the Status of the Global Food Cold-Chain](#) includes case studies to show the current state and development across areas such as technologies, design approaches, finance and business models, policy and planning.
- [The Cold Chain Database and Modelling initiative](#) developed together with the Global Food Cold Chain Council to assist countries in identifying their cold chain baseline covering different perspectives.
- [The Virtual Sustainable Cold Chain Exhibition](#) showcases sustainable and commercially available cold chain technologies for food and vaccines.

CONTACT US!

If you have any doubts or wish to have more information, you can send an email to Food-Loss-Waste-Day@fao.org

www.fao.org/international-day-awareness-food-loss-waste
www.unep.org/events/un-day/idaflw
#FLWDay

THE UN RECOGNIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF REDUCING FOOD LOSS AND WASTE
On 19 December 2019, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 74/209 proclaiming an International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste.

The International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste seeks to promote awareness and collective action to reduce food loss and waste.



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