



# Food Waste

## Food loss

is the decrease in the quantity or quality of food resulting from decisions and actions by food suppliers in the chain, excluding retailers, food service providers and consumers (SOFA, 2019). Empirically, it refers to any food that is discarded, incinerated or otherwise disposed of along the food supply chain from harvest/slaughter/catch up to, but excluding, the retail level, and does not re-enter in any other productive utilization, such as feed or seed.

<https://www.fao.org/platform-food-loss-waste/food-loss/introduction/en>

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refers to the decrease in the quantity or quality of food resulting from decisions and actions by retailers, food service providers and consumers (SOFA, 2019).

Less food loss and waste would lead to more efficient land use and better water resource management with positive impacts on climate change and livelihoods.

<https://www.fao.org/platform-food-loss-waste/food-waste/introduction/en>

## UN Entities

### • Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

- The Food Loss and Waste Challenge: <https://www.fao.org/interactive/food-loss-waste-challenge/en/>
- Technical Platform on the Measurement and Reduction of Food Loss and Waste: <https://www.fao.org/platform-food-loss-waste/en/>
- Food Loss and Waste Database: <https://www.fao.org/platform-food-loss-waste/flw-data/en/>
- Food Chain Crisis: <https://www.fao.org/policy-support/policy-themes/food-chain-crisis/en>
- Food Loss and Food Waste: <https://www.fao.org/policy-support/policy-themes/food-loss-and-food-waste/en>
- Food safety and quality: <https://www.fao.org/food-safety/en/>
- Measuring hunger, food security and food consumption: <https://www.fao.org/measuring-hunger/en>
- Agrifood systems: <https://www.fao.org/food-systems/en/>
- Sustainable Food and Agriculture: <https://www.fao.org/sustainability/en/>
- World Food Situation: <https://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/en/>
- Make #NotWasting food a personal resolution: How you can avoid food waste this holiday (28 December 2021): <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/story/Make-NotWasting-food-a-personal-resolution/en>
- The art of cooking and what you can do to make it more sustainable: Tips from FAO's Goodwill Ambassador chefs on how you can buy, cook and eat food that respects the planet (18 June 2021): <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/story/The-art-of-cooking-and-what-you-can-do-to-make-it-more-sustainable/en>
- 15 quick tips for reducing food waste and becoming a Food hero – We all have a part to play in saving food (29 September 2020): <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/story/15-quick-tips-for-reducing-food-waste-and-becoming-a-Food-hero/en>

- Three smart ways innovation is helping reduce food loss and waste: On the first International Day of Awareness for Food Loss and Waste, let's talk about solving the problem (28 September 2020): <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/story/Three-smart-ways-innovation-is-helping-reduce-food-loss-and-waste/en>
- **UN Environment Programme (UNEP)**
  - Food loss and waste: <https://www.unep.org/topics/food-systems/food-loss-and-waste>
  - Food Waste Breakthrough: <https://www.stopfoodlosswaste.org/advocacy/food-waste-breakthrough>
  - Food Waste Index Report 2024: <https://www.unep.org/resources/publication/food-waste-index-report-2024>
  - Food waste in focus as the world marks the International Day of Zero Waste (30 March 2026): <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/food-waste-focus-world-marks-international-day-zero-waste>
  - Chef Massimo Bottura's philosophy on food waste – and a recipe that embodies it (30 March 2026): <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/chef-massimo-botturas-philosophy-food-waste-and-recipe-embodies-it>
  - Reducing food waste: a multi-purpose solution for climate and economic health (28 March 2026): <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/speech/reducing-food-waste-multi-purpose-solution-climate-and-economic-health>
  - Reaping the digital dividend: the AI solutions helping cut food waste in half (28 March 2026): <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/reaping-digital-dividend-ai-solutions-helping-cut-food-waste-half>
  - Behind food waste: The city and business solutions gaining ground (27 March 2026): <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/behind-food-waste-city-and-business-solutions-gaining-ground>
  - Seven ways to cut your food waste and support the planet (27 March 2026): <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/seven-ways-cut-your-food-waste-and-support-planet>
  - Amid crisis in food waste, celebrity chef Massimo Bottura gives produce a second life (Video, 28 September 2023): <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/video/amid-crisis-food-waste-celebrity-chef-massimo-bottura-gives-produce-second>
  - UNEP appoints renowned Lebanese chef Leyla Fathallah as advocate on food waste for West Asia region (21 March 2023): <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/unep-appoints-renowned-lebanese-chef-leyla-fathallah-advocate-food>
  - Why the global fight to tackle food waste has only just begun (28 September 2021): <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/why-global-fight-tackle-food-waste-has-only-just-begun>
  - How food waste is trashing the planet (18 June 2021): <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/how-food-waste-trashing-planet>
- **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**
  - How Nuclear Science Helps Tackle Food Waste (30 March 2026): <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/how-nuclear-science-helps-tackle-food-waste>
- **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**
  - Food loss reduction: <https://www.ifad.org/en/food-loss-reduction>
- **Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food**  
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-food>
- **UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)**
  - Food Loss and Waste: <https://unece.org/trade/wp7/foodlossandwaste>
- **UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)**
  - Food waste in focus as the world marks the International Day of Zero Waste (30 March 2026 ): <https://unhabitat.org/news/30-mar-2026/food-waste-in-focus-as-the-world-marks-the-international-day-of-zero-waste>
  - UN Advisory Board names 20 city leaders in zero waste (27 March 2026): <https://unhabitat.org/news/27-mar-2026/un-advisory-board-names-20-city-leaders-in-zero-waste>

- **World Bank**
  - Climate smart agriculture: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/climate-smart-agriculture>
  - Food security: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/agriculture/brief/food-security-update>
- **World Food Programme (WFP):** <https://www.wfp.org/>
  - 5 facts about food waste and hunger (25 June 2024): <https://www.wfp.org/stories/5-facts-about-food-waste-and-hunger>
  - 11 facts about food loss and waste – and how it links to sustainable food systems (21 September 2021): <https://www.wfp.org/stories/11-facts-about-food-loss-and-waste-and-how-it-links-sustainable-food-systems>
- **World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism)**
  - Tourism Leaders Convene on Zero Waste Day to Launch Global “Recipe of Change” (30 March 2026): <https://www.untourism.int/news/progresstourism-leaders-convene-on-zero-waste-day-to-launch-global-recipe-of-change>

## Further Information

- Sustainable Development Goal 2 – Zero Hunger: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/hunger/>  
<https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal2>  
<https://sdgs.un.org/topics/food-security-and-nutrition-and-sustainable-agriculture>
- Global Issues on the UN Agenda – Food: <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/food>
- A foodies choice of UN food resources to celebrate the New Year (31 December 2020) <https://unric.org/en/a-foodies-choice-of-un-food-resources/>
- UNRIC Library Backgrounder - Food Insecurity: <https://unric.org/en/unric-library-backgrounder-food-insecurity/>

## UN Observances

- International Day of Zero Waste – 30 March 2026: Food Waste <https://www.un.org/en/observances/zero-waste-day>  
<https://www.unep.org/zerowasteday/>  
<https://unhabitat.org/international-day-of-zero-waste-2026>
- World Food Safety Day – 7 June <https://www.un.org/en/observances/food-safety-day>  
<https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-food-safety-day>
- International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste – 29 September <https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-food-waste-day/>  
<https://www.fao.org/international-day-awareness-food-loss-waste/en/>
- World Food Day – 16 October <https://www.fao.org/world-food-day/en/>